

The New ARTICLES • INFORMATION • COMMUNITY CALENDAR
SOUTHERN VIEW

VOL 5 ♦ NO 3 A QUARTERLY JOURNAL EXPLORING THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI WINTER 2005–2006
MISSISSIPPI'S VERY FIRST E-ZINE ♦ ON-LINE SINCE SUMMER 2001

**Mississippi's
Tunica RiverPark**
Plane-Living in Benoit
Snow in Mississippi?
Dorothy's Garden



See the Community Calendar
for Winter Activities

Check back often for updates on articles, stories, and photographs.

Just lately, I have been cleaning my parents' house in preparation for an estate sale. This house belonged to my grandparents on my mother's side before Dorothy inherited it. That makes two generations cluttering one residence.

There is a great deal of personal mythology in this house. Artifacts. I found my brother's Russian airplane model with the broken landing gear, the purple ashtray that he made in shop class, and the Old West curtains with the cow skulls that used to scare him as a child. My mother's bedroom is full near to bursting with clothes—the labels still on—cute kitty calendars, Andes Mints that mice have gotten into, and tons of knee-high stockings. There are more holiday hand towels than there are festive occasions in a lifetime ever to use them.

My parents snapped innumerable photographs. I am pink-cheeked and adorable in many. As my brother and I grew older, we avoided the camera. On the Christmas that my brother was one-year-old, Santa brought my father a photo enlarger. It appears in pictures under the tree next to the green-and-silver zebra that glowed in the dark and a wooden pull-toy bee that made a sharp *thwanging* noise when it was drug across the floor.

I dig deep to the layer where my parents were married. Wedding plans, the green orchid pressed in a college annual that Dorothy carried in her corsage. Then, in the depths of a cedar chest is my father's Golden

Gloves pendant and his navy uniform. Everything smells of mice and cedar.

A fox fur that to my knowledge never left the back of a chair—except for the time I scared my cousin with it—peeks over my grandmother's right shoulder in a 1925 photo of her wedding day. She wore it on her honeymoon trip to New Orleans. Its glass eyes saw my remotest past—the time before my mother was even born.

Some of the diaries read like a comic-Gothic Southern novel. Grandma and Grandpa arguing about whether or not Grandpa would be enjoying another piece of toast with his Chicken à la King. Grandma taking the thermometer out of her mouth only long enough to tell my father that she was *not* a hypochondriac!

I find the diary entry from my father on the date of my birth. There! I exist now. He was delighted, and passed out cigars and candy. That's nice.

Then, while still glowing from my warm welcome into the world, my friend flips the pages back a week before my birth and there reads to me another of my father's entries: "Dorothy and I wonder, will the child coming be a Kathy Jean or a Barry Norwood?"

I am now properly deconstructed.



Kathy

Editor/Publisher

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On the cover:

The Tunica RiverPark Museum cuts a striking figure against the sunset
Photo by Bill Pitts

Photo by Benjamin Root, Sr.

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MAY WE HAVE YOUR ATTENTION?

The New Southern View is no longer being commercially printed as we are now focusing our time and energy on our on-line presence.

However, we will soon be offering a hand-crafted, print version of **The New Southern View** for those of you who prefer a hard copy. Details will appear soon in this space so keep checking back.

A NOTE TO OUR READERS

If you have an **idea** for an article that you'd like to submit, if there's a **category** you'd like to see added to the pages of our magazine, if you'd like to **advertise** in our magazine, or if you simply want to **comment** on our magazine, feel free to e-mail us at info@newsouthernview.com or send us a letter to **PO Box 7962 Jackson, Mississippi 39284-7962**.

Scenic & HISTORIC Mississippi #1

Down Where Grows the Possum Haw

by Benjamin Root, Sr., first published in *The Southwest Guide*, January 22, 1976.

Photo by Paul Wray, Iowa State University

Below Fort Hill and into the flatlands north the ground remains wet long after the floods have gone. Its ditches yield the succulent crawfish and along its banks there lives the Possum Haw. Apparently native to waterlands, this Holly-type bush holds forth its bright red berries against the cold drab background of darkened leafless woods. For reasons we shall never know, it does so at the beginning of December holidays and continues well into January's coldest days. Unlike most hollies, the Possum Haw is deciduous, losing its leaves each year, and thereby making its bright red berries stand out in sharper contrast.

I have looked for it in a hundred other places, but I find it only there—along Vicksburg's river road north—and only for a short distance. It confines itself to an area which needs its winter decoration. A mystic hand has placed it there to decorate the dismal puddles and, in a double-measured way, to send up dancing red



reflections from the cold surface water. It defies the colorless patterns and jagged forms out of which it grows. Like an outspoken child, it will not be silenced by surroundings which way it does not belong. It stands in every fence row where plow and axe cannot go.

It listens only to its Creator and well knows the role that it must play. It brightens where and when brightness is wanted. Very few individuals understand their assignments as well as does the Possum Haw. It stands as tribute to the relationship between creature and Creator.

If you need an example of how to flourish amid the brambles of life, come down off the hills of Vicksburg, down where grows the Possum Haw. See it in all of its unexpected splendor, never knowing that it lives among thorns, standing in royal pageantry along the sloughs and bayous of the Delta lowlands. There one gets lessons in living, in those places where flood tragedies have struck—down where grows the Possum Haw.

OUTDOOR TREASURES

WINTERVILLE MOUNDS

Article drawn mostly from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History Website

The Winterville Mounds, named for a nearby community, is the site of a prehistoric ceremonial center built by a Native American civilization that thrived from about A.D. 1000 to 1450. The mounds, part of the Winterville society's religious system, were the site of sacred structures and ceremonies. Archaeological evidence indicates that the Winterville people lived away from the mound center of family farms in scattered settlement districts throughout the Yazoo-Mississippi River Delta Basin. Only a few of the highest-ranking tribal officials lived at the mound center.

The Winterville ceremonial center originally contained at least twenty-three mounds. Some of the mounds located outside the park boundaries have been leveled by highway construction and farming. Twelve of the site's largest mounds, including the 55-foot-high Temple Mound, are currently the focus of a long-range preservation plan being developed by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and the University of Mississippi's Center for Archaeological Research.

