

Kings Mountain Herald

PUBLISHED EACH TUESDAY AND THURSDAY

GARLAND ATKINS
PublisherGARY STEWART
Co-EditorLIB STEWART
Co-Editor

MEMBER OF NORTH CAROLINA PRESS ASSOCIATION

The Herald is published by Herald Publishing House, P.O. Box 752, Kings Mountain, N.C. 28086. Business and editorial offices are located at Canterbury Road-East King St. Phone 739-7196. Second class postage paid at Kings Mountain, N.C. Single copy 15 cents. Subscription rates: \$10 yearly in-state, \$5 six months, \$11 yearly out-of-state, \$5.50 six months. Student rate for nine months, \$7.50. USPS 931-010.

EDITORIALS & OPINIONS

Record budget for city

The city budget for 1980-81, as finally passed last Monday night, again set a record, though the tax rate was cut to 50 cents per \$100 valuation, on the basis of the new county-wide property re-evaluation.

The total budget is \$9,429,671.00 and reflects a five percent increase over the previous fiscal year. It provides a five percent "across the boards" pay raise for employees.

The administration is to be commended for raising the pay of its labor force. It can be assumed that better labor will be attracted and that demands for performance can be increased by department heads and foremen without fear that the men will quit and that they cannot be replaced. With the inflationary trend evident and the high incidence of unemployment in Cleveland County, the board's action is praise worthy. Although there was some question raised about pay of policemen at the recent budget hearing, the Herald believes that the recent police pay scale plan, which is based on merit raises on recommendation of the Chief of Police, has the same thinking in mind in providing merit increases for performance.

A city budget, of course, is much like a housewife's. About the only definitely set, unchangeable item, even after passage, is the debt service department. It can be assumed that some departments will not use all the money budgeted, and that some others, due to unforeseen developments, will end 1980-81 overspent.

* * *

Letters to the editors

Prayer is needed

Ever since 1962, when the Supreme Court outlawed prayer in public schools, the God-fearing people with the prayer-believing senators and congressmen have not ceased to "put prayer back" in the schools. The United States Senate already has passed the Senator Jesse Helms' voluntary school prayer bill, it has to go to the House of Representatives, needed only a majority vote of the House for passing, and prayer could be back in public schools by September this year.

The Lord is waiting for all children in the schools to come to Him, no parent, no (Christian) citizen of our Nation under God can afford to hinder them from that sacred fellowship, therefore we have to write to our congressmen informing them that we want to have voluntary prayer restored in schools because in God we trust! (Write for more information: Leadership Foundation, Inc., P.O. Box 1720, Washington D.C. 20013).

We know that many of the clergy in the pulpits, and the hierarchy of most of the major denominations are against bringing prayer and with it awareness of God in our public schools. Their argument is that Americans live in a religious pluralistic society, and no religion can be made superior in tax supported institutions like our public schools. In

An Ambitious Project

From Mayor John Henry Moss and the KM Celebration Committee comes the announcement that after nearly 30 years a group of ambitious folks will again produce the historical drama, "Then Conquer We Must," written by Robert Osborne and adapted by Tom McIntyre, Kings Mountain newspaperman.

The production will be staged at KM National Military Park in conjunction with the 200th anniversary in October 1980 of the Revolutionary War Battle of Kings Mountain.

Auditions for the drama's many speaking and non-speaking roles will be held in Gaffney, Kings Mountain, Rock Hill, Gastonia and Shelby during the middle of July.

We are pleased over the decision of the Celebration Committee to undertake again a project which was highly successful by Kings Mountain Little Theatre in the Fall of 1951. And it will be all citizens of this city's responsibility to help them make it a success again.

Many of our grandfathers, great-grandfathers and great-great-grandfathers carried smoking squirrel rifles in the day history was made at Kings Mountain during the Revolution. The Battle of Kings Mountain stands out as one of the most important in American history. It was at Kings Mountain that the tide was turned in the Revolutionary War, leading to the defeat of Cornwallis at other places in the South and his eventual surrender at Yorktown a year later.

their opinion atheism (also a religion worshipping materialism) is too "sacred" to be offended. Don't they know that every religion (to mention Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, beside Christianity) calls to believe in God and prayer?

In the same breath those clergy boast that the churches can take care of their religious education and leading children in prayer and worship in their respective churches or sending to parochial schools. Well and good. But what about those children whose parents can't afford sending their children to parochial schools? What about those children of the homes where parents are strangers to God, where religion is a fairy story never to be told and for whom to hear about God the Creator and Sustainer of the material world (an all) and learning to pray the school would be the only place? Don't forget, the "high clergy" have been wrong many times before, very wrong!

To continue the argument, let me say, that I have been a teacher for a number of years, and I know that mentioning God in the classroom, meditating on spiritual life, even if in silence, and voluntary, invites God to be present and to change things for better, change schools, families, and the Nation. And that change we need. And for that we have to pray, and our schools, too, should be the places to pray.

