

THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

JERRY McKELVY, EDITOR

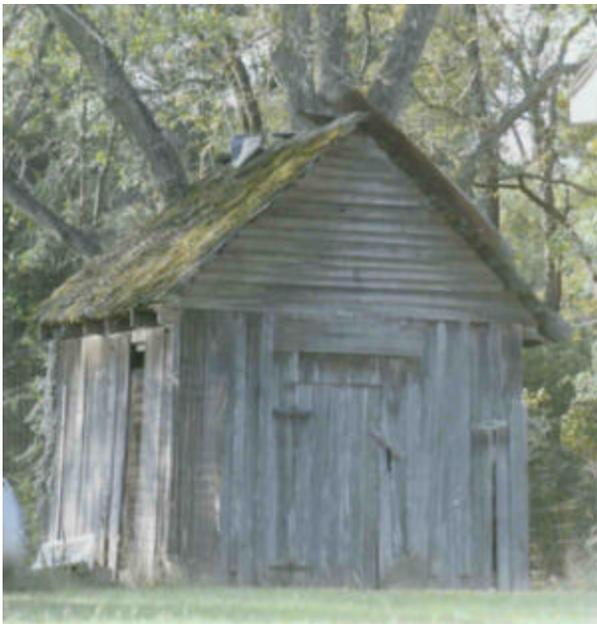
November, 2003

Vol. 3—No. 11

SMOKEHOUSE MEMORIES

Most farms back in the good old days had smokehouses. These were usually small buildings sitting somewhere out behind the house or somewhere fairly close to the main house. Most of the food for the family came from the farm. Everyone had a garden and canned their own vegetables. Most people had several fruit trees and farm animals were slaughtered for meat. In the days before electricity, the meat had to be preserved in some way, usually by canning or by home curing in smokehouses.

The name smokehouse comes from the process of curing the meat which involved salt, keeping it at a certain temperature, and exposing it to smoke for an extended period of time. I can't remember much about the details of how the meat was cured, but I can remember my father trying his hand at curing some hams in our smokehouse. I also remember one time when we stuffed some sausage into cloth sacks and allowed them to hang in the smokehouse. Best I remember they tasted pretty good.



The smokehouse I remember was directly behind our house. It was there when my father purchased the farm from Mr. Berry Martin in 1947. The main house was very large with high ceilings and a porch on three sides and a fireplace for heat. It had a tin roof on the very top with cypress shingles down below. It was built on top on a hill and was surrounded by several large sycamore trees. There were the usual out-buildings found on a farm—barns, a garage, the outdoor toilet, and the smokehouse.

We lived in the old house for several years until about 1956 when my father decided it was time to build a new house. He decided to tear the old house down and save the lumber for use in the new house. The only problem was that the new house would have to be built in the exact same spot as the old one. That created a major problem—where to live for several months while all this was accomplished.

Building a new home is a major expense. It takes a lot of money, and most folks look for ways to cut expenses as best they can. We didn't have many options. I guess we could have tried to rent a house if one was empty close by. That would cost money that was needed for the new house. It was decided that the best thing for us to do was to try and make do by moving into some of the out-buildings while the new house was being built. My grandfather,

THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

“Gee” McKelvy had some carpentry experience, so he had a big part in the building of the new house.

At that time our smokehouse had another shed built onto the side that we called the wash house. That’s where we had the old wringer type washing machine. We heated the water in a wash pot in those days. The smokehouse had a concrete floor, but the rest was wood. It was probably about 12 feet by 14 feet in size and the wash house was about the same size.

At that time our family consisted of my father and stepmother, me, and my younger brother, Billy. I was about 13 years old and Billy was about five. We put two beds in the smokehouse for our sleeping quarters. That about filled up the place, but I believe we found room for the food freezer also. I will have to put in a plug for General Electric here. That old GE freezer purchased about 1951 has been running continuously for 42 years and still keeps things cold. I think we had a television at that time, but I can’t remember watching TV while we lived in the smokehouse. It was probably stored away during that time due to lack of room.

The wash house which was attached on the side of the smokehouse was our kitchen. It contained our cook stove and our dining room table. We had most of the clothing packed away in boxes and only kept out the bare necessities.