Archaeological evidence indicates that



The approach to Winterville Mounds from Greenville, Mississippi along State Highway 1, also known as the Great River Road.

the Indians who used the Winterville Mounds may have had a civilization similar to that of the Natchez Indians, a Mississippi tribe documented by French explorers and settlers in the early 1700s. The Natchez Indians' society was divided into upper and lower ranks, with a person's social rank determined by heredity through the female line. The chief and other tribal officials inherited their positions as members of the royal family. The elaborate leadership network made mound building by a civilian labor force possible.

A great fire during the late 1300s con-

sumed the original building on the Temple Mound at Winterville. According to archaeological evidence, the cause of the fire remains a mystery. The site continued to be used afterwards, but no more mounds were built or maintained. Even though the site continued to be occupied after the fire, the general population declined at Winterville while increasing at settlements and mound sites fifty miles to the south, in the lower Yazoo River Basin. By 1450 A.D., the Winterville Mound site appears to have been abandoned completely.

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Scenic & HISTORIC Mississippi #2

The Tunica RiverPark

by Bill Pitts

The Mississippi River is a fascinating water course, weaving its way through the history of our nation and the fabric of our lives. You could spend a lifetime learning about the river and its many facets in drips and drabs, or you could spend a day touring one of state's newer museums—the Tunica RiverPark in north-west Mississippi.

Situated right on the banks of the river just west of Tunica, this 24,000 square-foot award-winning, one-of-a-kind, interactive and interpretive museum explores

Ol' Muddy from the Ice Age to the present age, from one end to the other, and from top to bottom. Few aspects of this mighty waterway are left out: the exhibits



Photos by Bill Pitts



It's hard to list all the highlights of this amazing museum. When was the last time you saw the skull of a giant beaver or a display of core samples that compare the deep Delta soil to the less fertile soils of other locations? Do you have any idea what a revetment is and how it applies to flood control? Know who the tired guy to the right is? You will after a visit to the Tunica RiverPark. Plan for a whole day!



include an animated map of the river, several large riverine aquariums, a wetlands diorama, and a sampling of artifacts from prehistoric Native Americans, Spanish Conquistadors, and Colonial settlers. Exhibits also highlight the steamboat era, take you underwater in James Eads' diving bell, put you behind the controls of a Coast Guard rescue boat simulation, and fly you over the farmlands of the Delta, then over the river at and below tree top level—skimming the waves towards the museum.

The museum leads you along a logical course towards understanding the Mississippi River's strong impact on our civilization—through the ravages of wars and floods, the devel-

opment of commerce, the growth of recreation—and how the people who have chosen to make their homes along its banks have responded.

This is only a small sampling of what the museum offers—a museum that extends far beyond its physical walls. From the second floor, you can ascend to the observation platform high above the river and watch the everchanging vista of the largest river system in North America. Step outside and take a quiet walk along the 1.9 mile EcoTrail that winds through the park's wetlands forest. There is even a covered veranda stretching along the Mississippi River side of the building, lined with large, comfortable rocking chairs—perfect for viewing.

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From the museum's observation deck high above the river (below), tows, sunsets, and sandbars make fine viewing.



Cookhouse Special

The Mississippi River Shrimp Story

by Daniel J. Drennen, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Jackson Field Office

What comes to mind when I think of Mississippi shrimp is the image of a plump Gulf shrimp, golden brown, ready to be dunked in cocktail sauce. Shrimp from the Mississippi River may be unknown to some

Big River shrimp have a preference for the main channel of the river. They grow to about four inches in length and are slightly transparent gray in color. From March through September female Big River



Photos by Daniel J. Drennen

Mississippians. However, one species, the Big River shrimp, sometimes called the Ohio or stump shrimp, *Macrobrachium ohione*, is plentiful within our section of the Mississippi River. In our state this crustacean has been reported in the Pascagoula River drainage. It is also located in several drainages in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and along some coastal rivers in Georgia and the Carolinas. It is the only river shrimp endemic to the United States. However information from Charles Knight at the Mississippi Museum of Natural Sciences states that populations of these shrimps are in decline.

shrimp are in "berry," and may have up to 32,000 orange eggs. The Big River shrimp feed on both plant and animal material and in turn is fed upon by flathead and blue catfish, bass, and other predators.

There are two theories that try to explain why this shrimp may be found in both completely fresh water, like in the upper Mississippi and Ohio Rivers, and brackish water, like the lower Mississippi and Pascagoula rivers. The animal may have several physiological types that have adjusted to various salinities of river waters throughout its range. Or according to the other theory, the juvenile Big River shrimp



has to spend part of their life in salt water. If so, it would be a long venture for a juvenile invertebrate to the Gulf of Mexico, especially if it lived in the Ohio River!

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Good News for Gulf Coast Shrimp Lovers

from a NOAA news release dated October 26, 2005 / www.noaa.gov

Photo by Robert K. Brigham, NOAA

NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) announced in late October that tests of white shrimp samples collected the week of September 12 from Mississippi Sound found no elevated contaminants. The agency collected 23 samples of white shrimp from Mobile Bay to Lake Borgne two weeks after Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast. The samples were tested for hydrocarbon exposure due to oil spills or urban runoffs, and other contaminants, such as PCBs and DDTs.

Analyses found PCB levels below five parts per billion (ppb) and DDT levels below two ppb, which were within U.S. Food and Drug Administration guidelines for consumption. FDA guidelines allow PCB levels of 2,000 ppb and DDT levels of 5,000 ppb. Analyses also found low levels of hydrocarbons in the shrimp, less than 15 ppb. In addition, analyses showed no detectable level of brominated flame retardants (PBDEs) in the shrimp samples.

NOAA tested samples of shrimp that were caught prior to Hurricane Katrina and found similarly low levels of toxins.

The agency previously announced that analyses of water, sediment, crab samples, and fish tissue also collected during the week of September 12 found no elevated contaminants or bacteria.



A double-rigged shrimp trawler with one net up and the other being brought aboard.

NOAA scientists currently are analyzing the second round of samples collected from the Gulf of Mexico during the week of September 26. Agency scientists returned to port on October 17 after collecting the third round of samples aboard a chartered shrimp trawler, the Patricia Jean. Scientists collected samples from areas that most likely would be af-

ected by delayed releases of toxic substances, such as the mouth of the Mississippi River and the western Mississippi Sound where water from Lake Pontchartrain enters the Gulf of Mexico.

NOAA will continue to collect and test samples at least through the end of the year to monitor for any environmental change over time.

