

Jerry McKeivy's

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

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IRON SPRINGS VS. LACKLAND SPRINGS

An article by C. E. Shankle published in the May 18, 1934 issue of *The Prescott Daily News*

Sometime along in August, 1894, there was organized in Prescott the Iron Springs Community Club, which sought to secure a more convenient summer resort for the people than Lackland Springs. The latter was twelve miles away, while the new resort was only about five. These springs were discovered accidentally, and the discoverers thought they had found the fountain of youth. Several acres of ground surrounding the springs were purchased by Col. C. C. Hamby from Mrs. Mary E. Janes and lots resold, the grounds were then fenced, the wilderness cleaned, and roads built.

I don't remember the names of all the citizens who took stock in the new enterprise at that time, but among them were J. T. Brooks, C. C. Hamby, W. B. Waller, W. V. Tompkins, Jno. M. Pittman and others. They erected cottages on the site and everything looked favorable for a real resort. I was an invited guest at many of these places. Especially nice to me was Col. C. C. Hamby, who invited me out often especially during the hunting season. At his invitations I would drive out to the springs very early reaching there before daylight, had breakfast with the family, and we would be in the woods by daylight and enough squirrels would be killed for the dinner meal, which Col. Hamby's good wife knew exactly how to prepare for a hungry man.

There were many diversions besides hunting--there were parties and other amusements and it began to look like Iron Springs had solved the problem of a real summer resort for Prescott.

During the stay the men would drive to their places of business in the morning and back to the springs at night. There were very few nights when a party of some kind was not given by the many "campers" there. As the drive was short and the weather hot, ice refreshments of all kinds were available. I usually was selected to freeze the cream.

But the springs were short lived. A drought soon dried them up. By late 1895, not a spring was flowing and the promoters abandoned the place, and the next year Lackland Springs, whose waters will flow on forever, had a revival of business.

When the Iron Springs were first discovered, there were no automobiles and a two hour or more drive to Lackland was out of the question, but now 20 minutes is all that is necessary and why the people of Prescott who used to be so concerned about an ideal summer resort, don't acquire those springs and make a real summer resort there, we can't understand. There is real health in those numerous springs that are said to cure everything from chills and fever to mange on a dog.

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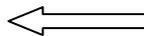
I have spent many pleasant days at Lackland and fishing on Caney creek. One time, with my family, I spent a whole month there and during the entire time we had fish for dinner and squirrel for supper--we imported the ham and eggs we had for breakfast.

But seriously, Lackland Springs could be made a most ideal summer resort for Nevada County and southern Arkansas. It has many advantages over Armstrong Springs near Searcy and Baker Springs near Horatio. They are the most dependable springs in south Arkansas.

THE OLD BARN

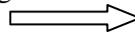


This old barn was on the property my father purchased in 1947. We used it for several years, but soon realized its usefulness was quickly coming to an end-- a casualty to the passing of time. It was sagging and leaning in all directions. We didn't know how old it was, but I guess it served its purpose for many years. I remember sitting in the log portion in the winter and picking peanuts off the vines. We also used that part for storing potatoes. The side shed on the left had stalls for cows and the shed on the right once served as a chicken house. I can remember gathering eggs from that shed. We finally tore the old barn down and built another one to replace it.



Log portion was the last to go (view from rear)

Close-up showing notched logs



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I look at the hand-hewn logs in this old barn and consider how much work went into constructing that part of this barn. Imagine going out on your farm and finding trees of just the right size, peeling the bark, skidding them to the construction site, and notching them so they would fit well enough to make a wall. It had to be a time-consuming project. They used the same process in constructing the old log houses our ancestors lived in. The log portion of this old barn was the main part with the sheds added on to the sides. It appears that a more suitable foundation was needed under the log crib--something that would better stand the test of time. Large rocks were usually used for the foundation stones. Someone would have to search for suitable foundation stones and haul them to the construction site. Constructing a large barn in the old days was quite an undertaking.

When I look at this picture, I think of how we are like that old barn. In our younger days, most of us look pretty good. We are strong and healthy and full of energy. But as time passes, we soon see wrinkles and began to slow down. Our hair begins to turn gray. Some people lose hair they would like to keep and begin to grow hair in places where it shouldn't be. Most of us put on extra weight. Our energy is not like it once was. We require more rest as we get older and our eyesight and hearing are not what they used to be.

I can tell from the picture of this barn that many repairs had been made over the years. Holes were patched and attempts were made to prop up the parts that sagged. In much the same way, we try to repair and patch our bodies as they begin to fall apart. We buy anti-wrinkle creams and lotions. We cover up the blemishes and try to look our best. We try to exercise to keep our bodies in good shape for as long as possible. These things may postpone the inevitable, but despite our best efforts, the time comes when our bodies look somewhat like this old barn.

