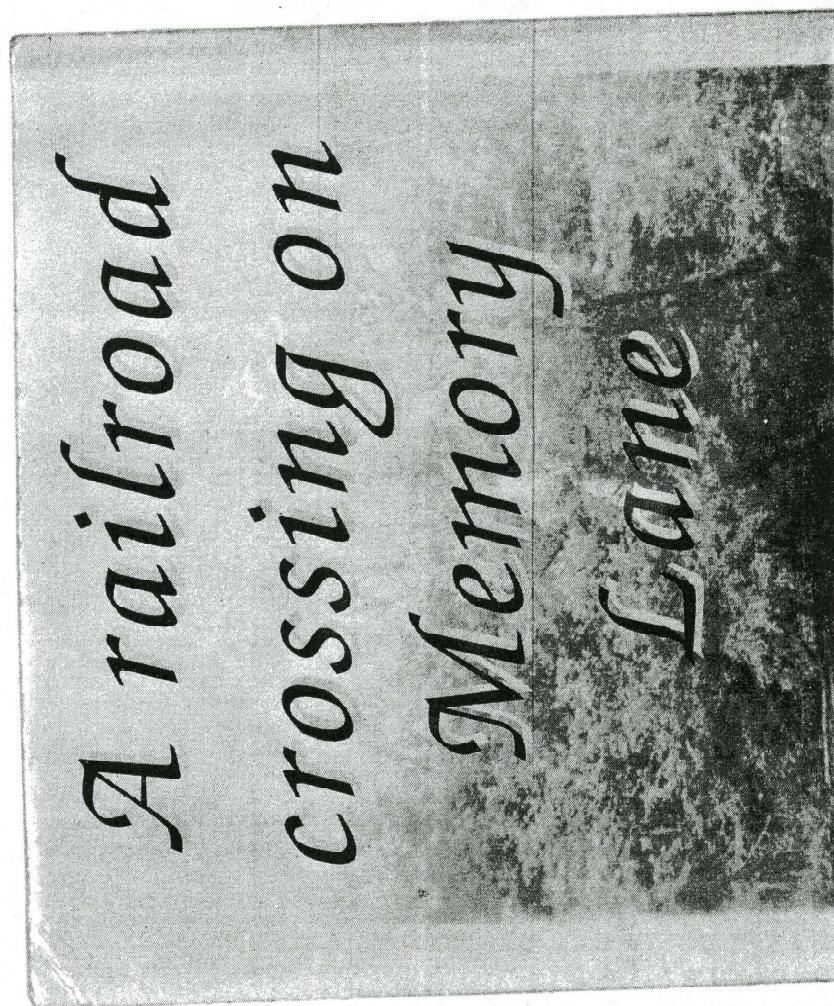
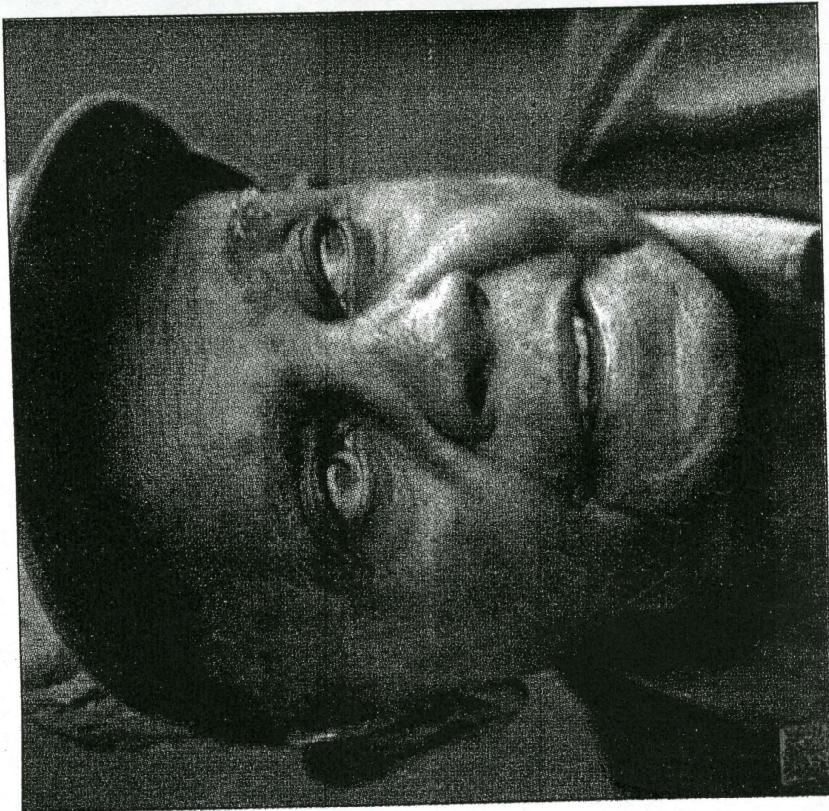


