

# THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

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## WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE DAY OF REST?

It's funny how things change over the years. Back when I was a kid, practically all stores closed on Sundays. That was a day devoted to going to church and after services we looked forward to a fine Sunday lunch, especially when the preacher was a guest. The afternoons were spent resting from the week's labors with hardly any work being done except by farmers who had to tend to the livestock.

Gradually, things changed and some stores in town started to open up for a few hours on Sunday afternoons, usually from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. When the huge discount stores came to town, it was only a matter of time until these stores realized how much more money could be made by staying open on Sundays. It wasn't long until some of these stores shocked the community by opening their doors even on Sunday mornings.

The idea of stores being open on Sundays was a controversial thing a hundred years ago and laws were passed prohibiting them from being open. Some storekeepers didn't complain because they also enjoyed getting one day off each week. It was not considered proper for a church-going person to do manual work on Sundays unless "the ox was in the ditch". Exceptions were made for farmers who had to tend to livestock, but they usually worked that around the church services. I have read of some families who would insist on walking several miles to church because they considered it wrong to make their horses pull a wagon on Sundays. They felt that the animals also needed a day of rest.

I have found two articles on this subject-one in Prescott in 1907 and one in Stephens in 1924.

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### SUNDAY LID GOES ON IN PRESCOTT Prescott Daily News - June 1, 1907

Mayor Arnold will strictly enforce the Sunday law. Anyone violating the law will be arrested and fined. A few of the business concerns involved in the closing are meat markets, news dealers, boot blacks, short order houses, telephone exchangers, electric light plant, saw mills, express office, stores of every description, cold drinks, cigar stands, drug stores, ice houses, livery stables, etc.

No labor of any character, except for protection of property, will be tolerated. This last item includes all mill hands, except watchmen, all depot force except telegraph operators and baggage men, all livery help except those necessary to feed the stock, and the entire force of the telephone office. In fact, Sunday is to be strictly observed as a day of rest.

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In the next day's paper, a report was given on how things were in Prescott on that Sunday back in 1907 when all the stores were closed for the day. *(continued on page2)*

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Yesterday was one of the quietest Sundays in Prescott's history. It was perhaps the first Sunday that livery stables and news dealers failed to do any business.

Mr. Bryan, the news dealer, gave away papers to those who had been in the habit of buying them. The liverymen turned the stock out into the pasture Saturday night and took a vacation. All stores were kept entirely closed throughout the day. (*PDN- June 2, 1907*)

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### SUNDAY LID GOES ON AT STEPHENS From The Stephen News in 1924

The Sunday lid is clamped down in Stephens "tighter than Dick's Hat Band". In fact it is so tight that a man has to leave the corporate limits of the city to spit.

The lid went on last Sunday and it went on with a bang....Deputy Sheriff Lawler, we understand, has served notice that next Sunday will be even tighter than last Sunday and of course everybody is wondering how it can be done. There was absolutely nothing doing last Sunday in the way of buying and selling in Stephens, but our neighboring towns, we are told, did a thriving business with Stephens people. They went to other towns for gasoline and other things they wanted to buy and they got them.

There are varied reasons given for the sudden shutting down on Sunday business. Mr. Lawler seems to be in supreme command of the situation and has the whole town under his thumb. It has been suggested that a closed town will mean more people at church and Sunday School, and maybe more men will stay at home to draw water and carry in stove wood for their wives instead of drifting downtown. If the latter statement is true, it will have the backing of the women.

Opinions of the wisdom of clamping down the lid differ. Some contend that it is driving the Sunday trade to other places and that the local dealers are losing the money. Others contend that he is carrying out the letter of the law, but they go further and say that there are many other things going on that should be included in the closing process and they are not much in sympathy with his order unless there is a general cleaning up. At any rate, there is not much doing where it can be seen on Sunday, and will not be until the Deputy Sheriff relents and permits the old practice of the people buying such things as they have to have on Sunday mornings. In the meantime, Mr. Lawler calmly sits serene holding down the lid, while those who have money to spend go to other towns to spend.

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These days some stores never close and others will open on Sundays for a few weeks just before Christmas. Some states have laws against selling alcoholic beverages on Sundays. I wonder how long it will be before these laws are discarded. We are an impatient people who do not like to be inconvenienced in any way. I am reminded of an episode of *The Andy Griffith Show* in which a businessman from the city gets stranded in Mayberry on a Sunday and can't quite understand why the whole town seems to shut down for the day.

Yes, times have changed in the last hundred years, but have we lost something in the process?

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Mrs. Oleta Nelson of Bluff City shares this picture of a watermelon she grew this summer at her home. The melon vine's runners entwined themselves on a nearby fence and this melon grew wedged in between the fence wires. When the melon was picked October 19, 2002, it weighed 18 pounds and had never touched the ground.