Winterville Mounds

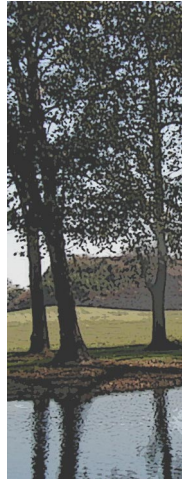
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Archaeological Investigations

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, relic collectors occasionally visited the site, although few artifacts were discovered. The National Park Service and Harvard University's Lower Mississippi Survey conducted the first modern archaeological studies at Winterville in the 1940s. Lower Mississippi Survey archaeologist Jeffrey P. Brain directed extensive excavations at Winterville in 1967. His final report, "Winterville: Late Prehistoric Culture Contact in the Lower Mississippi Valley," was published in 1989 by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

Preservation of the Site

In 1939, the Greenville Garden Club led a community effort to purchase forty-two acres of the Winterville Mounds site and to convey the property to the City of Greenville. Supported by the Winterville Mounds Association, the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (formerly the Mississippi Park Commission) operated Winterville as a state park from Mississippi Department of Archives and History. In 1993, Winterville Mounds was designated a national Historic Landmark.



Visiting the Site

Winterville Mounds, an official state historic site listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is maintained by the Historic Properties Division of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

It is located on Mississippi Highway 1, six miles north of the intersection of Highways 82 and 1 in Greenville, Mississippi. The grounds are open daily from dawn to dusk. The museum is open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is free.

A Final Note:

Upkeep on the larger mounds at Winterville "is an ongoing project that depends on the weather and the budget," according to branch director Eleanor Schnabel. Working within these limitations, we trust that the MDAH will restore the mounds to the past standard of the prehistoric Indians and the Greenville Garden Club.

The main Temple Mound (above) is shrouded in Sumac and Johnson Weed, and the lower portion is blackened by a controlled burn—an attempt to control this overgrowth.

The stairs that once allowed visitors access to the top of the mound (right) are reportedly under repair and, at the time of this writing, not a safe passage.



Photos by Bill Pitts



The highpoint of a visit to Winterville Mounds is the museum itself (above), where interpretive displays help explain the significance of the site. Seen in this aerial photo taken during the 1927 Mississippi River Flood (right), the large mound was one of the few points of high ground for miles.



Flood photo courtesy MDAH

The Garden Gate

DOROTHY'S GARDEN

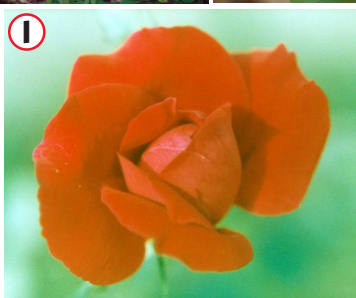
by Kathy Root Pitts

Flower photos by Dorothy Norwood Root; Lilac Cinder photo by Bill Pitts

The house and gardens of my grandmother, Mrs. E. E. Norwood—a lady active in the Greenville and Jackson Garden Clubs—will be for sale shortly. Her yard, wildly grown over now, holds a magnificent array of Southern flora: camellias, azaleas, altheas, day-lilies, crepe myrtles, roses, amaryllis, and a wide variety of other beautiful plants. There are thriving fruit trees as well: figs, persimmons, and pears. There are hickories, pecans, and chestnuts. I hear that the chestnuts are a rare tree.

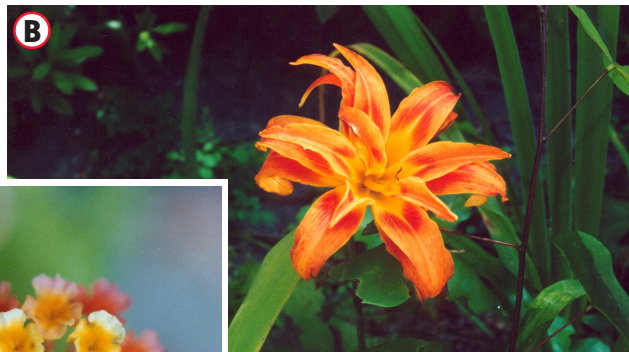
Sadly, a large oak fell during Katrina. It just missed crushing all of a large camellia. The flowers blaze a hot pink now, as if protesting the weight of that heavy tree, which lies across the front lawn still.

My mother, Mrs. Dorothy Norwood Root, continued cultivating the yard after her mother died in 1986. Though Dorothy was much more of a recluse than her socially-minded mother, she thoroughly devoted herself to the art of Southern horticulture. Dorothy had an impressive grasp of the names and types of flowers. She seemed to invest them with personality. We often caught her talking to her plants; they were close friends. We have one azalea called Lilac Cinder which my mother brought as a small cutting from the coast years ago. My father was forever planting cuttings for Dorothy. Lilac Cinder has almost taken over my yard, and there are several at Fontaine Park. These azaleas are unusual in that they seem to glow at twilight. My husband wonders if their color is bordering on ultraviolet. They are also the only azaleas I know of that have a perfumed scent like other flowers.



Where Grandma's interests were mostly classic azaleas and roses, Dorothy had a passion for the exotic. She loved orchids, and would have enclosed a greenhouse eventually. Her wedding bouquet held a green orchid in the center. I discovered that same orchid pressed in her old Millsaps annual. Dorothy's beloved yew tree stands in the front yard, and was nearly missed by the same fallen oak that dented the camellia.

The entire place feels close to nature.



Starting from upper right, the gardens of Dorothy Root and her mother hold many beautiful treats for the eye—and palate. From plump, delicious delta figs (A), to the blazing glory of dozens upon dozens of daylilies (B); from the white splash of altheas (C) to the multi-colored show-off of the little lantana (D); from the delicate slip of Blue Waters irises (E) to the fall flame of a hickory tree (F) and the variegated splendor of Ben Morrison azaleas (G). And not to be outdone is the soft explosion of a spray of Naked Lady lilies (H). Rounding out the garden display is a Lady Elsie May rose (I) and Lilac Cinder azalea (J).