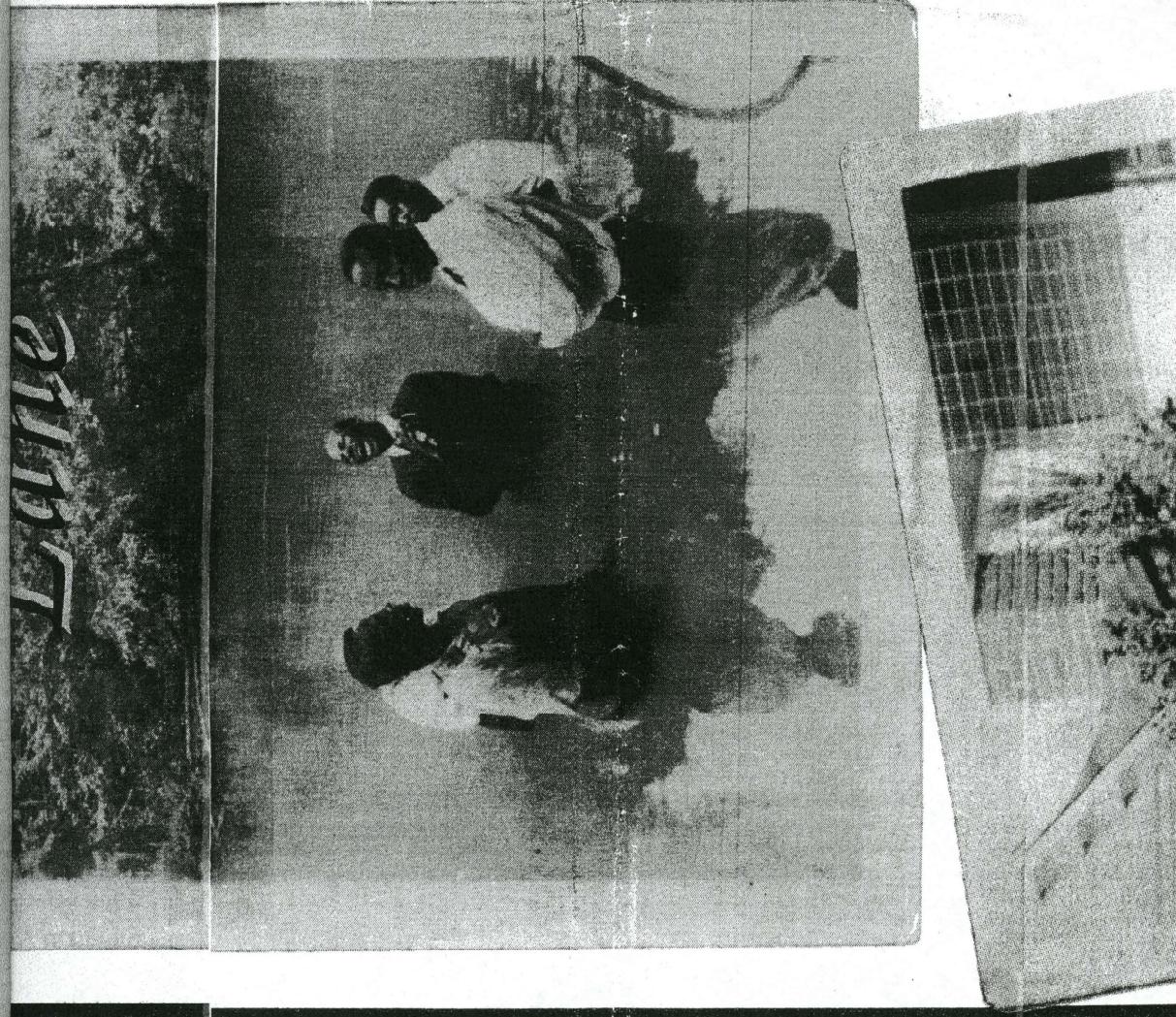
Pope County - November

RANDALL
HENDRIX

Sunday, Jan. 5, 1997

Section C





Story and photos

by Fred Gladdis

For The Courier

Black and white photos courtesy of Randall Hendrix

"W

ithout a past, a man has no future," it was once

said.

One of the buildings in Russellville's past will soon play an important part in its future. Negotiations are being held between the city of Russellville and Union Pacific Railroad Company for the leasing of the former train depot to the city.

Randall Hendrix sits in the office of the Glenwood House, a retirement community. He has worked here as an night watchman "in the neighborhood of 15 years" checking on the livelihood of the residents and "keeping the peace." The property that he has lived on since 1927 is a block away on South Houston Avenue.

His brown eyes, ringed with a halo of blue, and broad smile reveal a vivid past. Though his hearing begins to fail him, his eyesight does not. He picks out minute details in blurred photos, and his sharp memory provides the details for the moments captured in a split second by a Brownie box camera.

Hendrix was an active photographer in his neighborhood. Often, he stopped children in the street to take their picture, documenting a time that would otherwise slip away.

Along with the multitude of pictures stored in albums, he has a copy of the "Russellville Centennial 1870-1970 Arrows to Atoms" commemorative book published by the Russellville Centennial Book Committee.

ALONG WITH THE MEMORIES

