

KINGS MOUNTAIN MIRROR-HERALD

KINGS MOUNTAIN, NORTH CAROLINA 28086 WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1975

Looking Back At 1975

By TOM McINTYRE
Editor, Mirror-Herald

This month it was announced that a Federal subsidy program was in the works to create employment for some of the city's jobless. The program was Federal House Bill 16596. The program was extended through the end of 1975. Also in January active campaigns were being waged in the local ABC referendum by "wet" and "dry" forces. Dr. Frank Sincox was still holding committee meetings to determine a fair water rate for larger users at the request

of the city council.

Also in January a committee was appointed from the Chamber of Commerce and the Merchants Association to begin drafting by-laws and nominating a slate of officers for the soon-to-be merged organizations.

The city also received news that the Farmers Home Administration had approved a \$90,000 grant to be used toward the construction of a gas peak shaving plant for supplementing the city's

natural gas supply with the local manufacture of propane gas.

In January the city was also studying ways and means to cut back on expenditures to cope with the economic crunch.

In the latter part of January the economic pinch in Kings Mountain was finally catching up with the rest of the state. The local Employment Security Commission reported there were 1,400 unemployed residents filing claims at the community center office.

Local telephone service charges were also increased 20 percent this month, an open house ceremony was held to dedicate the new Kings Mountain Junior High and the Kings Mountain Centennial Committee announced the city wound up the city's birthday celebration with a \$12,723.63 profit to be used in establishing a local historical museum.

It was also this month the Mirror-Herald was honored with two N. C. Press Association awards at the annual winter

institute banquet at Chapel Hill. Editor Tom McIntyre and sports editor Gary Stewart accepted the two awards — first place for non-daily editorial pages and second place in sports coverage.

Residential garbage pickups were cut to once weekly in January in an effort to cut down on the outgo of expenses in that area of city service.

(Please Turn To Page 2)

Sewer Line Rights Of Way

County Should've Handled Project All Along' - White

City Attorney Jack White said today the problems of acquiring rights of way for the Eaton sewer line are where they should have been all along — with the county.

White was commenting on a news story published last week quoting county officials who stated the rights of way acquisitions "had been taken away from Kings Mountain." The comments alluded that the city had not fulfilled its obligation in the acquisitions.

"I maintained from the very beginning the rights of way work should have been done by the county," White said. "Because, quite frankly, I'm not sure the city has the right to condemn property outside the city under these circumstances."

The city does have the right to condemn property within its extraterritorial boundaries if the action is both necessary and for a public purpose on behalf of the citizens inside the city limits. The primary purpose in condemning the property between Kings Mountain and Eaton Corporation site near Grover is to provide that industry, and later perhaps Grover, with sewer facilities. White said at any rate the city has been handling the rights of way acquisitions and has secured "20 or 30 of them." He said there were a few that had not gone through with the offers and condemnation resolutions had been drawn under the condemnation laws.

The attorney explained that under the law the city appoints one appraiser, the property owners appoint one appraiser, then those two appoint a third. The committee makes appraisals on the basis of each right of way and reports

back. A public hearing is held and if the property owners do not choose to accept the appraisal, then condemnation is affected and the city takes immediate possession of the right of way.

Under the old law the city cannot take immediate possession and should the property owner raise a question as to the legal right of the city (or county) to condemn their property, the entire matter can be tied up for years in court.

Shelby attorney J. A. West is handling the acquisition process since the county has taken over the project. White said "I'm afraid Attorney West is going to find himself in a bigger hole than the little ones he says he found in the project drawn up here. The reason I feel that way is because the county is handling the project under the old condemnation law."

Kings Mountain was handling the rights of way acquisitions, but the county was putting up the money to pay the property owners. The city was to turn over the rights of way to the county. The county set a maximum amount they would pay per foot of rights of way and this, according to White, was the reason that condemnation proceedings were being drawn on several property owners. "They would not accept the amount offered," he said.

Early this year a condemnation resolution was drawn and approved by the city council. In that resolution a date was set for appraisals and a public hearing (for last June). That appraisal and public hearing was never held. The condemnation resolutions were never delivered to the property owners.

"The reason for that was the fact the question arose over just where the financing for construction of the sewer line was coming from," White said. "I was unofficially told by the board to hold up on the paper work until this question was resolved. I was never told to start the paper work again."

"This whole project has been frustrating," White said. "In the first place I was never given a composite map of all of the property involved in rights of way acquisitions. Secondly, several plats I was given to draw up were later changed by the engineers on the project and had to be redrawn and thirdly, another attorney was given several of the plats to draw, so I never have had a complete picture of the project."

White said he was not authorized to conduct the rights of way acquisitions on behalf of the city. "That job was given to someone else," he said.

The city attorney also said he had never been invited to sit in on any meetings between city and county and Eaton officials concerning the project.

About two weeks ago, according to White, he was called by County Manager Joe Hendrick and told that the Federal government wanted certification showing that land had been acquired or was in the process of being acquired because of the \$300,000 grant approved to the county to pay for the sewer line construction.

"I told him at that time that all we had to do was reset the appraisal and public hearing dates and have the condemnation resolutions delivered to the property

(Please Turn To Page 4)



Photo By Lib Stewart

CENTRAL STUDENTS WIN PRIZES — The six Central School students pictured won the top prizes in the annual Christmas decorating contest, a library project. Seated, from left, are David Faucette, Brian Lepley, Randy Parker, and

David Jones. Standing, from left, are Walter Frazier and Teresa Oliver. The students gave the decorations to shut-ins of the community as Christmas presents.

