

THIS IS NOT COUNTY HISTORY, JUST SOME PERSONAL INTERESTING THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN A PART OF MY LIFE IN THIS COMMUNITY

My father bought the Northeast Georgian in 1920. The previous owner had hired high school students – paid them a cent an hour and charged them a cent for each mistake they made. Each week he paid them what he owed them or wrote off what they owed him. This went on through raises to 2, 3, and four cents an hour. When they were paid 5 cents they kept what they had earned – apprenticeship was over. Now they could make a decent living any place a typesetter or pressman was needed. Times changed and my father did not use this particular policy. Ernest Hallford continued working for my father, and much later became our County School Superintendent, his brothers, Fred and Pat, became FBI agents. Ferd often came by to see my father and the two became good friends.

In 1924 we drove to Atlanta often as my father got hotel discounts through the paper. We went through Lula, Gainesville, Buford, Lawrenceville, Decatur and up Ponce de Leon to Peachtree Street. My mother carried 2 mason jars of water as there were very few stations with places to powder your nose. We pulled off to a side street before we got to Peachtree and washed our faces, neck and hands as the only paved road we had been on was through Gainesville. In 1925 we got our first car with roll up windows and 4 wheel brakes – **mason jars** were no longer needed.

The dirt roads became very muddy here and in adjoining counties when it rained. Mrs Macobson, one of my high school teachers told of a funeral procession going from Cormelia to the Demorest Cemetary took 2 days as the mule drawn hearse sank to its axles in the mud.

We lived in Demorest in 1925 on the hill above the Federated Church and the road down the hill was just 2 very deep ruts. The first road paved in the County was from the hill at

Baldwin School to Highway 197 in Clarkesville. There were no motor graders and the roadbed was graded by mule drawn dragpans leaving the road wavy. When Clark, was a baby in 1950 he had colic and had a difficult time going to sleep we would put him in the car and drove on this wavy road up and down and it rocked him to sleep for which we were thankful. Anyone who has had a child with colic understands this. Years later the road was widened and leveled.

In 1926 my father was Business Manager of Piedmont College and taught Biology. My mother taught expression and directed the plays. I have some of the programs. The plays were presented in the auditorium on the hill. Chapel was also scheduled in the auditorium every school day from 10 to 10:30. - attendance mandatory – there were assigned seats. Some of the speakers ran over time. Dr. Jenkins, the President then, had a clock put on the back wall and when introducing the speaker said the students could leave at 10:25. This kept the speeches short. When I was a student there we had chapel in the Demorest Woman's Club Building. It was heated by stoves, which sometimes got red hot. My seat was the closest to one of these stoves and I was very uncomfortable. I was glad Dr. Jenkins rule to keep speakers short as the clock was still in sight and enforced.

Mother grew up in in Oconomowoc. Wis. and was a avid ice skater. Once the Demorest lake froze enough so she could skate for several days.

The quality of education at the college has always been excellant. The students with Chemistry and Physics degrees were promoted rapidly to very responsible ranks in the army during the WWII. Those with teacher's degrees were sought after. Today there are new buildings that would rival any university. The school now awards nursing degrees, Master's degrees, and PHD's. The quality of education remains superb.

The Tallulah Falls Railroad or TF – Total Failure. These initials caused many jokes in the community, but everyone loved the train. It ran from Cornelia to Franklin – some 56 miles. It had 67 trestles all but one made of wood. Some time in the mid 20's, while a group of us were playing ball on the hill we heard a terrible noise from the lake and ran to the lake and saw that the engine and mail car lying in the water on the opposite side of the lake; luckily the passenger car was still on the tracks. The community was stunned. The engineer, fireman and mailman were killed. I still vividly remember the tragic scene.

When we moved to Cornelia in 1933, I went to the fifth grade. There was a new teacher who was to be paid \$550 a year. This could be done as Cornelia was an independent school district. This was more than some veteran teachers and there was some rough talk about this. This class had some unruly boys. All boys but 3 were assigned to a class room in the adjoining auditorium building. The oldest son of the principal was their teacher. He walked into the class the first day with a shoe sole in his pocket and made sure that all students saw it. He had to use it only a couple times. There was no lunch room. Most went home for lunch and got back in time for 15 or 20 minutes of ball. There was no supervision on the playground and none was needed. There was a period of time when we lined up to go to class after Recess and Lunch.

Sarah's oldest sister, Mary Glenn was 5' 2" tall and graduated from Wesleyan when she was 18. She took a job teaching in Cornelia High School. Many of the students were almost as old as she and much bigger. I was in one of her classes. This was before watches were common. She asked Cliff Kimsey, "What does your watch say?" He held his watch to his ear and said, "tick, tick, tick". You know how the class reacted. Cliff is still embarrassed. Mary Glenn taught one more year then went back to get a different degree. Cliff was quarterback of the only unbeaten Cornelia High School Season. The father and two uncles of our Banker, Hulsey, were on this team. Cliff went on to play at

the University with Charlie Trippe and Frank Sindwich. Cliff was named to some All-American teams. Cliff and I are the only Cornelians who saw Georgia beat UCLA in the 1943 Rose bowl. Game. We were in the Army on the West Coast.

