

PALMERSVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 1, Issue 2

July 2006

The 22nd Palmersville Alumni Banquet held last April 15th was a great success. The officers did a great job, and we eagerly anticipate the next one to be held in 2009! New officers elected are President-Gath Meeks, Vice-President-Robert Perry, Secretary-Terry Leo, and Treasurer-Sandy Rodenbush.

The Historical Society was very pleased with the response to our membership drive and encouraged by the large number who visited the building before the Alumni Banquet. It was confirmed by several alumni that night the first annual published by Palmersville seniors was the 1941 issue, although it did contain some pictures and highlights of the 1940 Class. We're still wondering about 1942 through 1946?

We always solicit your ideas and comments, as well as your written memories, family genealogy and pictures, school-related pictures and memorabilia. Also, if you have a newsworthy item (such as a class reunion) or a query we could use in the Newsletter, please send it to us. We also ask that you jot down any basketball highlights and send them to add to our archives, as we are planning to highlight sports at our October meeting. Read Jim's article for inspiration.

Our thanks to Mrs. Irene Laws who recently donated a PTA Scrapbook covering several years in the 1950's and a couple of photos of the Girls Basketball teams of 1928-29 and 1932. We have also received a booklet on the history of the Thompson School by Jessie Pearl (King) Mansfield.

Presently, we are still open only on Friday afternoons from 1-5, but will be happy to be "open by appointment" if you contact either June Kemp at 731-782-3348, Carol or Hugh Brann at 731-822-7921, or Nelda Rachels at 731-822-7485. You can reach us by mail at P.O. Box 21, Palmersville, TN 38241.

We sadly announce the recent deaths of Mr. Gene Trevathan and Mr. Paul Oliver, former teachers at Palmersville School, and Mr. Lowell Dean Woodruff and Mrs. Mary (Kennedy) Barber, graduates of Palmersville High School, and extend our sympathy to their families.

* * * * *

The next meeting of the Historical Society will be Friday night, July 28, 2006, at 7:00 p.m. at the Historical Society's building in downtown Palmersville. Mrs. Carol (Pentecost) Brann, Palmersville native and retired teacher, will present the program. She will share with us some interesting facts and stories of her McWherter ancestors. Our meetings are very informal, and we encourage anyone who has a story to tell or a picture to share to join us. Refreshments will be served after the meeting.

Remembering the '47-'48 and '48-'49 Boys' Championship Basketball Teams

By Jim Cantrell

At our recent alumni banquet, we had in attendance the starting line-up of the district champs of fifty-eight years ago, the 1947-48 team. That brought about many memories of the '47-'49 championship teams. We were undefeated in the district those two years, defeating Dresden in the finals of the tournament each year.

The starting lineup in '47'48 was Charles Henry McWherter, Hugh Brann, Bobby Pentecost, Bill Crews, and Jim Cantrell. The only senior was Hugh Brann. Donald Smith replaced Hugh on the '48'49 team. Only two regular season games were lost each year. We split home and away games with Puryear and McKenzie in '47'48, then split home and away games with Cuba, KY, and lost to a Memphis team in '48'49.

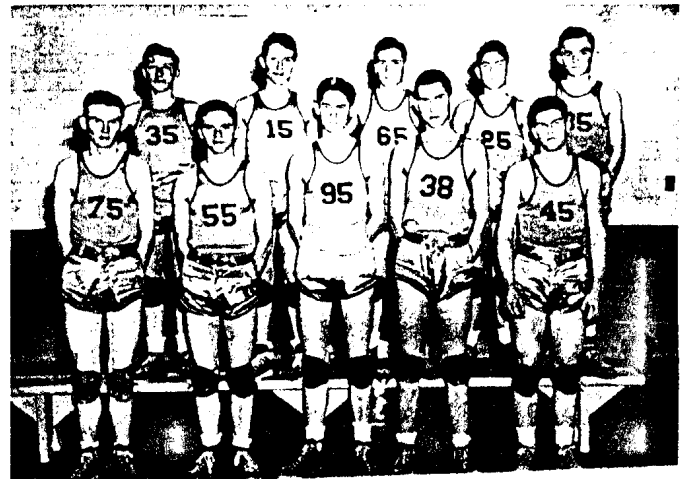
Each of the two years we were defeated in the regional tournament by what was, at least to that year, the best ever Grove High team. In the '49 semi-final game we led Grove most of the game, but they pulled ahead by a few points at the end, after some of our key players got into foul trouble.