copy of the "Russellville Centennial 1870-1970 Arrows to Atoms" commemorative book published by the Russellville Centennial Book Committee.

He scans through the publication like he was looking through a passenger train window. Each frame returns a memory of familiar places from a time unfamiliar to most Russellville residents.

Aunt Joan

One picture that he took of his grandmother is reprinted on page 61 of the publication. It reminds him of a story about her.

Joanna Humphrey, known to most as "Aunt Joan," walked to town every day to pick up stray cotton from the bales that would be brought in by the growers.

"They'd cut off some of that loose cotton and drop it on the ground and my grandmother [picked it up]," said Hendrix. He and other family members helped "Aunt Joan" collect and store the cotton until the end of a year when they would have a 500-pound bale that she would sell. "She didn't get that much; it gave her a little money," he said.

Hendrix is proud that his grandmother lived to the age of 103, giving him hope that he would live past that age.

Please see MEMORY on page 6-C

Left: Randall Hendrix returns home from work with the Missouri Pacific Railroad Company with a buffalo fish in a photo taken in the 1940s. (Picture inset) The 87-year-old Hendrix 50 years later.

Top left: "I was baptized in the running water," said Hendrix. "That's the only way." Pictured in this photograph of an early baptism in the Illinois Bayou are (from left) Randall Hendrix, Ray Black (behind Hendrix), the Rev. N.H. McGill (praying), Howard Landrum and Roy Smith.

Top right: Randall Hendrix reminiscences about the Missouri Pacific Depot.



