

Obituaries

Needles in Haystacks

By Ann Harwell Gay

If finding your ancestor's names seems like hunting for needles in a haystack in the dark, you are not alone. Genealogy, now an international mania, is alive and well in Choctaw County. A county genealogical society founded in 2001 by Sarah W. Mazingo meets every third Saturday at ten a.m. except for the months of November and December at the county library in Butler, and welcomes inquiries and new members. David Snow is President of the organization.

In our home are two walls almost weighed down with family pictures. One wall I call The Rogue's Gallery (his side of the family) and the other one The Hall of Fame (mine). This will not be a series about my family tree, but about other county families, happenings and miscellany. In spite of the millions of name listings and queries on the internet on Rootsweb and Ancestry.com, there may be still some who prefer a paper trail, so here goes. And I beg your indulgence to dig up some of Choctaw County's past with the help of our genealogy society members. Inquiries are welcome as long as there are some ties to Choctaw County.

Rooting around in the near past, the 1970s and 1980s, which is ancient history to today's youngsters, I rediscovered some county history in Ala-West, the monthly magazine supplement to West Alabama newspapers, which was published in Livingston. In the November 1971 issue, B.B. Williamson's column "Over 30" contained the most delightful quotations about family tree fanatics. Here are some of the best:

Never judge a man by his relatives. He did not choose them. Don't judge a man by his family background. Cain belonged to a good family. A family tree is something you pay a little to have looked up, and then pay more to have it hushed up. Williamson said that some people can trace their ancestry back 500 years but cannot tell you where their children were last night! The main idea of his column was that the way we raise our

descendants is more important than what went on in the past.

The late Earl Tucker's book, "All the Nuts Aren't on the Trees", although not about family trees, contains delightful humor. Incidentally, the ghost-story recorder Kathryn Tucker Windham, who was born at Tuscahoma, is his niece. One of the brief recordings on her tape of Reminiscences is entitled "The Tombigbee at Tuscahoma".

Family trees contain roots, trunks, branches, nuts, stumps (those cut off from life too soon) and petrified wood (skeletons in closets or the attic, depending on which is the least visible). Ann Landers wrote that she was not too excited about family trees because too often they turn out an abundance of sap. J.C. Penney said family trees need constant spraying. Some could stand to be cut down, in my opinion. The ancient Egyptians tried to do this, when they chiseled off the names and records of Pharaohs who fell out of favor.

The modern sciences of in-vitro fertilization, artificial insemination, surrogate and single mothers nearly cause a "tree fanatic" to fall into a deep melancholy, not to mention multiple marriages, divorces and adoptions. If these don't spell the doom of genealogy, they are sure to give great challenges to future tree climbers. However, if you love the hunt, and love fitting pieces of a puzzle together, keep on looking and recording. Genealogy is a hobby that will never become passe, because it is passe already!

(ED. NOTE: *The Sun* is pleased to announce that our friend Ann Gay, a retired librarian and noted local historian, will be writing this column for the *Sun* on a regular basis. If you have items to share of genealogical interest, send them to her c/o *The Sun*. Readers are reminded that the *Sun* prints genealogical queries FREE OF CHARGE to anyone looking for their Choctaw Connections. -- Tommy)

Mary Scurlock Barber

BUTLER – Mary Scurlock Barber, 97, died February 2, 2007 at Heartfelt Hospice in Meridian, Miss. Services were held February 5, 2007 at the First United Methodist Church of Butler with Rev. Dan Nixon officiating.

She was the widow of the late Dr. William J. Barber. After the death of her husband in 1956, Mrs. Barber managed rental properties in Butler, the Barber Hospital and the Choctaw Drug Store for several years.

She retired in 1965 and devoted her time to traveling.

Survivors include one daughter, Shirley B. (Dr. E. Gray) Scott; one sister, Rosa Green, of Gilbertown; one brother Don P. Scurlock, Jr. of Butler; five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Bumpers Funeral Home of Butler was in charge of arrangements.

Linda L. Campbell

BELLAMY – Linda L. Campbell, 59, died February 3, 2007 at her home in Sumter County. She was a former art teacher at Patrician Academy.

Services were held Feb. 5 at Bumpers Funeral Home in Butler with Rev. Carl Sudduth and Father Richard Losch officiating. Interment was in the Campbell-Derby Cemetery in Sumter County.