During the Depression of the 1930's, the Government created some programs to put people to work. These were known by their initials. One was the Civilian Conservation Corps – CCC. There was a CCC Camp on Chase Road where it leads off from the Toccoa Highway. They constructed Lakes Nancytown and Russell, two picnic areas with shelters which were very popular, and trails down Chenocetah to the lakes. 5 or 6 of us would ride our bicycles on a trail to Nancytown – the swimming area then – swim and ride the road back.

Two other programs WPA and PWA were formed. The community wise wags had a good time making up names more descriptive than those the government had assigned – one was “We Poke Along.” And they liked the jobs these programs provided. They built the Tower on Chenocetah, the swimming pool the city closed this year and the Community House. The Kiwanis Club ran and used the building. They ate there, being catered by various town people.

In the late thirties the high school had dances every Friday night – boys 25c and girls just come. I was there every night. The rent was \$3.00 and the rest of the quarters fed jukebox furnished by Yonah Vista. It was a locally owned short order place across the street from the Skyland Motel just before Wayside Street meets the Baldwin Highway. It was the MacDonaldis of the day. Its signs on the roads into town read “Food, Drinks and ?” - a slick way to advertise illegal beer.

When war threatened the army created Camp Toombs at the base of Currahee Mountain. Many of the first contingent of troops was from New York, home of the

notorius Toombs prison. The troops almost revolted when they realized they were at Camp Toombs, on Highway 13 with 2 mortuaries and a casket Company on the road to Toccoa. the Camp name was changed to Toccoa and the Highway to 123. Bill Shortt, head of Ethicon here and a distinguished member of the Kiwanis Club trained there. He was a member of a special paratrooper unit, once left for dead, was a POW. He was an unsung hero. He talked very little about all this.

The Kiwanis Club and the local USO has dances every Saturday night at the Community House. Sarah and all the girls enjoyed these dances. Many Cornelians knew some of those who jumped on D-Day.

Back to 1933 the only swimming pool here was built and run by Floyd Carter, a black man, who had been the town barber. Go up Front Street till it dead ends. His house was on the left with a road in front of it going down and crossing the tracks and down a short distance. Here was the pool, large and with crushed stone on the bottom and sloping sides to keep it clear. I went often and always Mr Carter sat on the side of the pool making gravel from big stones with a hammer and putting the gravel in the pool. Only whites used the pool. There was building with dressing rooms. 10 cents for children and 25 cents for adults. Life guards got half the take. When the regular life guard had other business, I, often, was the life guard.

When my folks were just past forty they took up golf. There was a course at the tuberculosis sanatorium – now the women's prison. It had nine holes and sand greens. Briefly there was a course at Dick's Hill. They were charter members of the Toccoa Club. In the thirties and some of the forties they were members of the Druid Hills Golf Club. My mother was good! Two years in a row when she was 50 and 51 she lost the Woman's Tournament at Drud Hill on the nineteenth hole to a woman 20 years younger. She did not play in the Toccoa tournaments as no women or few men would have

played with her.

Beginning when I was 13 or 14 we went to Atlanta most Sundays. I would ride the streetcar to town, see a movie, and ride back or go swimming in the club pool. Once I lost my money and had to walk from the Fox to the Club. The Railroad advertised with us and in addition furnished script (\$25) to buy tickets. I believe round-trip to Atlanta was a little over \$2.00. From age 12 on I would catch the 8:00 am train to Atlanta – shop – see a movie and catch the 6 or 8 pm train to Cornelia. If I was lost I was to find a policeman and ask him where I was. Once I wanted to find Houston Street finally finding 3 police talking to each other near Houston St. I approached them – two of them took off and the remaining one pointed out the street to me and told me it was pronounced Hoooston here. These were wonderful days and my parents were not worried.

The Cornelia Bank was at the corner of Main and Irvin Streets, the President, Cliff Kimsey, Sr. sat at his desk just inside the door and did all his business there. There were no computers and the tellers added the deposits on adding machines.

The building next to the bank building on Irvin Street where the offices of Cathey and Strain are was L. Y. Irvin's Department Store. He was a well to do man who had the finest house around and it was at the highest level of Irvin Street, with view and a wonderful location. It had and has a wonderful stair case. Women wanted to get married there so they could come down the stairs. He was intelligent, sensible and in every way a good citizen. If one's wants were political, he was the man to see. He bought the first bale of cotton each year, displayed it at the store's front door. He gave it away each year on Christmas Eve. He generally bought it back. When the building was built the bricks came by rail. Two nephews were each paid 2 cents an hour to move the bricks from the rail car to the building site. After the first car they asked to be paid a cent a thousand, and were. On the remaining cars they went back to the 2 cents an hour.