Railroad crossing on Memory Lane

Continued from page 1-C

Russellville depot revisited

The railroad was completed through Pope County in 1873, and the first depot was built in 1880, seven years before the county seat transferred from Dover to Russellville. The Iron Mountain Freight and Passenger Depot was replaced by the present station in 1916, said Betsy McGuire, program director of Main Street Russellville.

"I spent many a day up and down and around this area here," Hendrix said walking toward the depot. A parked Union Pacific engine releases a burst of compressed air every 20 seconds as he reminisces.

He peers into a dusty window, describing how the offices were arranged.

He points out the door to the one-time colored waiting room on the west side of the ticket agent's office, then the door to the white waiting room on the east side. This separation continued until the depot closed, he said.

Hendrix reminisces as he stands in the breezeway facing the former baggage room on the east side. He gives recognition to Claude Gannon and Grady Neal, who worked in a busy express office on the west side of the breezeway.

Hendrix tells a story about a time when he lost his horse while herding cattle.

it passes, he continues with recollections from a time when black and white photos were the norm.

General fatherhood

Hendrix's father, General, was born several miles north of Dover on Piney Mountain on his mother's rye farm. "Aunt Joan" moved her family to Russellville before General married. Randall was born on Oct. 4, 1909, in the 400 block of the street that is presently named Independence Avenue. "It didn't have a name when I was born," said Hendrix.

General started working at the depot as a porter in February of 1918 when he was about 30 years old and Randall was nine. "I wasn't big enough to work that much so I stayed around him all day," said Hendrix. "I helped my dad as long as he worked there."

"Dad would take stuff off and on the trains, check and put passengers' baggage in the baggage car [using a] baggage check," framing with his hands a 3-by 5-inch card.

"Dad didn't ride trains. He could have, but he stayed [at the depot]. He worked there for about 20 years at least."

General Hendrix with Frank Moore worked at both the train station and the freight

chandise from the freight house to stores in the area using horse and wagons as opposed to the trucks that hadn't come into existence yet, said Hendrix.

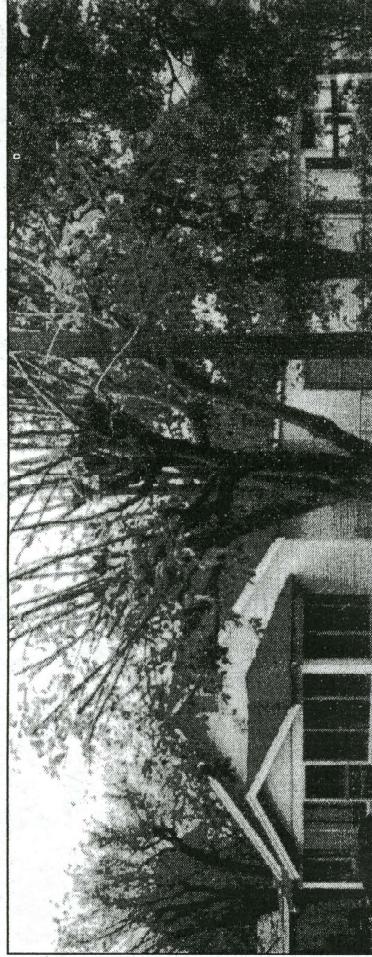
The only crossing gate in Russellville was located on Commerce Avenue between the depot and the freight house. It was operated manually inside an elevated booth by a man who would lower it to stop traffic when the steam engines passed through.