The grounds have this marvelous, edenic quality that I have seldom felt in other gardens. The yard is overgrown now. This might sound strange, but it is as if Fontaine Park has a soul, and even when alone on the property, the surroundings seem to

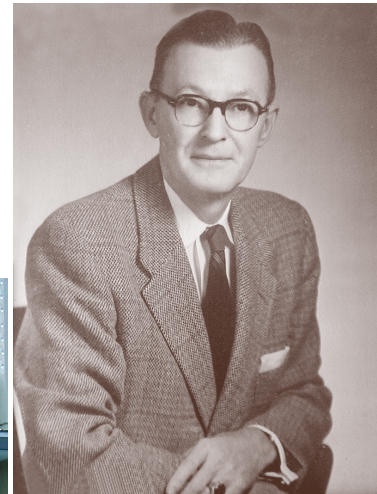
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mens sana in corpore sano SOUND MIND & SOUND BODY

Brent's Drugs: 60 Years of Success

by Bill Pitts

"Everything over there," he gestures towards the soda fountain. "is just like it was in 1946. When they opened up, they couldn't get glass for the front windows...." This was a result of material shortages following the end of World War II—sixty years ago. "It took about a month to get in plate glass. The store was open, but they had ply-board in the windows until they could get glass." So begins Randy Calvert's introduction to Brent's Drugs at Woodland Hills Shopping Center in Jackson, Mississippi's historic Fondren District. He is clearly a man who loves what he



Randy and Melanie Calvert have worked hard to keep the tradition of Alvin Brent (above) alive with the continual operation of the original soda fountain at Brent's Drugs at Woodland Hills Shopping Center, still serving Jacksonians for coming on six decades.

Brent's Drugs has sponsored a little league baseball team, supported athletic programs in the schools, helped supply

medical supplies and services to the underprivileged in countries like Peru, and has lent support to the Jackson Free Medical Clinic. Brent's Drugs also participates in charities and fund-raisers in an effort to make a positive difference in the community.

Brent's Drugs offers a full-line pharmacy, free delivery of prescriptions and gifts, home accessories, and decorations at both of their locations. Randy Calvert describes Brent's Drugs as "a modern pharmacy with old-fashioned service."



Both Brent's Drugs locations, at Woodland Hills Shopping Center (above) and at their new location at English Village on Fortification Street (far right), are popular draws at all times of the day.

Ralph Miller (right) performs during the Friday lunch hour at Brent's Drugs at Belhaven.

does—it shows in his face, in how he talks about his business.

"Alvin Brent worked in a downtown drug store in a hotel base and decided to open his own drug store out here. This is actually the first shopping center in the state of Mississippi," Randy says, referring to Woodland Hills Shopping Center. "Most of the streets out here were dirt streets at the time."

Edwin E. Morgan from Mississippi had traveled to California and there toured a shopping center, a new concept. Coming back to Jackson, he built the Morgan Center in 1946. Over time, the center's name changed, yet Brent's Drugs kept on as before but with new owners: Paul Heflin and Bob Grantham, early employees, bought the store from Brent in the late 1970s.



Running a newspaper ad stating that "Everything's the same, not even the name is changed," the pair ran the store together until Heflin bought out Grantham in the early '90s. "In 1995, I bought it from Paul Heflin," Randy continues. "Paul was probably in his early '70s and the only



pharmacy job he'd ever had was here, so he wanted to sell it to someone who would want to keep up the nostalgia, keep it like it was. When I first came in, I didn't realize how important the store was for the people. They would come up to me and ask, 'Are you the new owner?' They would seem suspicious and ask me what I was going to change." When they would hear that Randy was planning on leaving the store pretty much the same as they had known it to be for years, they would then introduce themselves."

continued on page 12

Photos by Bill Pitts, photo of Alvin Brent courtesy of Randy Calvert

Business Flash

The Memphis Group

A Most Unusual Sight at the Greenwood-Leflore Airport

Photos by Bill Pitts unless otherwise indicated

A visit to the Greenwood-Leflore Airport, just east of Greenwood, Mississippi, reveals an amazing panorama. Where one would least expect to find it is a collection of retired airliners that at times can number in the several dozens.



A view from a cherry picker lift shows the extent of the operations at The Memphis Group's ramp at the Greenwood-Leflore Airport (above). Airliners at various levels of deconstruction stretch to the tree-line at the end of the taxi-way.

Working from a scissors lift (right), employees of The Memphis Group detach the port elevator, one of the many parts of these airliners that can be reused.

Photos above and below by Richard Cordle, Greenwood Facility Manager, The Memphis Group



Landing struts and a fuselage (above), parts to be shipped and bodies to be cut up. It was here that Joanne Ussery bought her Boeing 727 fuselage (see pages ten and eleven).



This gathering of silent craft, awaiting passengers who'll not arrive, or that last flight that will never begin, is like a scene from *The Twilight Zone*.



Everything that is reusable is removed from these retired airliners at the Greenwood facility of The Memphis Group by licensed engineers. These parts, such as avionics and engine equipment, are packaged for shipment to an FAA/EASA (Federal Aviation Administration/European Aviation Safety Agency) approved repair station for overhaul or repair. What's left over is cut up and sold as scrap metal.



INTERIORS & EXTERIORS



This photograph (above) of the airplane in flight, autographed for Ms. Ussery by Captain Alfred Spain of Continental Airlines, expresses the captain's wish that "she serves you as well as she did for our airline."



Access to the front of the plane is via a circular stairway taken from a Boeing 747 (above).

The "front door" (right) is the airstair which led the infamous D.B. Cooper to choose the Boeing 727 for his daring hijacking in November 1971. Cooper parachuted from a 727 after extorting \$200,000 from Northwest Orient Airlines.

The craft's cockpit has been replaced with a full bath. The plane's original lavatory at the rear serves as a half-bath.



Joanne Ussery (above) appeared with Dave on *Late Show with David Letterman* in July of 1996. Dave wanted to have the airplane temporarily moved to New York City so he could tape the show onboard.



Some people travel by air so much that they feel as if they live aboard airliners but Joanne Ussery of Benoit, Mississippi can actually claim that distinction. In 1994, she bought a Boeing 727 airline fuselage from The Memphis Group in Greenwood and had it transported 60 miles to the shores of Bolivar County's Lake Whittington in the Mississippi Delta (see page 9). The first person to renovate an airliner fuselage for plane-living, Ms. Ussery states, "It's wonderful! It's insulated to 60° below zero. You don't have to reroof it, and—you know how Mississippi is, those termites will eat anything—they won't eat this!" All of the plumbing and ductwork needed to make the fuselage a liveable space is contained inside the craft's baggage compartment. She's discussed her airplane, the first of 18 Boeing 727s built in 1970, on over twenty-one TV shows such as the *Today Show*, *Late Show with David Letterman*, and *Inside Addition*, as well as TV shows in Germany, Japan, and Italy.