Dr. Valdis Mezezers
Iron Station

GARY STEWART Of snakes, sharks and class reunions

Fifteen-year-old Pam Bowen of Chesterfield Apartments had an experience last Tuesday she won't soon forget.

Returning from a friend's home about 2:15, she entered her mother's apartment and headed straight for the kitchen to wash dishes.

She was down to the last pot. She picked it up and there on the counter top was a 1½ foot long copperhead snake, all curled up and ready to strike.

"It scared me to death," she said. "It was curled up and had its head sticking up and flipping its tongue back and forth. My hand went right by it."

She threw her dish towel on the coffee table and made a quick exit.

A number of friends were outside the apartment, and she ran to tell them. No one believed her, but none doubted enough to go inside and take a look.

Finally, Jeff Dunn went inside and took a broom to the critter, which was still lying on the counter in a strike position.

Pam hesitates to go in the house alone now. She's heard the old saying that the mother snake may be close by.

* * *

The Kings Mountain High Class of 1950 held its 30th year reunion recently at Woodbridge Country Club. Twenty-five members attended the festivities, which included boat riding on Moss Lake, courtesy of Iva and Tom Beam.

A booklet published by the class tells us what's happened to some of the class members.

One of the most famous is Hal England, of Studio City, Calif. He's an actor and seen daily by most of us on the Wachovia Bank commercials. He did not attend but wrote the classmates a nice letter.

Mary Lou Barnette is now living in Charlotte and is a secretary for Piedmont Natural Gas Co. Gay Bennett Shockley resides in Gastonia and is a self-employed accountant. Billie Bookout Yarbro still calls Kings Mountain home and is a nurse at McGill Clinic.

Some others still living here are Joanne Bridges Pruette, a library aide at KMHS; Faye Caldwell Payeur, a banker; Bob Crawford, a retired Air Force man; Norma Falls Bridges; a housewife; Cornelia Gantt Crawford, teacher aide at East School; Iva Beam, teacher aide at East School; Patricia Neisler Plonk, housewife; William Lawrence Plonk, dairy farmer; Bobby Sellers, a retired soldier; and Houston Smith, who works with chemicals.

Jean Cash Girault lives in Charlotte where she is a coordinator for a nursing service; Jack Hicks lives in Wisconsin where he is vice president of Sandel Marble Co.; Bob Jackson is a plant manager for Fike Chemicals in Nitro, W. Va.; Johnny Littlejohn is a certified public accountant in Charlotte; Roy Moore lives in Pensacola, Fla., where he is a salesman; Carl Moss is patient accounts manager at Charlotte Memorial Hospital; Iris Patterson Thompson is a math teacher in Clemson, S.C.; Dotie Smith O'Hanlon is a secretary in New York; Richard White is a teacher-coach in Taylorsville, N.C.; and Curtis Wright is retired from the U.S. Navy and is now an instructor at the University of Florida.

* * *

Anne Withers of Kings Mountain recalled some fond memories when she picked up a recent edition of the Charlotte Observer.

Tom Higgins, outdoor writer for the sports department, did an article on pier fishing at Kure Beach and told a story about Mrs. Withers' father, the late G.S. Spargo of Dallas.

Bill Robertson, owner of the Kure Beach Pier, told Higgins this story:

"Spargo was a giant of a man with a John Wayne face reeking of good character. Several times each season, he and his wife would pack up and head for their beach cottage at Kure.

"As soon as I found he was in the area, I'd arrange to spend some time with him. He was a



Pam Bowen...and friend

shrewd judge of human nature, an observer of the human condition who had great stories to tell.

"The one I remember the best was when he caught the shark.

"It was before I came on the scene, back in the late 1920s, I think. Regardless, G.S. was down here to do some repairs on this house and decided to go out and catch enough fish for supper. He was bringin' one in when - wham! - it was struck by a shark.

"G.S. fought him for about an hour, and finally beached the rascal. It went a hundred pounds or so. He had no idea what he was going to do with it, then it occurred to him to take it back to Dallas and show off to the field hands on his farm. They'd never seen a fish so big.

"Well, Spargo and some acquaintances down here hoisted the shark into the right front fender and tied it to the car, the same way some hunters used to transport deer they'd bagged. It was well into the night when the Spargos arrived in Gaston County.

"The next morning, he had a mischievous little idea.

"Right near Dallas, there was a narrow little river with a one-lane bridge across it. G.S. drove out to the bridge, dropped off the shark and then parked nearby. He had taken along the smallest, lightest rod and reel rig he had.

"He cast in, propped himself on the bridge rail, and stood there with one foot on the side of that shark. Soon a car came along and skidded to a stop. Then another, then another. Within an hour or so, there was a traffic jam or maybe 50 cars around that bridge.