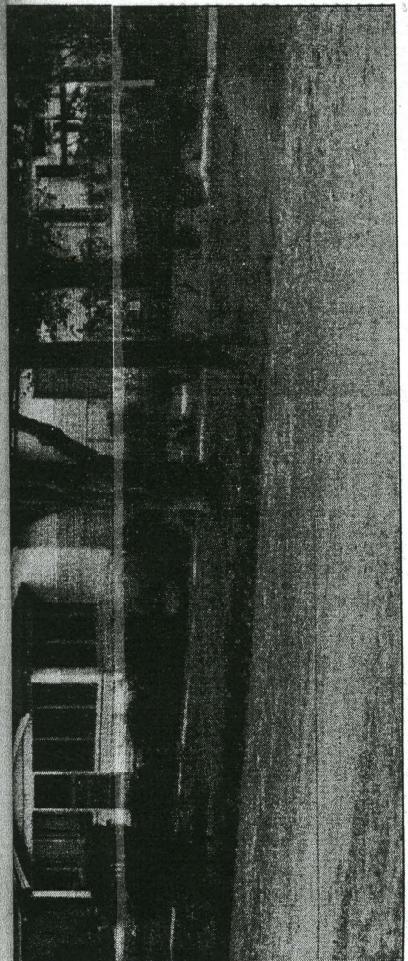
The Palace and White House hotels were located on Denver Avenue just south of the depot. "That's where the passengers who came off the trains went to. At that time, they were the only hotels in town that I knew of," said Hendrix.

"Clothes salesmen's trunks would come into the baggage room, then would be transferred to the hotels. Then they would hit the stores and advertise their goods," said Hendrix.

Hendrix also took the mail from the passing trains to the Post Office. It was located in the R.J. Wilson building where Larkin Business Machine is presently located on Main and Denver.

Because there were no paved streets, they used a one-horse wagon when inclement weather prevented them from using the four-wheeled "bag-





FOOT-POWERED *LACE-UPES* *B-CAR*
horse wagon when inclement weather prevented them from using the four-wheeled "baggage" truck in the mud and snow.

about 20 years at least. General Hendrix with Frank Moore worked at both the train station and the freight house under Jack Smallwood, one ticket agent for Missouri Pacific. The main line serviced destinations between Little Rock and Kansas City.

Hendrix tells a story about a time when he lost his hat while hopping slow-moving trains for recreation. He tried to collect it from a conductor who had found it but wouldn't reveal his name. He finally admitted his identity and the man, subsequently informed his father about the incident.

"He punished me for that," Hendrix said with a raised voice.

The Negritto house was in the vacant area that now serves as a parking lot across Commerce Avenue from the depot. Randall Hendrix helped his father unload merchandise that was stored in the freight house. Then it was delivered to the stores by three transfer companies, operated by Johnny Carpenter, Joe Hamilton and Johnny West, recalled Hendrix. They delivered the mer-

Hendrix is first to recognize the self-announcement of a coming train. He hurries back through the breezeway to greet the engineers driving a merged Union Pacific / Southern Pacific freight train with a wave. After man subsequently informed his father about the incident.

"He punished me for that," Hendrix said with a raised voice.

Growing up at the depot

As a child, Hendrix rode the local passenger train from Russellville to Fort Smith and came back the same evening. "I would just hang around the station in Fort Smith until it was time to come back I didn't have any money to go shopping with," said Hendrix.

He recalled being stung by cinders blowing in his eyes that flew into the passenger car windows from the coal-driver's engine.

steam engines.

Working the rails

Hendrix worked for the railroad from 1941 to 1972 as a trackman, "keeping up the tracks for the trains to run on," he said.

The territory of the Missouri Pacific Central Division ranged from North Little Rock to Wichita, Kansas.

Hendrix installed and replaced the rails, spikes and cross-ties by hand, traveling the lines by handcar at first. "They didn't have any power equipment," he said.

heard a teacher speak. "Blacks didn't go to high school, not here." Hendrix had to go to Fort Smith after he finished eighth grade. "In later years, they transferred the kids to high schools for the railroad workers," he said.

too hard to get on in some cases.

"The mission of this committee is to continue to promote community awareness of the value of the depot, to promote the depot as a viable asset.

"to everyone in the community and to actively raise funds toward the development and preservation of Russellville's historic depot," she said. The committee began raising community awareness of the depot acquisition effort during Fall Fest '96.

Supporters sold train whistles, ornaments and T-shirts with a logo designed by an Arkansas Tech University art student.