Survivors include her husband, R.M. "Greg" Campbell, of Bellamy; one son, Hunter M. Campbell, of Auburn; one sister, Cecelia Moore, of Winfield; her mother, Myrtle Newman, of Fayette.

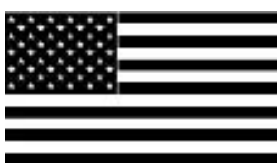
She was preceded in death by her father, Leon Wallace.

Pallbearers were Charlie Munoz, Charles McGough, Wayne Wuestifeld, Hubert Satterfield, Howard Turner, and Robert Campbell.

Bumpers Funeral Home in Butler was in charge of arrangements.

William E. "Billy" Smith III

PENNINGTON – William E. "Billy" Smith, 62, died Jan. 30, 2007 at his home. He was employed by Chevron Oil Co. as a truck driver and was a U.S. Navy Vietnam Veteran.



Survivors include his wife, Sandra Smith, of Pennington; two daughters, Gail (Jay) Freeman of McLain, and Lisa Blackwell, of Meridian, MS.; five brothers, Walter Smith of Crossville, TN, Arthur E. Smith of Eljay, GA, Phillip M. Smith of Linden, Peter R. Smith of Pennington, and James L. Smith of Oak Hill, WV; four grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

Services were held at Bumpers Funeral Home in Butler on February 1 with Rev. Ernest Twiner and Rev. Randy Burns officiating. Interment was in the Ebenezer Cemetery in Pennington.

Pallbearers were Roy Garrison, Jr., Billy Shoemaker, Mitchell James, Brian Taylor, Eric Taylor, and Kyle Schroder. Honorary pallbearers were Steve Taylor, Leon Wansley, Wade Hampton, Ferrel James, and Steve Scruggs.

Bumpers Funeral Home in Butler was in charge of arrangements.

James "Bill" Conner

BUTLER – James "Bill" Conner, 76, died February 2, 2007 at his home.

Conner was a retired Heavy Equipment Operator and a U.S. Army Veteran of the Korean War.

Survivors include two daughters, Peggy Ainsworth of Trinity, TX, and Linda Clauch of Butler; two brothers, John L. Conner of Rose Hill, MS, and Harold Conner of Creola; three sisters, Eva Conner of Montgomery, Carol Malone of York, and Hilda DeSpain of Cleveland, TX.; six grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held February 4 at Bethel Cemetery in Isney with Rev. Gilbert Evans officiating. Interment was in the Bethel Cemetery.

Pallbearers were Ronald Dingman, Bill Dortch, Harold Conner, Warren Despain, Ryan McIlwain, and Edwin Malone.

Bumpers Funeral Home in Butler was in charge of arrangements.



Lucky #12!!

Leslie Roberson (left) is a 3rd grade student at Patrician Academy. She is nine years old. She plays for the Wildcats which is made up of 1st-3rd grade students who are coached by Lindy Long and Robbie Reid. She was not present when the numbers were picked for the team so when uniform time came, she was given the number "12" jersey. Unknown to the coaches, that number was special because it had been her grandfather, Rayburn Jenkins' (right) basketball number when he was in college! He played high school basketball for House High School in House, MS, and then went on to play at East Central Community College in Decatur. Several scouts from major colleges contacted Rayburn and his parents about coming and playing basketball on scholarships for them, but he chose to play at East Central for the late Coach Denver Bracken. Rayburn retired from Georgia Pacific in 2002 after 45 years of service. Today, at 69, he still enjoys playing basketball with his granddaughter and giving her tips on improving her game. She hopes to one day learn his hook shot so she can continue his legacy and love of the game. (Submitted photo)

Choctaw Timber Co. Inc.
P.O. Box 231
Gilbertown, AL 36908

Bert Campbell
Buyer Of All Types Of Timber

Office: 251-542-9272
Home: 251-843-2166
Cell: 1-888-250-8243

*"Memories happen only once...
... let us help you capture those
memories in pictures."*