Mrs. Nelson has gardened all her life and she said she has never seen anything like this. She enjoys working with plants.

She said the melon was really a good one—very sweet.

### A FINE DINNER

**July 14, 1890**

**Hotel Brooks**

**Camden, AR**

We had the pleasure yesterday of being a guest of the good Hotel Brooks, and sitting down to as fine a dinner, in point of variety, elegance, and service as ever graced a table. At 2 o'clock the inviting dining hall was thrown open and soon all the tables were surrounded by a pleasant crowd, consisting of traveling men, transient guests generally, and townspeople who graced the occasion, having heard of the good things in store. The menu was served in courses and was as follows:

Clam Chowder, Consomme Julienne, Soup Sticks, Sliced Tomatoes, Olives, Civit of Game aux Fine Herb; Boiled Salmon, Madura Sauce, Hollandaise Potatoes, Boiled Westphalia Ham, Sherry Sauce, Boiled Capons, Parsley Sauce, Roast Ribs of Beef, Dish Gravy, Roast Suckling Pig, Stuffed Applesauce, Roast Young Turkey, Current Jelly, Filat de Chicken a la Financiere, Tenderloin of Beef, Sauce Diplomatic, Peach Turnovers with Honey, New Cabbage, Green Corn on the Cob, Boiled Onions en Crème, Baked Candied Yams, Mashed White Potatoes, Mayonnaise of Egg, Cold Spiced Tongue, Russian Salad, Tom Thumb Ice Cream, Baked Apple Pudding, Brandy Sauce, Pineapple Meringue Pie, CharlotteRusse, Sponge Drops, Chocolate Cake, Pound Cake, Preserved Apricots, Malinga Raisins, Water Crackers, Soda Crackers, Virginia Hoe Cake.

We venture to say the bill of fare was not surpassed in the state yesterday and only equaled by a few houses. These dinners will be a special feature of this hotel every Sunday, and that they will receive popular patronage is already assured.

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Your mind is a garden, your thoughts are the seeds. The harvest can be either flowers or weeds. (Author unknown)

**TRIVIA (answers on page 6)**

1. Song that begins—"Mine eyes have seen the glory..."
2. His picture is on the five dollar bill
3. What Lincoln was dedicating when he gave the Gettysburg address.
4. In what direction does the Mississippi River flow?
5. How many feet are in a mile?
6. John fell into a barranca. What did he fall into?

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**CAMDEN'S NATATORIUM IN 1908**

Camden's natatorium is located in a ravine at the north end of California St. The deep natural depression has bluffs on three sides. Three overflowing springs provide an abundance of pure water. An embankment has been built to confine the water and is partly covered with a concrete bottom. The water depth ranges from a few inches to eight feet. Steps are provided from the street to the edge of the pool. An amphitheater is being built and there will be dressing rooms for both sexes. It is the intention of the proprietors to fit up the whole grounds in park style, light it up brilliantly, and provide such attractions as shoot the chute, a scenic railway, and a moving picture show. It promises to be a popular place to spend the hot summer evenings. (*The Nevada News- 8-20-1908*)

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**TALK ABOUT HARD-HEADED**

Lake Village, AR—While attempting to arrest an escaping prisoner, Deputy Sheriff John Crabtree, was suddenly attacked by the Negro and shot in the center of his forehead at close range with a 22 caliber Winchester. The deputy escaped serious injury, the bullet simply flattening against the man's forehead due to the hardness of the bone. (*Prescott Daily News- 2-19-1909*)

**THE CITY OF READER TO BE DISSOLVED**

The *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* reported on October 7, 2002 that the small town of Reader which is located on the Ouachita-Nevada county line is to be disincorporated as soon as the paperwork is done and the order signed by Ouachita Co. Judge Mike Hesterly. The town has been receiving state turnback funds even though there is no elected city government to oversee things. The city council has not met in several years. The accounting of the city's finances has become a nightmare and the former mayor and council members are more than willing for the county to take over these funds. One woman said, "It's not a town. It's just a quiet place to live". Pam Chittum, former city treasurer is quoted as saying, "It doesn't matter to me that the town's dying. I don't live there anymore. I'm glad they're dissolving it." The 2000 census showed 82 people living in Reader.

Reader was once a lively town with a large sawmill and the place where the famed Reader Railroad connected to the main line. The Reader Railroad (the Possum Trot Line) brought many tourists to the small town back in the 1960s and 1970s. It was one of the few trains still operated by steam locomotives that offered passenger service. The train was used in filming the television drama *The North and South* and a movie called "*Boxcar Bertha*". This filming brought to Reader such well known stars as Barbara Hershey, David Carradine, Johnny Cash, Patrick Swayze, Waylon Jennings, and others. The main railroad line through Reader once offered daily passenger service from Reader to Camden. This railroad to Camden was dismantled a few years ago. The Reader Railroad has been dismantled except for a short stretch of track from Reader to Hwy. 24 and the trains no longer run.