The next building was and is Gold's Department Store Meyer Gold, a WWI veteran, came to the County and peddled dry goods by walking the roads with a pack on his back. If you wanted something he did not have with him, he brought it next week. The store was open when I knew it. Meyer's wife ran the Cash Register. She, at times, took money from the Register and put it where women put such things. What she did with the money nobody knew. Meyer's brother Charlie worked for him. Charlie's wife had lived in Poland during WWI and to hear her telling of hiding from the Germans in basements and attics was a preview of WWII. They had a daughter, Mariland. She watched us as we played. She could and did go to Bible School but was told not to believe a word they said.

There were two pharmacies – Cornelia Pharmacy and Hoopers where Arnolds is now. Coca-Cola was just beginning to be sold as a fountain drink. Men used the Cornelia Pharmacy and women met and talked at Hoopers. Many used the word dope to order Coke. My class went to New York on its Senior trip. One of the chaperones ordered Dope there and almost got arrested.

Over the Cornelia Pharmacy was the Phone switchboard. A person rang his phone and the operator said, “number please”. She connected to the number given her. When I played around town and wanted to call home, I used a convenient phone and gave the operator the number 20. Often she said my mother was not home but she knew where she was and she connected me.

This building was Stovall Motor Co. started by Calvin Stovall's grandfather - Ford. Model T's came in parts and were stored upstairs. When one ordered a car, it was assembled and delivered the next day. The color was never a problem as Henry Ford said a purchaser could have any color he wanted as long as it was black. When cars came assembled they added the building attached to this one. Calvin much later built the

present dealership where it is now and later sold it,. He kept the Tractor Co and I bought my tractor from him. Calvin did much to advance Cornelia and this club honored him for his service to the club and community. This building became Carwood Manufacturing Co. which made shirts. It was the first real employer in the city and employed mostly women – their first real jobs.. They were busy during WWII. Later they moved to Airport Road.

Where Gusben's is, was Cornelia Motors. They sold Chevrolets and Oldsmobiles. During WWII, the automobile manufacturers built planes and tanks and other wants of the armed forces – no cars. People wanting cars listed their names with several dealers and after the war when the dealer got a car (It took years to supply the back orders) he called the next name on his list. If the person had not already gotten a car from another dealer he bought the car and paid list price. In September, 1946, my father's name came up on the Chevrolet list. He had already gotten a Plymouth. I took his place and bought a new straight shift Chevrolet with a radio, but no other extras, for the princely sum of \$1276. Sarah and I took in and enjoyed every square dance in the area

There was a funeral director who also liked his drink. One night he and an employee picked up a body on B C Grant Road and when they got to his place of business the body was missing. Going back over the road they found the body in the creek on B C Grant Road about a half mile from Level Grove Road. The business closed a short time later.

Frank Irvin was a shoe repairman. He had a shop in Demorest and later moved to Cornelia. His two sons always wanted to be pilots. As young children they wore boots like the pilots did. They became Air Force pilots during the War and got jobs with Delta after that. They were celebrating their luck at the Wincoff Hotel when it burned. The younger son was killed as were two respected sister who were shopping in Atlanta.

Cornelia was shocked as only one city lost more people.

As the County was too hilly for row crops, Orchards were numerous. Peach orchards were from 100 to 1000's of acres. For many the money made working the peach harvest of two or three weeks was vital. Many came from miles away and camped out to be able to work there – all members of the family often worked. The largest grower was married 3 times – the second time to the sister of the first wife. There were 21 children. He built a house with 21 bedrooms and only one closet. A daughter built the house across from the Baldwin school like his house. It is now *Sweet Pea Plantations – Room Rentals*. Too many freezes, bugs living on arsenic and the high price of planes dusting the trees to try to control the bugs forced many including Sarah's father out of the peach business. Mr Garrison put poultry in his packing shed and continued to expand his poultry operation.

Before air conditioning, there were many hotels in the area catering to those living in hot Atlanta and South Georgia. Mt Airy had an elaborate system of getting from the depot to carriages without getting out in the weather. Clarkesville had a mule drawn street car from the depot to the very large hotel on the left of the square. The Southern regularly left on Sunday one or two cars on the TF siding to be taken to Tallulah Falls with new guests for their hotels and to bring back those who had been there. This was a big business until Air Conditioning came along.

Movies *I'd Climb the Highest Mountai Great Locomotive Chase*
and others. One now in production in Tallulah Falls

We have gotten a Johnson & Johnson Ethicon plant, Scoville and other manufacturing plants and a new super Wal-Mart store and Longhorn, Captain D's and Chic-Filet have invested heavily to help feed all the workers and retirees.