Ideas for the depot include a tourist information center, a gift shop and a student or the old depot arch and fixtures.

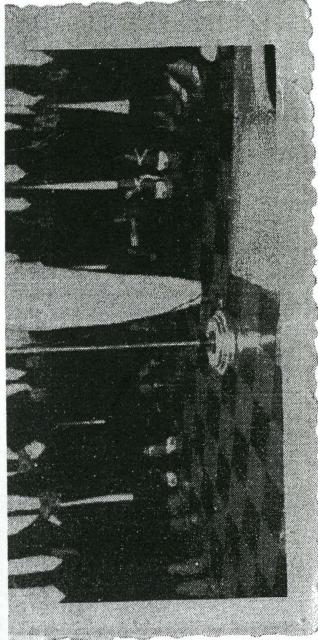
Russellville police department bicycle substation. The substation would strengthen the security of the area during social and political activities that could be held on the depot property, said Mr. Finn.

American Magazine

Later, the Post Office moved to its present location on South Boston Avenue to occupy the former location of the Russellville High School.

It was in this latter building that Hendrix never heard a teacher speak. "Blacks didn't go to high school, not here," Hendrix had to go to Fort Smith after he finish eighth grade. "In later years, they transferred the kids to high school at Morrilton."

He had to get a room when he was living in Fort Smith, though only for a few months a year. "My family was only able to send me to school



Hendrix sang in the New Prospect Missionary Baptist Church choir for 10 years under the direction of the Rev. N.H. McGill (in white suit). Choir members are (from left): Nina Dell Graves, Vivian Smith, Virginia Black, Janie Black, Geraldine Wilson, McGill, Ray Black, Aletha Williamson, Hendrix, Edna May Grant, Roy Smith, Flossie Garment and Ora Lee Brown.

Division ranged from North Little Rock to Wichita, Kansas. Hendrix installed and replaced rails, spikes and cross-ties by hand, travelling the lines by handcar at first. "They didn't have any machinery," he said. The railroad later went to motor cars for the trackmen, which were heavier and more difficult to remove from and return to the tracks. "It wasn't too hard to get off in some places, but it was hard to get back on," he said.

Special areas were built along the railway to accommodate the removal of the motor

"Sometimes they were really close, too close. [It] wasn't very comfortable, [we] had to throw [the handcar] off [the tracks]," he said. "We got into some tight situations there some times, but nobody ever got hurt or got hit by a train. We were really blessed."

For 10 years that Hendrix was a choir member of the New Prospect Missionary Baptist Church, The choir sang weekly on the Arkansas

Hendrix

Polytechnic University radio station, KXRI, located in the Stroupe Building.

It broadcast as far as Morrilton and Danville, said

with a logo designed by an Arkansas Tech University art student of the old depot arch and fixtures.

Ideas for the depot include a tourist information center, a gift shop and a bicycle substation. The substation would strengthen the security of the area during social and political activities that could be held on the depot property, said McGuire.

"It is an ideal spot and a

beautiful asset for the city of Russellville," she said.

Meanwhile, the commit-

tee continues to keep the ball rolling to speed the process

along for the depot's acquisi-

tion.

The prospect of utilizing this historical site excites many who are interested in the numerous values that are offered by such a preservation movement.

But what value can one

place on the memories of some-

one who has known this site first hand?

The last passenger train passed through Russellville on March 28, 1960, said McGuire. This trend will continue to drive passenger service out of its only Arkansas depot when Amtrak discontinues its St. Louis to San Antonio segment of the "Texas Eagle."

The nearest train ride after May 10, 1997 will be at Memphis, Tenn., on the "City of New Orleans," which travels between Chicago and New Orleans.

Passenger train service in Arkansas is becoming only a memory for those who have experienced the rails.

4-3

4-4

4-5

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Randall Hendrix stands on the east end of the Russellville train depot, anticipating its lease to the city for its preservation.