After five years at the lake, she had it moved just under a mile across the levee to the backyard of her new house and has now opened it up for public viewing.

With three bedrooms, one-and-a-half bathrooms, a comfortable living room, and a remote-controlled stairway, Ms. Ussery's personal airliner, though permanently grounded, is one classy ride.



Upon entering the airplane (below), one passes through the gallery—still in use as the home's kitchen (right).



Original equipment has been left in place throughout the plane, from the control yokes above the bathtub in the cockpit (far left) to the individual reading lights and air vents (right).



Photos by Bill Pitts
Boeing 727 in flight photo and
Late Show photo courtesy of Joanne Ussery



WARNING
THIS EXIT HAS BEEN DESIGNED
AND CONSTRUCTED SO THAT IT
CANNOT BE OPENED DURING FLIGHT

As a result of Cooper's exploits in 1971, the FAA required that all 727s be fitted with a mechanical device known as the "Cooper Vane" which prevents the rear stairway from being lowered during a flight.

Anyone interested in touring Ms. Ussery's Boeing 727 home may contact her for further information by calling 662/742-3602.

talk to the animals

Our Pushy State Bird, the Mockingbird

by Kathy Root Pitts

The North American mockingbird is described as a very territorial bird, and that is evident, as the critter has claimed the title of "State Bird," not only in Mississippi, but in Arkansas, Florida, Tennessee, and

and Veracruz, Mexico. These pushy birds have even been introduced and established in Hawaii.

Once the mockingbird has chosen his or her own favorite spot—and the girl birds are as aggressive as the boys—they will not abide an interloper, and will swoop

commonly found to be city dwellers. They like also open grassy areas and thick, thorny shrubs for nesting.

Mockingbirds are skilled imitators, and can entertain with as many as 200 songs. They add to their repertoire throughout the courses of their lives. They can meow like a cat, bark like a dog, and even produce machinery sounds. Each imitation is repeated a few times in quick sequence.

The mockingbird, scientifically known as *Mimus polyglots*, wears light gray outer feathers with white underneath. *Mimus polyglots* is an average sized yard bird with a thin bill, yellow eyes, and displaying no great differences of appearance between male and female. Both male and female mark their territories for fall and winter for food sources. They will defend their homes in pairs, and may mate for life.

According to Tracy at Wild Birds Unlimited, mockingbirds will come to outdoor feeders. The problem sometimes is that they will then claim the feeders as their own and not let other birds share. Tracy tells me that they love mealworms, and that they will also eat crawfish, lizards, small snakes, spiders, snails, and fruits. They will also pick the raisins out of suet. Mockingbirds are applauded for eating pest insects.

From what I've read and heard, it seems as if Mississippi has chosen a highly intelligent bird with a strong sense of loyalty to home, to family, to the vocal arts, and to grubs.

Photo by Gary Kramer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Photo by Gary Kramer



down on cats and people. Once, while I was walking into a bank, I noticed children in the back of a pickup truck, watching me, and giggling. In the time it took me to look down and

check that I was properly buttoned up, something whacked me in the back of the head. A mockingbird had spotted me for an undesirable, shot out of a lygustrum a few feet away, and parted my hair. The kids were howling in the bed of the truck.

It is no surprise that the mockingbird turned up nesting at a bank, as they are

Texas. The mockingbird was selected as Mississippi's official state bird by the Women's Federated Clubs and by the State Legislature in 1944.

Though most mockingbirds are found from Florida to central Texas, they are known to journey as far north as Southern Canada and as far south as Oaxaca

Brent's Drugs: Sixty Years of Success

Randy has had grandmothers tell him that this is the only place in Jackson where they can bring their grandchildren and enjoy a time with them "exactly as when I was their age." The stools are the original stools (although they've been recovered), the grille is the same one that cooked burgers sixty years ago, the fountain equipment still dispenses sodas to order, and everything's done by hand. "We serve tuna fish sandwiches, egg and olive which is a big hit with our customers. Our pimento cheese is hand-made every morning before we open up. It's not out of a can, it's not out of a bag, it's not out of a freezer. If you order a lemonade, they cut a lemon in half, squeeze it, and put the soda water in it out of the soda fountain. And we do use flaked ice."

Randy's and Melanie's children grew up working at the store. They have 24-year old twins in medical school who started

as soda jerks during the ninth grade. Another daughter who is a Junior at Ole Miss also started in the ninth grade as a soda jerk. And his youngest son, a tenth grader, started this summer behind the soda fountain. "They learn a lot about business, a lot about people, a lot about cooking, and a lot about life."

Randy recently purchased the Parkins Pharmacy on Fortification Street, the only other drug store in Jackson that still has its soda fountain. He's renaming it Brent's Drugs of Belhaven. "Our main goal and message, especially with opening this new store, is that service is still alive and well in Jackson, Mississippi. Old-fashioned service that you used to take for granted, and that you don't have anymore, is still here at Brent's Drugs." Much like the full-service gas stations that have disappeared from the American scene. "If you call a pharmacy now, you usually get a recording; you get a

live voice here. If you call and ask us to bring your medicine to you, you have a...person walk up and ring your door bell...pretty much anywhere in the city."

"Particularly around holidays, we have people come in and tell us 'This was where I had my first job,' or 'I started out behind the soda fountain,' or 'I worked here wrapping presents during Christmas.' There was one fellow who told me that in 1959 he was a soda jerk behind the soda fountain, went to Murrah High School. They would let him out five minutes before school was out and wave him through the crossing guard so he could get over here, get on his white coat and get behind the soda fountain before the crowd got in. He said the store had not changed at all since 1959!" Special treatment like that for a high school student gives you an idea just how important in institution Brent's Drugs was, and still is, for the community.

Photo by Ryan Hagerty, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

continued from page 8

Whatever Happened To . . . ?

Snow in Mississippi

by Kathy Root Pitts

Photo by Benjamin A. Root, Sr.

This is a photograph of February 13, 1960 in Jackson, Mississippi. I've often heard Mississippians ask, "What ever happened to snow?" Mississippians seem to recall there having been more snow in years past.

We looked up snowfall statistics in Jackson between 1929 and 2000, and found that Jackson received measurable snow for only 25 winters out of 72. In the first half of this time span, 10 out of 36 winters had snow. In the second half of this time period, 15 out of 36 winters had snow. This indicated to me that we are actually having more snow fall as time goes on.