This was to be our humble abode for whatever time it would take to tear down the old house and get the new one as least partly built, so we could move into one or two rooms.

I believe we moved into the smokehouse in August of 1956 and were there until sometime in December of that year. We didn’t have any heat in our temporary quarters. I figure we expected to be able to move into the new house before winter set in, but you know how that goes. Things take longer than expected. So for the last few weeks we had to contend with some cold temperatures. It even snowed once while we were living in the smokehouse.

We could always pile on enough quilts to stay warm even on the coldest nights, but getting out of bed in cold weather is something we always dreaded. In our case, we had to go outside every morning to get to our temporary kitchen next door for breakfast.

But we survived the experience. In later years we would remember the time we lived in the smokehouse. I also remember the time a few years later when we caught a six foot chicken snake in the smokehouse.

In the years that followed the smokehouse became more of a storage shed and a feed house where we kept sacks of feed for the animals.

The old smokehouse is gone now, but I managed to take a picture of it before it was torn down (see photo). Sometimes when things seem to be going wrong-- when the furnace won’t work or we have a plumbing problem-- I can always think back to 1956 when we spent five or six months living in our smokehouse without all the modern conveniences and be thankful for what we have today.

THE TOWN NOBODY WANTED
From the Prescott Daily News - June 18, 1909

The entire town of Antimony, located in the corner of Howard County near where Howard, Pike, and Sevier counties converge, has gone to the state as a result of the failure of anyone to bid on the property when it was offered for sale for delinquent taxes.

The town of Antimony at one time was a live and promising community being at the center of antimony deposits. It has been said this is the largest deposits of antimony in the world, but for some reason, plans made for development of the deposits were abandoned.

About two years ago, the American Antimony Co. made up entirely of foreign investors, most of whom were from England, spent a large amount of money for installation of an expensive plant. A smelter was built and every preparation made for opening the mine on a large scale. A town known as Antimony sprang up near the mine and for a time had a considerable number of residents.

For some reason, the company abandoned the mine after only a small amount of ore had been taken out, and upon abandonment, the town was soon deserted.

Taxes have not been paid on the land on which the town was located and the property was offered for sale for payment of delinquent taxes. Not a bid was made on any of the property included in the town and as a result the land will go to the state.

UNKNOWN MAN BURIED AT DE ANN CEMETERY
From The Nevada News – March 23, 1911

A man was killed by a freight train five miles north of Prescott. J. D. Cornish, the embalmer, went to Boughton and brought the body back. A pocket handkerchief was found on the body with the initials W. C. H. The collar band of his shirt had the name Heber written on it. It was assumed that the man's name was W. C. Heber. An expense account book was found in his pocket with a well kept account of expenditures, but in several places the names had been erased as if every effort was made to conceal the person's identity. This led to speculation that the death could have been a suicide. Two ten dollar bills were also found in the lining of his coat. It is hoped that this evidence will lead to the person's identity. The remains were buried in De Ann Cemetery at Prescott.

CHRISTMAS PARTY TURNS DEADLY
From The Nevada News – January 6, 1916

Essard Renfro, age 19 was stabbed at Nubbin Hill church December 23, 1915. A Christmas tree was being held at the school building when a fight broke out which turned into a free-for-all. Several others were injured. Renfro's wounds proved fatal. Lonnie Harris was arrested and is under a \$1000 bond. He is still at large at this time.

PHOTO FROM THE PAST



Left: Lawrence Walker; Right: Lewis Carter; Standing: Mattie Carter
Photo from Mrs. Annie Mae Greer & Mrs. Clara Harvey

SUNDAY SICKNESS

A disease peculiar to church members. The attack comes on suddenly every Sunday with no symptoms on Saturday night. The patient sleeps well and awakes feeling well, eats a hearty breakfast, but about church time, the attack comes on and continues until services are over for the morning. Then the patient feels easy and eats a hearty dinner. In the p.m., he feels much better and is able to take a walk, talk about, and read Sunday papers. He eats a hearty supper, but about church time, he has another attack and stays home. He retires early, sleeps well, and wakes up on Monday morning refreshed and able to go to work and has no symptoms of the disease until the following Sunday. The peculiar features of this disease are as follows:

1. It always attacks members of the church.
2. Symptoms vary, but never interfere with sleep or appetite.
3. It never lasts more than 24 hours.
4. It generally attacks the head of the family.
5. No doctor is ever called.
6. It always proves fatal—to the soul.
7. There is no known remedy, except prayer.
8. Religion is the antidote.