Our teams were well suited for the rather unique style that Mr. Cravens had us play. We played an aggressive full court press, man-to-man defense. On defense Charles Henry and Hugh played the forward positions under the basket, with Bill and me out front ready to lead the fast break. Then on offense Bill and I played under the basket. When we scored, we were all ready for a full-court pressing defense. Every team had a tough time getting the ball up court, with most teams completely out of the game by the end of the first quarter. Of the twenty-seven regular season '48-'49 games, we more than doubled the score on thirteen opponents and tripled the score on many of them.

Our whole first team graduated in 1949. However, there were some good under-class subs who went on to make a name for themselves. They played Dresden in the finals of the district/county tournament each of the next three years, losing in 1950 and winning in 1951 and '52. It is an interesting record: Palmersville playing Dresden in the finals five consecutive years, with Dresden winning one and Palmersville winning four. An impressive fact is that these championship teams were from the smallest school in the county.

Over the years, both Palmersville boys and girls have won more than their share of tournaments. We would like to have a complete record of first, second, and third place tournament finishes for boys and girls in high school, junior high, and eighth grade.

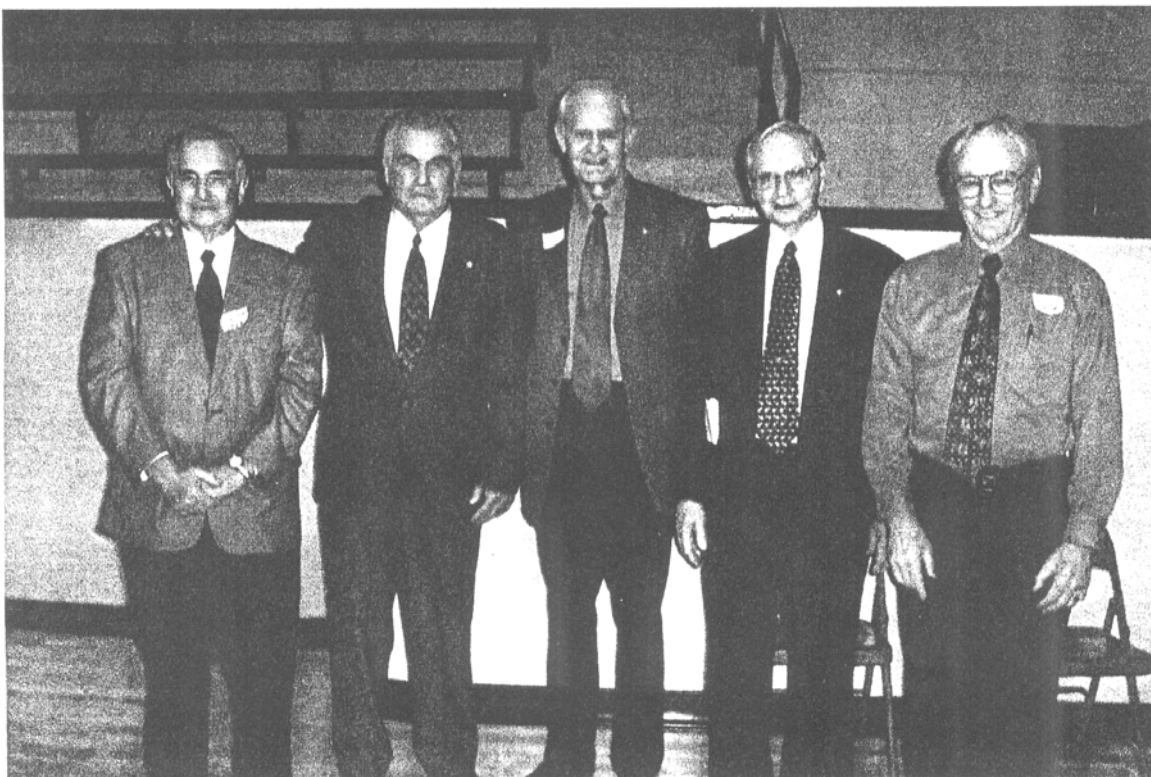
We ask each member of the Historical Society to write to us about your teams' successes. Also include any facts and anecdotes that you find interesting. Please send your information and comments to our society's address, or to any of our board members.