Aunt Joan

POPE COUNTY HISTORICAL

ARTICLES

COMPILED BY:

J. B. LEMLEY

BOOK NUMBER 1

J. B. Lemley
1120 N. Detroit Ave.
Russellville, Ark. 72801

POPE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
110 E. 3rd ST.
RUSSELLVILLE, AR 72801

and a Mr. Reasoner lived there during WWI. Later, Dee Tyler, bought it and built a small store on the corner. The house was soon torn down and a new one built with the store attached to the west side of the house. In a few years, Mr. Jake Denton bought it and ran a store for many years. Mrs. Denton still resides in this house.

At what was the end of East J Street for many years, about the 800 block, is Parker road. Just north of J st. on the left was a house where Jim Webb, lived when he first moved to Russellville from Appleton. There was a family of negroes who lived in their quarters near by and worked for Mr. Webb. The name was Hendrix and they had lived in the Rushing Community before moving to Russellville. Many will remember the negro, "Aunt Joan." This was her family and she was born in slavery. Her husband was buried in a cemetery in the Rushing Community.

In the 100 block of West J, is a house with a big magnolia tree in front that was built by Tom Oates for his family. His wife was a Bradley. They didn't stay there too many years and in 1908, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Braselton lived there for a while. For a few years during WWI, a Mr. Sanford lived there. One day while going visiting, the mules Mr. Sanford was driving ran away and he stopped them by running into a maple tree at 1000 N. Detroit. The tree was partly uprooted and remained that way many years before the tree died. During my childhood, I could point to the tree and tell my buddies that I knew how come so many roots there and why the tree was so crooked. Just recently, the house being quite some years of age, with the magnolia tree still standing, and the gas hookup not being so good, was the scene of a great tragedy. Three young people, two of them just being married a few days, were asphyxiated.

About a hundred yards east of this place was the residence of Uncle Jim Taylor. He had a large store on the east side of the house. This is the first store that I can remember going to. Mr. Taylor, had a mule and hack and made deliveries. The street which is now North Boston, wasn't opened and there was a path through Mr. Taulor's pasture that everyone used going to church or to town. Just east of the store was the residence of his son, Will Taylor. Will, established a greenhouse and Flowerist shop there. He was abley assisted for many years by Clifton Brewer. After the death of Mr. Taylor, Mrs. Taylor moved the shop to town and it still goes by Tay,or's Flowers, although she has retired and had sold the shop to Mr. & Mrs. Wood Williamson, (son of Wood Williamson on page one).

For many years, East J St., was the farthest street north that ran east and west. The town began to grow on north about the time of WWI. This was partly due to the grade school that had been built in the 300 block and also

This & That

in the Arkansas River valley

By Tate C. "Piney" Page

area from which he came.

Loyd also works as a radar operator on Buck Mountain. His daughter, Judy, and a neighbor, Jodee Haverstrite, were busy riding well-kept horses and awaiting a couple of girls from town to join them.

XXXXX

According to Jeanette Bradley Thompson, "Aunt Jones name was really Aunt Joan." She remembers her as a very fine person with unusual character. She also has great love and respect for Aletha Williamson and her sister Inez.

Aletha Williamson is one of Aunt Joan's granddaughters and glows as she speaks of her grandmother. She said: "Though my grandmother couldn't read or write she could

John Heuston wrote from Little Rock to say his grandmother, Blanche Campbell Wright, 99, grew up on the Illinois Bayou. They still own the home place out of Scottsville, north, near the bridge. John's grandfather, Johnny Wright, came to Pope County from Cedar Point in Hot Springs County in 1890. His grandmother's folks, the Campbells, lived along the north fork of the Bayou, below Victor, before the War Between the States.

XXXXX

The Ozark Society Bulletin of Nov. 1, 1977, has an article, entitled The Big Piney Trip, May 1-8, by Ella McDonald. On this outing they visited the Rainbow Rock and the Buzzard Roost on a mountain side above Indian Creek, northern Pope County.