Maybe we can learn some lessons from this old barn. To start with, we need a good strong foundation. We need to eat healthy foods so that our bodies can function properly. We need to maintain our bodies and fix problems as they occur. We need to avoid things like smoking and drinking alcohol that we know do harm to our bodies. We need to avoid baking our skins in the sunshine which may bring on skins cancers and leather-like skin in old age.

But despite all we may do, if we live long enough, we will probably look something like this old barn in our old age. Some say a barn like this has "character". Maybe when we get old people will not think of us as "an old fossil", but someone who has character.

Another thing to remember is that older people are still worth something just like some of these old barns are worth something. Many people will buy the old weathered lumber from old barns for various projects. Even this old barn in the picture was not without value. One day a man came by our farm and wanted to buy the logs. My dad thought that was a deal he couldn't pass up, so the logs from this old barn were numbered and torn down to be reconstructed somewhere else. Perhaps that portion of our old barn still stands somewhere after all these years. I wish now that I had reconstructed the old crib someplace on our farm just for sentimental reasons.

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ADS FROM PRESCOTT HARDWARE IN 1934

Winchester .22 rifle model 67 for \$4.98
Eight piece dinette suite for \$49.50
Double cane chair for 79 cents
Solid oak rocker for \$3.95

Roll barb wire for \$3.15
Steel bed with slats for \$4.45
Card table for 69 cents



Bernadine Walker Mathis Gillespie, age 85, passed away February 18, 2010. She was born January 24, 1925, in Bluff City, AR to Thomas Jefferson Walker and Rose Dumas Walker who precede her in death along with her brothers, G. P. Walker, Hollis Walker, Dennis Walker and her sister, Marjorie Hendriks. She is also preceded in death by her first husband, Daniel H. Mathis to whom she was married from August 30, 1947, until his death on February 22, 1991.

She is survived by her husband, General F. Gillespie and his children, Allen (Carla) Gillespie, Linda Bushyhead, and numerous step-grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

She is also survived by her sons and their families: Jeff Mathis, Don Mathis, Ben Mathis, Ted (Pattie) Mathis, Matthew Mathis and her grandchildren, Adam, Nicole, Maggie Rose, Charlie and Chloe. Also mourning her passing are many nieces, nephews, family members and friends.

Bernadine's greatest joys in life were her faith and her family. She served as a church secretary for 12 years at the MacArthur Park Church of Christ in San Antonio and remained a faithful child of God her entire life.

In 1999, she attended a high school reunion and became re-acquainted again with General Gillespie who had asked Bernadine to marry him many years ago while she was in high school, but she said no as she wanted to finish school. She later went on to marry Daniel and General later married Louise Skelton and they both had happy marriages until Daniel died in 1991 and Louise died in 1998. When General asked again for her to marry him; she said yes and they were married October 30, 1999.

Rather, beauty is something internal that can't be destroyed. Beauty expresses itself in a gentle and quiet attitude which God considers precious. (1 Peter 3:4)

Funeral services will be held Saturday, February 20, 2010, at 11 AM, at the Memorial Drive Church of Christ, Tulsa, OK and Wednesday, February 24, 2010, at 11:30 AM, at the MacArthur Park Church of Christ, San Antonio, TX with burial to follow at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery.

Mrs. Gillespie has previously contributed information for The Sandyland Chronicle. She just recently had shared some of her memories about Bluff City and sent me a picture of her father's old 1925 Ford car which I used in the January issue.

Don Mathis remembers his mother in these poems he wrote for her funeral service:

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A Mother's Legacy

My Mother lived to be eighty-five.
Her memory in me will always survive.

I am mortal, I realize, and it is humbling.
As I watch this passing, my youth is crumbling.

I respect her and the path she's trod;
Her awareness, good; her experience, hard.

I know I will follow, may I be wise enough to know
Her example, my company, wherever I go.

I will remember how she cared for me,
Happily, joyfully, ungrudgingly.

Thank you for life, trust, love, and all that;
When you held me, when you held me back.

So strong and brave and true, you have lived your
life.
The world is blessed by your light.

You have seen the cycles of birth, life, death, and
spirits reborn.
You have endured and rejoiced. And you have
mourned.

Thus you gained knowledge, power to teach.
You gained compassion, power to reach.

Now your journey's over; now you have arrived.
May we honor and revere you the rest of our lives.

You have traveled so far. May you now have rest.
And you worked so hard. You deserve the best.

As a new cycle begins for you, it begins for us.
For you are now the actualized example of fullness.

In the Book of Life, you are one chapter ahead.
It has always been so. Of this I have read.

So it is now. Continue in praise.
Continue in peace, until the end of days.