The '47-'48 PHS Boys' Team

Top row: Wayne Crews, Jim Cantrell, Hugh Brann, David McWherter, Donald Smith

Bottom row: Joe Emerson, Bill Crews, Bobby Pentecost, Lowell Woodruff, Charles McWherter



Starting Five, '47-'48 PHS Championship Basketball Team: Hugh Brann (G), Charles H. McWherter (G), Bob Pentecost (C), Bill Crews (F), Jim Cantrell (F)



The '48-'49 PHS Boys' Team

Back Row: S. Gatewood, B. Cantrell, W. Crews, J. Laws, L. Woodruff, D. Laws, D. McWherter, B. Webb, Coach Mr. Cravens

Front Row: K. Pentecost, Manager, D. Smith, B. Crews, B. Pentecost, J. Cantrell, C. McWherter, B. Laws, B. McWherter, Manager

More Scenes from the '47-'49 PHS Basketball Teams



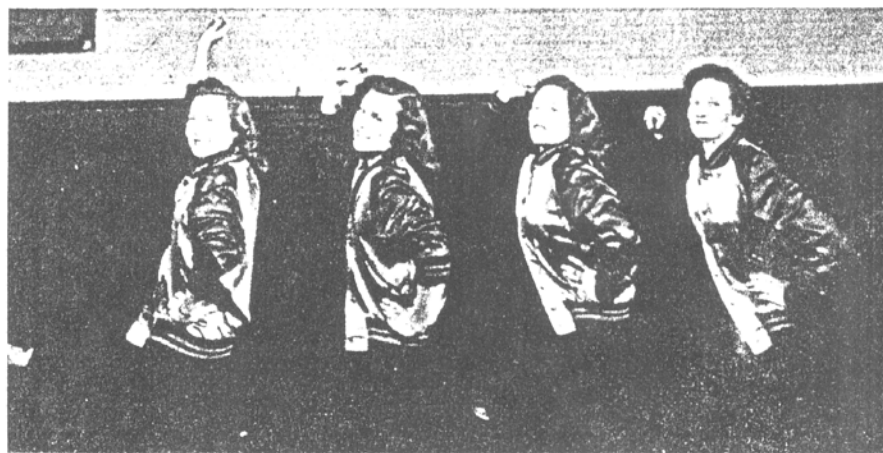
Back Row: Coach Mr. Elam, M. Bowlin, K. Moore, V. Turbeville, J. Rickman, S. O'Steen, G. Bowlin, G. Summers, M. Todd, N. Laws.

Middle Row: S. Pentecost, A. Reed, B. McClure, S. Atkins, N. Puckett, B. Grubbs

Front Row: P. Mansfield, F. Buckley, N. McWherter, E. Reynolds, B. Laws



K. Moore
B. S. McClure
G. Summers
M. Alderdice
M. Moore
J. Rickman
B. J. Grubbs
W. S. O'Steen
M. Hogard
J. Webb
V. Turbeville
G. Bowlin
N. S. Laws
B. Bell
S. Pentecost
J. Haynes
A. Reed
S. Robertson
D. Wilkinson
S. Atkins
M. Bowlin



Cheerleaders:

Marleen Ainley
Bettie McWherter
Sammye Pentecost
Marcia Bowlin

Palmersville's Grandmother

By Ben Cantrell

Imagine that you were a census taker in 1940 recording the names of the inhabitants in the vicinity of Palmersville. Starting at the crossroads and going west toward Latham, you would have visited the homes of Clyde Pentecost, Estelle Moore (Lis), Buddy Brann, and German Brann. If you traveled out the Blooming Grove Road, you would have recorded where some of the children of Buddie Rawls lived and you would have visited the Talmage Brann and Oscar Olds families. Mary Ella Fields lived across the road from Blooming Grove, at the Uncle Billy Brann homestead. Going east toward Cottage Grove, you would have noted the families of Sissie Riggins (Junior), Irven McWherter, and Alice Pentecost (Mocco). Irvin Pentecost lived a short distance out toward the Webb Community, and Luco Olds lived about a mile north of the village on Cane Creek.

The remarkable thing about all the people we have mentioned is that they were all either brothers and sisters or first cousins. They were the grandchildren of Mary Ann Webb Olds McWherter, and the list is only a sample. There were sixty-six of them in all, making Mary Ann the undisputed holder of the title of Palmersville's Grandmother.