Yet, the winters during which we received four inches or more were: 1935-36, 1939-40, 1947-48, 1948-49, 1950-51, 1959-60, 1961-62, 1963-64, 1967-68, 1976-77, 1981-82, and 1997-98. I was just reminded that there was a snow in 2000. These seem to be loose groupings that gradually dwindle, so that after 1968 we have only approximately one major snow per decade, excepting that one at the turn of the millennium.

Still, we can't really draw any conclusions from such intractable statistics. Besides, statistics vary from one source to the next.

Maybe we remember childhood snows as greater and more frequent events because snows in Mississippi are a little rare, no matter what decade we recall. A snow in Mississippi is exciting because it is different. Snow days in Mississippi are no-school, play-outside days. Festive occasions. Magical childhood memories of snow in Mississippi stick far beyond any spring thaw.



The snowfall of February 1960 dropped about nine inches on the Jackson area, forcing some people to walk to their local grocery stores, pulling their groceries home behind them on homemade sleds, a rarity in the South.

Dorothy's Garden

continued from page 7

personify themselves. Dorothy may have been on to something when she talked to the plants.

I wish now that I knew the names and origins of many of the plants that grow so abundantly over the acreage at present. I count on Dorothy's equally plant-minded sister Shirley Norwood Jones to help with these names as both daughters grew up with a rare love of nature.

Our hope is to sell the house to someone who can appreciate and maintain the garden and the house itself. I mention the house along with the garden because the two complement each other beautifully. One needs the other.

Grandpa's house, unique architecturally, fits into the natural surroundings as a distinctly 1960s prairie-style home in the Frank Lloyd Wright genre, but demonstrating Grandpa's uncompromising personality. He built structures to last.

The house at 5949 Fontaine Park Drive is created almost entirely of brick and coarse fieldstone. Having had much

experience with institutional architecture, Grandpa deliberately used unusual and contrasting elements in his interiors. Exposed concrete blocks and fluorescent lighting—as one might find in a school—

sits next to natural wood and roughened stone. It has a nostalgic and commodious Cold War fallout shelter that serves well as a tornado shelter. Grandpa's house harmonizes powerfully with the Southern garden. Here in Mississippi, one can create such a graceful intertwining of outdoors and indoors. Green things live vigorously here where Mississippians can throw open the windows and breathe.

My father recognized the living spirit of the place. He would start around five-thirty in the morning tending his wife's earthly paradise.

We ponder the future of E.E. Norwood's architecturally unique house with its woodland harmony, along with the adjoining gardens—giant camellias pushing at the eaves, oaks heavy with Spanish moss: gardens designed by ladies who knew Southern flora better than anyone I've ever known.

For more photos of Fontaine Park, the grounds and house, check our website for weekly updates. We'll introduce an easily recognizable icon that you can watch for.



Dorothy Root (left), and her mother, Harry Norwood, two Southern ladies with a love of gardening.

Photo by Benjamin A. Root, Sr.

A Child's World

OLDE TYME COMMISSARY

by Kathy Root Pitts

Sandra Tucker Weber was an English teacher in the late 1960s. At this time, *découpage* was a popular craft. Wanting to pursue a creative occupation, this teacher took her *découpage* to craft shows. Her efforts sold, and these led to the Greenwood *Olde Tyme Commissary* in 1972. In 1984, Sandra sold the store to an entrepreneur in Greenwood and moved her current store to Highland Village.

Now Sandra is the proud owner of four stores at Highland Village and one other *Olde Tyme Commissary* at Dogwood Festival. The stores at Highland Village are: *The Olde Tyme Commissary*, *Tyme for Boys*, *Inside Out*, and *Organizers*.



sets, stools, rocking chairs. This painting and personalizing is all done by four artists who work at this store.

Tyme for Boys sells boys clothing up to size 22. More than clothes, though, *Tyme for Boys* addresses rough-and-tumble interests. This is an ideal place to find specifically "boys" birthday gifts. I'm sure there are some girls who would be just

The Olde Tyme Commissary at Highland Village in Jackson is a colorful treasure-trove of dolls and toys for girls and boys of all ages.

Inside Out, carries artistic creations from Delta craftspeople and local artists, as well as fine household accessories collected from New York, Atlanta, and Dallas. Blair Henderson manages *Inside Out*. Like David Robinson at *Tyme for Boys*, Blair is indispensable for the management of *Inside Out*.

Sandra Tucker Weber also own *Organizers*, a store full of the necessary tools to help a person organize his life, closet, kitchen. Tools to organize your life, and keep the things that you buy in the other stores neat.

In the midst of all this successful business, Sandra describes one favorite and simple memory of a boy who came into the *Olde Tyme Commissary* with his mother saying "I can't believe it; I can't believe it," about all of the toys and games in this very special, child-oriented shop. Moments like these mean much to this very busy lady.

Photos by Bill Pitts



Sandra's original idea for the commissary came from the Delta-style commissary that could be found in a small town surrounded by plantations. These commissaries had a little bit of everything. Sandra explains that her *Olde Tyme Commissary* is especially for kids and is very hands on. The children can sit at "work stations" and solve puzzles or play with trains.

Sandra's *Olde Tyme Commissary* sells children's clothing. They also have a wonderful baby department. Children can buy materials to play dress-up. They can be princesses, cowboys, and Indians. According to Sandra, pretend play gets much out of children's system that parents don't want them to be acting out at 13, 14, and 15. Dressing up, Sandra feels, is psychologically purging.

Sandra likes to stock *The Olde Tyme Commissary* with educational toys. *The Commissary* supplies puzzles and skill building toys; study boards with children's names painted on them; table and chair



as fascinated with the stock as the boys. David Robinson manages. He used to work for *The Rogue*, and he does just about everything. Sandra credits employees like David for making her work fun and easy.

Sandra Weber still has strong emotional ties to the Delta, having grown up in Greenwood, the heart of the Delta. Her home furnishings shop,



Arts & Literature

Celebrating the Light Candlemaking in Carrollton, Mississippi

by Bill Pitts

On a recent trip north into the Mississippi Delta, I stopped in Carrollton where I had a conversation with Christye Stanton, a master candle-maker and business owner. **NSV:** Your store is the Carriage House Candle Company, correct? I was told to look for Ye Olde Carriage House. **Christye:** We dropped the 'Ye Olde' quite a few years ago, so it's just Carriage House Candle Company now. Our main product and focus is candles.

ness and got it up off the ground. We spent many long hours. He researched and he built. Anything that I needed him to do, he did. **NSV:** So your husband came into the candle business later? **Christye:** My hus-



Two large all-natural candles made from soy bean wax and cotton seed oil, and a smaller conventional candle (above) are just a few of the many types made at the Carriage House Candle Company high on the hill overlooking Highway 82 in Carrollton (top).