*Printed in Nevada County Picayune
1887*

From the Nevada County Picayune—October 22, 1885
MARRIED PEOPLE WOULD BE HAPPIER

- If home troubles were never told to a neighbor
- If expenses were proportioned to the receipts
- If they tried to be as agreeable as in the courtship days
- If each would be a support and comfort to the other
- If each remembered the other was a human being, not an angel
- If each was as kind to the other as when they were lovers
- If fuel and provisions were laid in during high tide of summer work
- If both parties remembered they married for worse as well as for better
- If men were as thoughtful for their wives as they were for their sweethearts
- If there were fewer silk and velvet costumes and more plain, tidy house dresses
- If there were fewer “please darlings” in public and more common manners in private
- If masculine bills for Havanas and feminine ditto for rare lace were turned into the general fund until such time they could be incurred without risk
- If men would remember—a woman cannot be always smiling when she has to cook dinner, answer the door bell a half dozen times, get rid of the neighbor who dropped in, tend a sick baby, tie up a cut finger of a two year old, tie up the head of a six year old on skates, and get an eight year old off to school, to say nothing of cleaning, sweeping, etc. A woman with all this to contend with may claim it a privilege to look and feel tired sometimes, and a word of sympathy would not be too much to expect from a man, who during the honeymoon would not let her carry as much as a sunshade.

GOOD TIMBER

From the Camden Evening News—September 9, 1925

The tree that never had to fight
For sun and sky and air and light,
That stood in the open plain
And always got its share of rain
Never became a forest king
But lived and died a scrubby thing.

The man who never had to toil,
Who never had to win his share,
Of sun and sky and light and air
Never became a manly man
But lived and died as he began.

By sun and cold, by rain and snows,
In tree or man good timber grows.

Where thicket stands the forest growth
We find the patriarchs of both
And they hold converse with stars
Whose broken branches show the
scars,
Of many winds and much of strife—
This is the common law of life.

---Selected

Good timber does not grow in ease;
The stronger wind, the tougher trees,
The farther sky, the greater length;
The more the storm, the more the
strength;

SIX CUP SALAD

Sonja Holland-Rural Arkansas magazine -June, 1999

- 1 cup cottage cheese
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 cup pecans, chopped
- 1 cup coconut
- 1 cup pineapple, drained
- 1 cup miniature marshmallows

Mix all ingredients together and chill before serving.

FAVORITE DINNER RECIPE

Rural Arkansas magazine -August, 1991

1. Preset oven to OFF
2. Place children and/or husband in car
3. Drive to nearby restaurant
4. Let each member of family order their favorite dinner
5. Return home to a **clean** kitchen

BARBARA MANDRELL CAKE

Mrs. Jerry Bunch-Rural Arkansas magazine -March, 1991

- 1 pkg. yellow cake mix with pudding in it
- 1/2cup oil
- 4 eggs
- 1 can (11 oz.) Mandarin orange slices
- 1/2cup chopped walnuts

Grease two 9" layer cake pans; line with waxed paper; grease again. Prepare cake mix according to package directions, using oil, eggs, and juice drained from oranges. Stir in oranges and walnuts. Spread evenly in prepared pans. Bake 25 minutes in 325 degree oven.

Frosting:

In medium bowl, mix together one 20 oz. can crushed pineapple in juice (chilled) and one (4 serving size) pkg. vanilla instant pudding. Fold in one cup thawed frozen whipped topping. Spread between cake layers and on top of cake. Keep in refrigerator until served.

SIGNS

Sign in Grocery Store: Snickers—5 for \$1.00 (Limit 4)

Sign on garbage truck: Satisfaction guaranteed or double your trash back

Sign on church door: This is the gate to heaven. Enter ye all by this door. (This door is kept locked due to the draft. Please use side door)

Sign on door of health food store: Closed Due To Illness