She was the daughter of Amasa Webb, who, about 1821, moved with his father John Webb into what was to become known as the "cold corner" of Weakley County's fifth district. Soon James Buckley, a Revolutionary War Veteran, settled in the same neighborhood with his family, and Amasa Webb married James Buckley's daughter Susan on January 26,

1823. Mary Ann was born on December 23, 1825.

On March 28, 1843, Mary Ann married Edwin Allen Olds, and they had six children before Mr. Olds' untimely death in 1858. In 1860 Mary Ann married John McWherter, a widower, and they had three children. John McWherter was one of the early settlers of Weakley County, and he had eight children by his first wife, Ruth Clayon McWherter. It is interesting that three of John McWherter's children married Mary Ann's siblings and another married her uncle, George Wesley Webb. The McWherter and Webb families were not strangers.

Mary Ann and Edwin Olds had the following children:

1. Emaline Elizabeth married Thomas Jefferson Brann, and they became the parents of Mittie May, Loudena, James Edwin (Buddy), Luther, Clara, and German.
2. Susan Henrietta married Almus Clayton McWherter. Their children were William Commodore, Maggie, Luna Belle, Lubie, Susan Alice, Birch, Nannie "Sissie" Paralee, Rufus Irven, Press Duke, and Charles Wesley.
3. Hester Ann Clemonia married Andrew Jackson Pentecost. Their children were Robert Lee, Cora belle, Nora Jane, Neulon, Gus, James Irvin, Clyde, Don, Quitman, and Hester.
4. Cordelia Josephine married William Thomas, "Uncle Billy" Brann. Their children were Amasa, Edwin, Louis, Genavee, Tansil, Elwood, Mary Ella, Deloma, Talmage, Revis, and Cynthia.
5. Winfield Scott married Virginia "Babe" Bright. Their family

included William Edwin, Elvis Earl, Luco, Cuthbert, Charles Lesley, Mary, Oscar, and Estelle.

6. Mary "Molly" married Nicolas Brann. They had no children.

Mary Ann and John McWherter had the following children:

1. Alexander Doak who married Rebecca Adaline Biggs. Their children were Ora, John T., Lilla, Valda, Susan, Edith, and William Hubert.
2. Ella married George Thomas Mayo. Their children were Basil Sylvester, William Thomas, Vivian, Charles Spurgeon, Ruth, Judith, Rozell, and Elise. More about the remarkable career of G.T. Mayo in a later edition of this newsletter.
3. Lucy Alice married James Mitchell (Buddie Rawls). They had Charles Otis, Coke Roland, Morten, Treva Belle, and Rudell.

Growing up in Palmersville in the middle of the 20th Century, I remember the children of the family members I have mentioned. Most of them were the age of my older brothers and sister or a little older than that. But I never knew that they were all second cousins. William Brann and Jean Moore were in my sister's high school class. Milton Pentecost was the best pool player in Palmersville, his sisters Dorothy and Jeanette were among the prettiest, and sister Betty Ruth was the town marbles champion. Magdalene and Thomas Irvan McWherter lived up by the big church where their brother Charles died of lockjaw in 1936. Clayton Riggins took up his father's trade as a blacksmith. His sister Thelma was the mother of Nan Jackson, one of my brother Jim's schoolmates. Adrian Brann was a teacher,

farmer, and one of the best basketball referees in the county. Beth Brann married Almond Stephenson, a third cousin of mine. Hacy Pentecost was one of the first volunteers for military service after the war broke out on December 7, 1944.

Mary Ann Webb Olds McWherter died on October 7, 1905, and she is buried in Blooming Grove Cemetery next to John McWherter who died on February 19, 1873. Magdalene Yeargin has a photograph of a reunion of Mary Ann's family at Lemon Springs sometime shortly before her death. The Palmersville Historical Society was formed to preserve these valuable records, and we urge you to add to the collection.

I am indebted to James Rightman Blanks for his research on the Webb family. His book, *Leaves From the Webb Family Tree*, is one of the resources available to Palmersville Historical Society members.

Gala Sports Reunion Scheduled for October Meeting

The October meeting of the Palmersville Historical Society will include a reunion of all former basketball players, coaches, and cheerleaders. Everyone is invited to share this evening of memories. A special effort will be made to contact as many of the former athletes as possible and to encourage their attendance, along with their families and friends.

Detailed information will be included in our October newsletter. Please mark the date of October 27 on your calendar.