Other items available at the store include ceramicware (above) by Terri Dillion, Christye's sister, plus award-winning Mississippi Cheese Straws from Yazoo City (left).

Photos by Bill Pitts



NSV: Christye, tell us, please, where you're from and how you got your start in the candlemaking business.

Christye: I'm from Winona—right up the road—ten miles. My husband, Durward [pronounced Durwood], is from Vaiden. This is my 22nd year in retail and my twelfth as a candle-maker. My father, Lee Collins, was a very integral part of my business. He traveled with us to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania where we observed the basic candle-making from the Amish. We've been there three times since then.

He poured with me on a daily basis for years up until about a year ago, July 2004, when he was diagnosed with lung cancer. He passed away this past May. He and I are the two who started the busi-

band has always been a big part of it. He always worked a full time job—he's a circuit clerk—and wasn't here on a daily basis. He'd been in education for years. He was a chemistry and physics teacher—Durward's role in this business is to formulate our chemical recipes. And he pours—he does anything he needs to do. I've got a wonderful husband.

NSV: What are your future plans for the company? **Christye:** We traveled to Williamsburg, Virginia about four years ago and I fell in love with a company that's been there for several generations—it's still in the same family—The Virginia Candle Company. We toured the facilities and I was so impressed with the way they had it set up. They had a

Durward tops off a group of candles after they've set up over night (left).



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TO THE NINES!

The Costumes of The Nutcracker

by Kathy Root Pitts

We would like to feature Mississippi Ballet Theatre's 2005 production of *The Nutcracker...All Jazzed Up*, that was held on December 9, 10, and 11. The costumes,



Mississippi Ballet Theatre director Allison Heindl (above) prepares a young Harlequin for the stage.



An intense discussion and a veiled look (above right) and hardworking snowflakes await their cue (above left). Spanish dancers practice for *The Nutcracker* amid swirling skirts (below).



Photos by Kathy Pitts



Mother and daughter pose and play.



as well as the performance and music, were bright and unconventional. But that is the way that Allison Heindl, Mississippi Ballet Theatre's owner and director, likes it.

Having had a classical ballet instruction under Susan Stowe, Allison Heindl focuses on classical ballet in

her studio. But with confidence derived of education and experience, Allison can freely depart from convention and put on a *Nutcracker* that is different in the extreme. Dance, music, and costumes placed Clara and the audience in a surreal land of confections and color.

Proceeds for *The Nutcracker... All Jazzed Up* went the American Cancer Society as part of Mississippi Ballet Theatre's contribution to **Relay for Life** to be held in the spring. Mississippi Ballet Theatre will also be holding an *All Night Dance Camp* one weekend in March. This is a charity event supporting the Relay for Life.



Watch *The New Southern View's* website for upcoming Mississippi Ballet Theatre events and performances. These are not just an evening's entertainment. Organizations like Mississippi Ballet Theatre strengthen the kids' sense of responsibility, teach them a beautiful art, entertain the public, and do it all with a childlike devotion to "fun."

What Allison Heindl is doing for the community, the children, and for cultural expression in Mississippi deserves recognition and encouragement.

Celebrating the Light

little seating area where you could watch an informational video, then see the pouring process. The video explained what you were seeing. You could not enter where they poured but you could watch through the glass.

NSV: That was for safety reasons?

Christye: Yes, insurance—OSHA—that sort of thing. But you could watch and I just loved that idea, that concept, and their buildings joined. You would leave that viewing area and then you would walk through a door into their retail store. But when you bought that candle, it meant so much more because you actually saw it being poured. It wasn't made in China. It was handcrafted there. Durward and I loved that idea so we got busy and got to thinking about what we wanted to do. And we got busy looking for some property and really got fortunate. A friend of ours sold it to me. Turned out to be the perfect piece of property.

Photos by Bill Pitts



NSV: And when did you make the move from downtown Carrollton to this location?

Christye: We opened this building November 15th of 2004. We're planning to build another building on the west side—all this [Christye indicates the candle pouring area] will be taken out there and there will be a visual center in the front [of the new building]. You can watch the candles being poured, through the glass, and then come back over here and buy a candle. By then, the store will take in the back of this building where we are now, with a gourmet coffee bar—serving Southern desserts! We've got enough land here—beautiful, hilly area—a place where you can come as a family and enjoy.

NSV: So this is obviously a fairly new building.

Christye: A friend of mine built the building for me. We actually weren't scheduled to start building until this year but when my dad was diagnosed, they only gave him

like six weeks, and I wanted him to be able to see what we had always planned to do—I wanted him to see the beginning of it. So, my friend told me, "We're going to get that building built." It was supposed to be larger than this and we had to redesign it to get it built in time. But my friend



Stroll through the Carriage House Candle Company's inviting entrance and you enter into Christye Stanton's world of candle-making—a world that Christye has developed to reflect the vision of her art.

cleared the land and built this building for me in six weeks time. He had a large crew—he pulled his crew off other jobs to come help me get this building built. In six weeks, we moved in and my dad cut the ribbon that day. He stood out front and did the ribbon-cutting.

NSV: I know that meant a lot to him.

Christye: Oh, it did, it did!

NSV: Are there any other family members involved in the business?

Christye: It's kind of a family thing up here. I have three sisters—Terri, Connie, and Sandra—who do pottery and they're involved with us—they work every day. Connie and Terri work regularly for me, and Sandy comes up about every other week. They have their own pottery business here in Carrollton in the old post office, *Collins' Collections*. They rent from me. I'm their landlord! But they only sell through here. We have a Christmas pattern that we ship all over that's become a collector's edition with a lot of people. My youngest sister, Terri, can pick a wad of clay out of a river—she does this at open house and people are just amazed—she takes a piece of clay, and she uses toothpicks and when she gets through in about ten minutes, she has the most beautiful Santa that you've ever seen in your life. And she does it just with a toothpick and

a piece of clay. It's amazing! Last year, we shipped those all over—she couldn't do enough of those. Her pieces do really well. **NSV:** You mentioned your trips to Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Your first one was to learn and subsequent trips were for what purpose, exactly?