Don Mathis

Poem for Mother

I think that I shall never see another
Poem as lovely as my mother.

A woman who went hungry if pressed,
To ensure her children were fed and blessed;

A woman who looked to God each day,
And, by example, taught us how to pray;

A woman, in our Spring so fair,
Flowered us with love and care;

And in the Summer time of childhood,
Shined on us peace, illuminated good;

As leaves fall down in the Autumn of life,
Still she strived to protect us from strife;

And as the Winter arrived, cold and drear,
She held us in her heart, warm and dear.

Poems are made by folks like me,
But only God can make a Mommy.

*by Don Mathis, inspired by Alfred Joyce Kilmer's
"Trees"*

Note: General Foy Gillespie, husband of Bernadine Walker Gillespie, passed away March 10, 2010. He was born Aug. 25, 1918 in Camden to General and Bessie Gillespie. Burial was at Black Oak Cem. at Winslow, AR.

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Some Comments From Readers:

Irma Hamby Evans writes:

Another interesting issue. I remember the doctors making house calls. I think it was Dr. Gill who would come to our house when needed. My sister, brother and I were born in the Cora Donnell Hospital. Looking back and reading your article, I see that we were so fortunate to have the medical talent available to all our communities.

I enjoyed James Hairston's story.

I'm curious, too, about the Poison Springs marker with the strange inscriptions. Could that have been something Masonic? Surely someone will let you know.

Thanks so much for your continued good work.

Jeanette Young Beaver writes:

Just read the *Sandyland Chronicle*. The kids from Reader came to the singing schools. We loved the Barlows-- in fact Ms. Lelia taught school there for a few years. I remember the sadness we felt when the Nichols were in a terrible wreck and several lost their lives. We were in singing school and sang for the funeral. Our families were very close, so it was very sad for us to sing.

Mr. Aubrey drove a very OLD bus. It had two wooden benches back to back down the middle of it, without a single window in it. He came to Reader every day to pick up the kids at the corner store which was operated by my Great Uncle Carl Tunnell. What a wonderful time to be with all of the B C kids. I remember going down the hill to the spring to get a drink of cold water.

We were younger than Wilma Starnes & Glenn Morrow, so we thought they were "in love", while they were just good friends.

I really enjoy your reminiscing as our families were related to so many up there and good friends as well. It brings back good memories.

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

Earlene Lyle writes:

I always enjoy this publication and read multiple issues whenever I finally am reminded to check it out. So many of your articles remind me of stories my daddy told me, some of which I really thought were untrue because they sounded so far-fetched.

I don't know how many times Daddy took me to the funeral home to see 'Old Mike', but I remember seeing him several times when I was quite young.

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June Hines Moore writes:

I always enjoy your chronicle - keeps my childhood memories alive.

Mary Ann Sanford writes:

My mother used Dr. Avery who you mentioned in your March Chronicle. In fact, I went to him I think once for a shoulder problem when I was around 18.

Also, how well I remember the singing schools in the hot summer time. How I hated to get up in front of the class to lead too. The ones I attended were held at Bells Chapel Church just out of Blevins on the Prescott highway. The original Bells Chapel Nazarene Church was founded by my great-grandfather, James Wilburn Honea. It was located down a little gravel road that goes beside where it is located today.

Did your folks attend all the "dinners on the ground and singing in the afternoon" that were held at all the churches during the summertime? My dad was very much a part of this and was well known among the people that attended.

Up here in northwest Arkansas there is a large group of people that get together once a month called the Sacred Harp singers using the old song books with shape notes. I went a couple of times just to hear them and to see if I remembered anything from all those singing school classes. Not much!

Barbara Masterson writes:

Wonderful! Makes me remember when I was young. I was born between two brothers. At age 3, 5, and 7, we crossed the street and walked a short distance to the train tracks to investigate the steam engine. Mother came storming after us with switch in hand. My older brother ran like a streak and my little brother was too small to know better (personally I never thought there was any wrong committed)--however I was spanked all the way home. By the time we got there my older brother was well hidden so I got a few more licks. Haven't likes trains since :-)

Teresa Harris writes:

You do a fantastic job, I'm not even a Nevada Co. native or researcher but I enjoy reading what you share. I suppose county lines make little difference when it comes to life in south Arkansas.

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DON'T GET THE CRAMPS
Eat at Sid's Cafe and you will enjoy what you eat.

Sid's Kitchen is the Cleanest in the State. We serve the best coffee on earth with pure cream.

SID'S CAFE
Prscott, Arkansas

Something about this old ad caught my eye.



Believed to be Woodmen of the World members from Cale, Arkansas about 1903. Can anyone identify any of these men?



Photo of James, Mary Ledochia, and Lillard Billingsley ca 1900 (photo from Betty Lawrence)