They also floated Big Piney from Leonard's Valley to Long Pool. Margaret and Herold Hedges who own a farm near Boxley in Newton County led the group. Others were Mary Virginia Ferguson of Conway, Ray Kreig of Clinton, Tom Gilchrist of Shreveport and Joe and Maxie Clark of Fayetteville. Rose Hogan, Carolen Dunnway and Ella McDonald from Little Rock were the other participants.

XXXXX

Mrs. Jane McEndree of Hurst, Texas, wrote seeking information on the Tate and Ford families. She expressed her appreciation for the help given by Katie Murdoch of the area libraries, Mrs. Steve Howie and Margaret Kendall. One of those about whom Mrs. McEndree is seeking information is Zack Tate who is thought to have lived on Dutch Creek in Yell County. Zack's parents are thought to have lived in the Russellville area.

XXXXX

Mrs. Kathlene Bell of Forrest City, whose daughter works in medical records at the hospital, wrote reminding us that the millstones from Cagle's Mill, at one time located on the Illinois Bayou are in Fugh Memorial Park near Little Rock. The Burrs were brought to Pope County by Howard Cagle from North Carolina in 1838. The information she sent is from a scrap book kept by her grandfather, W. F. Turner.

help us with our math."

She continued: "Each day she went to town and came back with a tub full of food on her head and both hands full."

Aunt Joan took care of not only the children of her community, but the families that were having a hard time. In order to not embarrass anyone she took food to families at night.

When anyone came to her home the first thing she would ask: "Are you hungry?"

Roy Smith, age 75, said: "She put shoes on me when my folks couldn't." She never thought of herself, only others.

She taught her children and grandchildren to be honest and clean and to work. She stressed to her family: "Something easy won is not very high priced."

Aunt Joan died in 1950 at the age of 100. She was a rare person and one that left the world better for having lived.

XXXXX

Mrs. Homer Puryear wrote from Decatur, Ill., complaining about the size print in The Voices Of Moccasin Creek and to request information on the McGowan family. There were McGowans on Indian and Moccasin Creeks but what became of them is not at this time known.

XXXXX

Dean Blackburn was born in 1905 on a farm near Harmony, north of Clarksville. After finishing Harmony grade school, he attended The College of the Ozarks Academy where he received a diploma in three years. The summer before entering the Academy he grew an acre of watermelons which at one cent per pound brought him over \$100.

That summer his father gave him a mule that he later sold back to his father for \$200. With the \$300 he began his higher education schooling that did not end until he had completed a doctorate.

In the summer of 1924 Dean taught a two-month summer term at Fort Douglas. He received \$50 a month for his work.

He rode into the mountains with Sam Park, one of the school directors. They had to camp out on Little Piney one night. During the night they had to move out of their wagon due to the mosquitoes and finished the night in a nearby barn.

There were children from seven families attending the one-room school. There were two Parks families, two Phillips families and one family of Bowmans, one of Allens and one of Huffs.

The greatest impression made on the 19-year-old teacher was the politeness of the children and their families. He was a guest in each home at least one night during the term. He looks back at all this with great pleasure.

XXXXX

Half century ago there were enough people living on Lee Mountain to support a one-room eighth grade school. The school was consolidated as population declined until only one family remained on the mountain top. Tate and Ola Johnson lived there in their comfortable brick home but with no neighbors. Times have changed and people are moving back. The Johnsons are happy about that.

One of their new neighbors is Pauline and J. T. Dare. Pauline grew up on the mountain. After they were married the Dares went to California in 1941. They returned in 1975 and built a substantial brick home near where Pauline was born. They left two daughters in California but would not consider going back there to live.

Another newcomer family is Pete and Sylvia Smykla and their five children, two boys and three girls. The family still lives in Pine Bluff but spend their weekends and holidays in their comfortable home on the mountain top. They are the kind of people that are welcome in the community.