The Judge Hangs Up His Gavel Today.....

By ELIZABETH STEWART
Staff Writer

J. Lee Roberts, who just turned 74, hangs up his hat today at 5 p. m. to devote more time to family and church.

The personable, veteran magistrate and Justice of the Peace, retires today after nearly 30 years as No. 4 Township magistrate in a "service" he has found most rewarding.

Yesterday "Judge" or "Catfish" Roberts, as he is affectionately called by friends, sat in his familiar surroundings among his legal papers and books, seeing visitors and "just listening" to people's problems.

He takes some of the work home but never the problems, as the Judge, recalled wedding ceremonies he had per-

New Years Day

begins a new life...

formed in the wee hours of the night for many starry-eyed lovers with his wife, Elizabeth Sapoch Roberts, as a witness. Called by law enforcement officers for warrants at all hours of the night is also commonplace because effective Sept. 1 any man or woman confined or released from jail has to be brought before a magistrate, excepting in minor cases of traffic violations.

He plans to continue notary service from his home but because of crippling arthritis, decided to retire this year.

Judge Roberts is quite proud of his record in the magistrate's job, one of seven in this county. During his long tenure, he had few civil and criminal cases appealed and none reversed and had high praise for local and county law enforcement agencies, officials of the court system and the Cleveland County Bar Association.

Born on a farm in Patterson Springs Community, he remembers, but doesn't relish, returning to "the good ole days" when wind blowing through the weatherboard house brought frost on his blanket but is thankful he learned to work hard and raised a Christian family.

He credits the high incidence of crime today to lack of discipline parents give their kids in the home and said juvenile delinquency popped up soon after World War II when Mamas left home to go to work. "You have to tell a child what is 'off limits' and stick to it," he declared,

adding that he hoped he had kept some families together and some kids from running away from home by just "listening to them."

Namesake of his grandfather who was a Captain during the Civil War, Judge Roberts' said his early training in the home prepared him for his work.

Judge Roberts had little opposition when he ran successfully for JP at least a dozen times and used to preside over civil cases from the bench in back of his present office prior to '68.

He practices with a sense of humor firmness in his profession and feels strongly that dignity in the courtroom is "a thing of the past" and that liquor is responsible for almost all the civil and criminal cases in the court system today. "I know from my long experience as a magistrate that this is true," added Roberts.

Judge Roberts signs more deeds of separation than marriage licenses and blames the high rate of divorce on fact that couples marry young and their courtship and engagement period is short.

Today in the county a prospective bride and groom can go to Shelby and with proper identification and proof of age obtain a marriage license at the register of deeds office, a blood test at the hospital, and be married by a magistrate or minister in the same day.

Life-long Democrat and Baptist, Roberts has a son, Joe Donald Roberts of Shelby and a daughter, Beth (Mrs. Doug) Eubanks of Kings Mountain. There are three grandchildren.

New Year's Day will begin a brand new life for Lee Roberts, and he plans to enjoy it.

Committees

Appointed

Mayor John Henry Moss has appointed commissioners to special committees for the coming year.

They are: Public Works Building Committee — Comm. Norman King, James A. Childers and Fred Wright, Jr. Water Project Expansion — Comm. Corbet Nicholson, Humes Houston and William R. Grissom.

Liaison Committee with General Assembly Delegation — Comm. Corbet Nicholson, Humes Houston and Fred Wright, Jr.

Comprehensive Recreational Facilities Plan — Comm. W. Norman King, William R. Grissom and James A. Childers.

Tax Listing Begins

Friday At City Hall

Busiest spot in town during New Year '76 will probably be the tax listing office at City Hall.

Annual county tax listing gets underway Friday and tax listers will be at City Hall for No. 4 Township citizens to list their taxes. Listers are Edwin Moore, Mrs. Charles Ballard and Mrs. Jack Hauser. The listers will also be in Grover

two Saturdays in the month.

County Tax Supervisor Jim Hendrick reminded that persons desiring to have the tax forms mailed to them and list by mail should contact the tax listing office (482-8311) between 8 a. m. and 5 p. m. by Jan. 15.

Persons listing for the first time must report to their listing location in person.



NEW MAGISTRATE — Charles T. Carpenter was sworn in as magistrate of the number four township Tuesday and will assume his duties on Jan. 1, 1976. A Kings Mountain native, Carpenter also operates a real estate firm.



HE'S RETIRING — J. Lee Roberts retires today as magistrate of the number four township. He is being replaced by Charles Carpenter, also of Kings Mountain.

Charles Carpenter Appointed Four Township Magistrate

T. Carpenter Jr., has been named magistrate for number four township, replacing J. Lee Roberts, who has resigned.

Carpenter, who was sworn in Tuesday at Ruth Dedmon, Clerk of Superior Court, takes office Jan. 1.

A native of Kings Mountain, Carpenter owns and manages C. T. Carpenter Real Estate.

Carpenter is a former sports editor and circulation manager of Kings Mountain Herald, was for 17 years a ICS representative and is a former real estate salesman for the C. M. Peeler real estate firm of Shelby.

Carpenter is a graduate of Clemson University and a veteran of World War Two. He's a member of the American

Legion and VFW and has held several offices in the Legion.

Married to the former Marian Laughridge of Gastonia, Carpenter is the father of two children, Chuck and Laura. The Carpenters attend Central United Methodist Church and are members of Kings Mountain Country Club and Lake Montonia Club.