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Members of the Starnes family were among the earliest settlers in the Bluff City area. The name is listed with property owners on an 1865 map of the area. Tom and Mollie Starnes raised a large family here and descendants of the family still live in the area. Mrs. Margaret Morris Starnes, wife of Arthur T. Starnes, had a unique way of keeping up with that family in a poem she wrote in January, 1928 celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tom and Mollie Starnes.

### THE HOME NEST

Wedding bells were ringing  
Under skies of blue  
When Grandpa and Grandma Starnes  
Built a nest for two.

They were very, very happy  
As happy as could be  
When their little Warren came,  
That made three.

They thought their joys complete  
What could they ask for more  
When Garland came to live with them  
That made four.

Garland wanted a sister  
When mercy sake alive;  
Little Jewell came along,  
That made five.

Then A. T. came to live with them  
They were surely in a fix,  
The nest was getting crowded  
For that made six.

Of Johnie they were not denied  
Another gift from Heaven  
Was added to their list  
And that made seven.

Now Daddy and Mother Starnes were  
rushed  
From early morn till late,  
They called the next one Orland  
And that made eight.

When Cullen came  
Around their hearts to twine  
The little home was most complete  
And the family numbered nine.

Of a sister, Jewell had been denied  
She had often spoken of one with pride,  
Then Eula was ushered in,  
And the family numbered ten.

The barque in which the family sailed,  
Moved on with slightly leaning keel,  
To make her run straight and level  
Beula got on and that made eleven.

Beula said, "Three sisters are not enough  
With all these boys to tease and bluff."  
And while some thought it would be too many  
They all gave welcome to sister Minnie.

When Loyce the last and sweetest came  
Around their hearts to cling,  
The little home was then complete  
And the family numbered thirteen.

Fifty years have passed away  
And their hearts beat as of yore,  
But the Home Nest is mostly empty now  
Again they're only four.

(Written by Margaret Morris Starnes, wife  
of Arthur T. Starnes—January, 1928

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**Thomas and Mollie Starnes are buried in the old section of Bluff City Cemetery.**

**THOMAS STARNES (1856-1934)**

**MOLLIE STARNES (1862-1943)**

**LIFE AFTER FORTY**

**HOW TO KNOW YOU'RE GETTING OLDER**

1. Everything hurts and what doesn't hurt doesn't work.
2. The gleam in your eye is from the sun hitting your bifocals.
3. Your little black book contains only names ending in M. D.
4. You get winded playing chess.
5. Your mind makes contracts your body can't meet.
6. You know all the answers, but nobody asks you the questions.
7. You look forward to a dull evening.
8. Your favorite part of the newspaper is "25 Years Ago Today".
9. You sit in a rocking chair and can't get it going.
10. Your bones buckle and your belt won't.
11. Dialing long distance wears you out.
12. You're 17 around the neck and 42 around the waist.
13. Your back goes out more than you do.
14. A fortune teller offers to read your face.
15. You turn out the light for economic reasons instead of romantic ones.
16. You burn the midnight oil after 9 p.m.
17. You sink your teeth into a steak and they stay there.
18. You've got too much room in the house and not enough room in the medicine cabinet.
19. The best part of your day is over when your alarm goes off.
20. Your children begin to look middle aged.

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Answers to trivia questions on page 4

1. Battle Hymn of the Republic
2. Abraham Lincoln
3. a cemetery
4. south
5. 5,280
6. a deep ravine

**DIRTY DISHES**

Thank God for dirty dishes,  
 They have a tale to tell.  
 While other folks go hungry  
 We're eating very well.  
 With home, health, and happiness  
 We shouldn't want to fuss,  
 For by this stack of evidence  
 God's very good to us.

--Deana Lawson

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**A. BAILEY'S APPLE CAKE**

- 2 cups sugar
- 1 ½ cups vegetable oil
- 2 eggs
- 2 ½ cups sifted flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 3 cups chopped apples
- 1 cup chopped pecans

Combine the oil and sugar. Beat in eggs. Sift dry ingredients together. Add to oil, sugar, and eggs. Add vanilla. Stir in apples and pecans. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour in a 9 X 13 dish. Let cool.

Drizzle a mixture of powdered sugar, water, and a "bit" of vanilla over top of cake.

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**PRESERVING CHILDREN**

- 1 large grassy field
- 1 dozen children
- 2 to 3 puppies
- pinch of brook
- small amount of pebbles

Mix the children and puppies well together and put them on the field, stirring constantly. Pour the brook over the pebbles. Sprinkle the field with flowers. Spread the deep blue sky over all and bake in the hot sun. When brown, remove and set away to cool in a bathtub.