

Alger-Sullivan's Donation Helps Flomaton Cemetery  
ASHS Column for June 19, 2008  
Jerry Simmons

I want to go back down memory lane again for the Century folks and maybe for some of you furreners from Flomaton and other areas. I know there are still a lot of you who go back further than I do and even more of you have a better memory.

What brought this up was I was recently looking at some old Flomaton Journal issues and came across a death notice in an April 1956 issue for Mr. Alton Conner. My recollection of Mr. Connor is that he ran a store located near what's now known as Century Boulevard, then called "Palafox Highway," and almost in front of the old Harrison place (that building is now known as the Century Chamber of Commerce). Conner was the brother of my dad's aunt Jessie Conner Simmons, who was married to daddy's uncle Albert.

He was only 42 years old in 1956, according to the Journal article.

Mr. Conner seemed to me a nice man, but I was only about five when daddy carried me up there to buy a writing pad for school. It was one of those with speckled covers and widely-spaced lines (I was five and in the first grade).

As an impressionable child (I'm an impressionable adult these days) I well remember Conner and my dad talking about a recent heart attack from

which Mr. Conner was recovering. When asked how it felt, he replied that it was like a knife sticking in his ribs, as he motioned under his left arm toward his back. I've thought about that off and on ever since then, and wondered if that was why Mr. Conner died at such an early age.

As we walked in, I recall that the store was dark, with only a couple of light bulbs hanging from the ceiling, even though it was still daylight outside. Stores weren't lit up like they are these days, and their electricity bill wasn't nearly as high as today's. Is that because the rates were much lower than today's or because they had less use of electrical power?

Later, Mrs. Flannigan ran that store. There may have been others but I don't know who. The building was demolished to make room for Highway 29's expansion way back in the 70s.



McDavid's first mail carrier, Mr. W.G. Huggins

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In that same issue of the Journal was an article telling that Flomaton's cemetery could now be enlarged due to the generosity of The Alger-Sullivan Lumber Company. Until the early 1940s Alger ran a railroad into the Escambia, Conecuh and Monroe counties' woods to transport logs to the Century sawmill.

After crossing State Line Road in Florida the railroad ran beside the present site of the Flomaton Funeral Home and crossed the then L&N tracks to run along the western side of Ringold Street in Flomaton. As the track passed by Rose Hill, it headed toward US 31 along the base of the hill at the cemetery. The Tri-City Chamber of Commerce spearheaded the move to gain the property the railroad bed occupied; the ASLC consummated it by donating it so the Town of Flomaton could expand the cemetery and also gain an access road to highway 31.

The tracks crossed the highway almost where the caboose is sitting today and headed right across the park (which, of course, wasn't there at that time) into the woods. The tracks were taken up about 50-odd years ago. There is no trace of the railroad along there any more, not even the rail bed.

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The picture accompanying this column is of McDavid's first mail carrier, Mr. W.G. Huggins. He was born January 19, 1889 in Monroe County, Alabama and died August 3, 1958. He lived in Bluff Springs, Florida. He began as a carrier when he was 19 years old, which would have been around 1928. He served as the McDavid carrier until he retired.

He delivered mail in the horse and buggy shown here. A wooden mail box on display at the Post Office Museum in Century is the same one shown in his buggy in this picture.

This mail box was donated by his widow, Mrs. Florence Huggins Covan, on Sawmill Day, April 27, 1991. Mrs. Covan lived in Bluff Springs.

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By the time you read this, the Flomaton Centennial Scrapbook should finally be at the printer after many technical delays and well on its way to being completed. There've been a lot of folks who've wanted to place pre-publish orders, but so far there's been no provision for that.

There'll be a whole bunch of books available, so you probably won't have to worry about the supply running out. Just watch this column and other pages of the Ledger and listen to WPFL for news when they arrive. Word of mouth has certainly inspired a heap of interest in it. I personally think there's something in the book for everyone, so be sure to get a copy when they get here, sometime before the middle of July.

While you're thinking of the good ol' days, I want to present a question: why is youth wasted on the young, when we older folks could make such good use of it? If I were younger, I'd know more.

Ya'll come.