"Ol' G.S. would roar with laughter when he told about it, especially when detailing some of the comments that were made, like 'I told you there were big fish in here!' and 'I thought I heard something big jump down here last night.'

"They had that shark identified as everything you can imagine. G.S.'s struggle to land it increased and became more heroic with every telling.

"The funny thing about it is that he never told anyone he'd caught the shark there. They just assumed it.

"Spargo was a magistrate or some type of court official, and he said the experience always made him wonder about evidence in cases after that."

Fulfilling a 162 year old obligation

William Pollard Thomasson died Jan. 31, 1818. He was a veteran of the American Revolution.

Sunday, June 30, his descendants gathered around the gravesite at Ebenezer Presbyterian Church, Ebenezer, S.C. to fulfill an obligation neglected by his family for 162 years - the erection of a monument in his honor.

The impressive monument carries the researched Thomasson coat of arms above which is the latin inscription meaning "Through the great war". The monument reads "A memorial to William Pollard Thomasson, Sr., Revolutionary Soldier, Buried Ebenezer Cemetery, February 4, 1763 - January 31, 1818. Married Mary Reeves, November 23, 1782, Granville County, N.C., Rev. File No. W6280. This monument erected July 1980 at his approximate burial site by his descendants."

In attendance was his great granddaughter, Miss Polly Clawson of Rock Hill along with many local family members. Descendants were there from North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Alabama and Georgia. Mrs. Marjorie Malloy of Newnan, Ga. and Curtis Thomasson, Andalusia, Alabama head up the family organization which holds yearly reunions and publishes "Thomasson Traces", a quarterly family newspaper.

After 11 a.m. worship services at Ebenezer Church, members of the family visited the Thomas Roach home built in 1811. William Pollard's son,



Lib Stewart

Thomas, married Sarah Roach and moved to Covington, Ala. A monument will be erected in memory of Sarah and Thomas at the next family reunion, Aug. 23, 1980, in Rose Hill Cemetery in Red Level, Alabama.

The dedication service for William Pollard Thomasson opened at 4 p.m. with the invocation given by Rev. David Fortson, pastor of Ebenezer Church. Following a hymn sung by Ebenezer's choirmaster, Eugene Barnwell, Curtis Thomasson recognized visitors and descendants. Mrs. Malloy, family historian, gave brief history of the Thomasson family in America. The unveiling and dedication of the monument was a time of patriotism and dedication for those watching. Mrs. David Lyle, Regent of the Catawba Chapter, DAR, placed the traditional wreath on the grave. The ceremony ended with "Taps", played by John

Davis, while the American flag fluttered over the old soldier's grave.

After the ceremony, the Thomassons were invited to the William T. Thomasson home. Mr. Thomasson, a descendant of James, William Pollard's brother, lives in the home built by his Confederate veteran grandfather, Monroe Lipscomb Thomasson. Mr. and Mrs. John I. Barron assisted Mr. and Mrs. Thomasson in serving a light supper of ham and turkey, open face and finger sandwiches, melon balls, cake and punch. After refreshments, the Thomasson visitors toured the home, furnished with family heirlooms refinished by the host.

HISTORY

Thomas Thomasson came to Virginia in 1677, settling in Louisa County. His son, George (named for his grandfather back in London) produced another Thomas who moved to Granville County, N.C. where his third son, William Pollard, was born. Thomas was drafted to serve in the Revolutionary War in 1777 and William Pollard volunteered to serve for his father. After serving his father's 12 months' conscription, William Pollard reenlisted and rose from private to officer's rank. He served at Briars Creek, Charlestown, Hanging Rock, Camden and Guilford. During the last of these battles, he was under the command of General Green and was present at Yorktown when

Cornwallis surrendered.

He married Mary Reeves after the War and they and his two brothers, James and Nathaniel, moved to York District, S.C. where they raised their families.

William Pollard was 55 when he died. His widow and family left York in 1832, moved to Georgia to draw in the land lotteries available to war veterans, their widows and orphan children. Of the nine children, Ann Garland (Rooker), Lemuel, Polley (Clawson), William P. Jr., Lucey (Henry), Thomas Randolph, James, Charles and Beverly Daniel, only the Clawsons remained in York County. Polley Clawson's descendants kept alive the memory of the traditional site of William Pollard's grave.

Thomasson descendants contributed to the cost of the monument which was designed and erected by Wylie Brothers, Rock Hill. The Wylie's are descendants of James Thomasson.

Attending the ceremony from Kings Mountain were Joan Thomasson Owens (Besemer City) descendant of William's son, Lemuel, and Mr. and Mrs. George Thomasson. George descends from William's brother, James who also fought in the Revolution and is buried at Union Baptist Church near Filbert, S.C.