Available for Special Events,
Weddings, Reunions,
and more

**Bryant's Photography
& Image Works**

for bookings call: **Mickey Bryant**
(205)459-3676 - cell (205)457-4487

Allen & Willis Drilling Company

Well Drilling & Pump Repair Service
(334) 289-2068 • Demopolis

**Opportunity Available at
Willow Trace Nursing Center**

Long Term Care Facility
Looking for Licensed
Social Worker
For 121 Bed Facility

**EXCELLENT BENEFITS
EXCELLENT SALARY**

Call Us For More Information
on This Exciting Opportunity.
Phone# 205-459-5506
1406 E. Pushmataha St.
Butler, AL 36904

**CAROLYN'S
RECYCLING, LLC**

**"WE BUY
JUNK AUTO'S
& IRON"**

\$4.00 Per 100 LBS

Hours: 8-4 P.M. Mon. - Fri.
Phone: 334-963-4714

Located: Industrial Road off Hwy 10 East in Pine Hill, AL

Tune in to WPRN Radio, 107.7 FM for
SUNDAY SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS
With Rev. Joseph Mason

Monday-Friday from 9:40-10 a.m.
And on Sundays from 7:15-8 a.m.

FREE ANNOUNCEMENTS for local churches!
Call Clara Dickinson at (205) 459-3408 or
Bonnie Gaines at (205) 459-3561
to have your announcement included.

To speak directly with Pastor Mason,
listeners and Sun readers may call
(205) 372-3681.

familiar with state and federal laws, and May recommended asking someone from the Alabama Dept. of Transportation to come and meet with officials to go over what the law requires and doesn't require.

In other matters, the board agreed to purchase an air compressor for a truck driven by Gerald Presley, so that vehicle will be better equipped to deal with flat tires and other equipment repair needs out on the road and away from the county shop.

Dixon said the truck has a new welding machine.

"When we have a flat on a motor grader, or dump truck, it would be very helpful to have that

compressor to expedite the changing of the tire," he said.

Commissioner Ruffin said that in addition to the compressor, the board needs to buy a few necessary air tools so that Presley doesn't have to take the shop's tools with him on the road.

The motion to buy a compressor and the necessary tools was made by Ruffin and Dixon and passed unanimously.

Even though the cost of the equipment will be far under the state's \$7,500 threshold for having to take competitive bids, prices will be obtained and a recommendation made at next week's meeting.

CDL

From page 3-A

ground? One thing for sure, your employees can make you or break you."

Commissioner Henry Lovette said he didn't have a problem with Brown paying for the raises out of his District budget.

"But employees in other districts need to understand that it may take more people and more money to run one district over another," he said. "Our money is stretched and it will only go so far. I may not be able to do for my district employees what another district is doing for theirs."

Ruffin suggested that the board begin work on a personnel policy.

"We have certain items that have been placed in minutes as 'policies' but have never been put into any order," he said. "The auditors have mentioned this. I'd like to work with someone to put a policy together that is beneficial to the whole county."

Probate Judge D'Wayne May agreed.

"We can come up with policy everybody can live with and operate by, but it need lots of discussion and planning," he said.

May said he will include the proposal on next Monday's agenda for a committee to begin work

on a policies and procedures manual.

"I believe if we have that, we won't have a lot of the problems we have now," he said.

In regard to Commercial Drivers' Licenses, Dixon said that he received a letter two weeks ago informing him that two of his dump truck drivers do not have CDL's.

"Some people have told me that county employees were waived from having to have CDL's, but I have found out that we are not," Dixon said.

Both May and attorney Lee McPhearson agreed that if an employee does not have a CDL, they cannot operate a county truck.

Commissioner Lovette said that he thinks it should be a requirement that all new-hires have a CDL.

Dixon said he has also been told the county needs to have U.S. DOT identification numbers on the sides of its trucks.

"I know that under federal law, you cannot have an employee driving a dump truck unless that employee has an annual drug test," he said. "You are also supposed to have a log book showing where the driver inspected that truck every morning and checked it off. If ever had an accident, we could be in trouble."

Ruffin agreed that the board needs to be more

CASH KING

124 W. Church St. - Butler / 205-459-3206

Let Deborah Merrida help you with
all your Check Advance, Title Loan,
and Check Cashing needs!

**Loans \$50.00 to \$2,500.00;
1st Loan Free; No Credit Check!**

Also, we're your designated bill payment center.

Hwy 39 N. Meridian 601.484.6001 Hwy. 80 E. Demopolis 334.287.0538 8th St. Meridian 601.484.6063