Christye: To add to the knowledge that we had already incorporated into our business. Candlemaking—most people don't realize—they're caught up in the scent, or the colors, or whether they fit their decor or not. For us, it truly is an art form—one that's constantly changing and takes a lot of hard work, research, and practice. It is not something you can jump right into. The good thing about candle-making is, if you



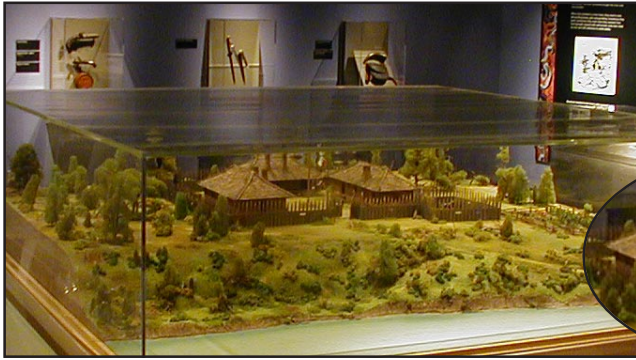
have a mess-up, throw it in the pot and do it again. But it's very intensive—if you want to do a good candle.

NSV: Tell me about your line of all-natural candles.

Christye: In order to be called all-natural, there are so many requirements that have to be met. One for example, the wick has to be a certain type of cotton cord—self-trimming—it has to be treated with something that's all-natural and biodegradable, like beeswax. For the scents, we work with three different chemists. They help us with all of our formulae and they send me samples. For example, if I want to do "American Apple Pie," they'll send me the samples until I'm pleased with the result.

NSV: Where are these chemists located?

Christye: (after a pause) *Secret!* Two are in the South and one is up North. It's my trade secret! We go through hundreds and hundreds of scents a year to get twenty-five that we like. The sky is the limit. You can do all kinds of fun things. It's an art!



A highly detailed model of the Arkansas Post, the first semi-permanent French settlement in the lower Mississippi River Valley.



There are also spacious meeting rooms for events, lectures, and workshops plus a gift shop. And for a closer view of the river, consider a sight-seeing cruise aboard the *Tunica Queen*, a three-deck, 300 seat "paddle-wheeler" that docks at the museum. Several cruises are offered daily during the season that runs from March until October. For the *Tunica Queen's* cruise schedules and rates, visit the web site at www.tunicaqueen.com or call 866/805-3535.

All ages are guaranteed to find something of interest at the Tunica RiverPark Museum. Jerlene Rhodes, the executive director, says, "The RiverPark continues

to surprise and delight visitors with its stunning appearance and unique location right on the Mississippi River." Open from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. seven days a week, the RiverPark can be reached by driving north on Highway 61 from Tunica, then heading west on Casino Strip Resort Boulevard for 1.8 miles. Take a right onto Fitzgerald's Boulevard, and then a left onto RiverPark Drive through their gate. Be prepared to pay a small admission fee.

For more information about the Tunica RiverPark Museum, visit their web site at www.tunicariverpark.com or call 866/517-4847.



The Tunica Queen leaves her dock at the RiverPark and heads down the Mississippi on a sunset cruise near the end of the season in late October.

The Mississippi River Shrimp Story

In 1876, Mr. Forbes, a fisheries scientist working for the Illinois Museum of Natural History, was the first to comment on the importance of the Big River shrimp in the Mississippi River around Vicksburg. Forbes stated, "Considering their size and abounding numbers they (Big River shrimp) must constitute an important part of the food of the fishes of these waters." According to the *Journal of Crustacean Biology*, between the 1930s to the 1970s, harvest of River shrimp declined from 994.5 tons to 1.7 tons, respectively. As of 1977, a local fishery was still active in the lower Mississippi River and reports show Big River shrimp being sold in markets for consumption and as bait. In 1957, Percy

Viosca of the Louisiana Conservationist reported that this shrimp "has always been considered a great delicacy and a food for gourmets in New Orleans." Big River shrimp have been collected in traps constructed of slats, similar to lobster pots, and baited with raw meat, fish, or cottonseed cake. Also the shrimp have been captured in "sets" of green willow and cottonwood branches stuck into the mud near the river bank and broken over, and even by hook and line by fishermen.

Apparently Big River shrimp have been used for food for many years, probably long before zoologists knew it. There still may be some entrepreneurs who collect and sell this species to local bait shops. I have no current information of existing

Webventuring[@]

by Bill Pitts

The Boeing 727 was first introduced into commercial service over forty years ago. In 1991, the first 727 built was donated to the Museum of Flight in Seattle. Visit their site at www.museumofflight.org.

All addresses current as of press time.

www.airplanehome.com

A fellow in Oregon has followed in the footsteps of those he refers to as "trailblazers, and [the] many others who explore and test alternative home options." In short, our own Joanne Ussery in Benoit! See the *Interiors & Exteriors* spread this issue, pages ten and eleven for her Boeing 727 home.

www.usnews.com/usnews/doubleissue/mysteries/cooper.htm

Here's the story of America's only unsolved hijacking that began with a parachute jump from the back stairs of a Boeing 727 high above the Pacific Northwest and ended with the "death bed confession" of a Florida antique dealer 24 years later. Or did it end there? Did D.B. Cooper really plummet to his death that November night or did he successfully land and eventually make his way to the Sunshine State to live out his final days surrounded by antiques and oranges?

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boeing_727

As Ed McMahon would say, "Everything you'd EVER want to know about the Boeing 727" can be found on this web site. Well, ALMOST everything, hydraulic fluid breath. From the history of the craft, through the design, trivia, and specification—brought to you by Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

contact us:

info@newsouthernview.com

What is YOUR favorite Web site?

Photos by Bill Pitts

continued from page 5

food or bait fisheries for the Big River shrimp operating in Mississippi.

In late summer and early fall, while researching Pallid sturgeon, up and down a short segment of the Mississippi River from Vicksburg north toward Chotard Shute, Big River shrimp are routinely collected in our sturgeon nets as we pass over submerged gravel bars that have depressions full of detritus or decaying leaves and branches.

Many of the shrimp that we catch and release incidentally to our sturgeon research are large and plump, and probably would be quite tasty deep-fried or boiled, and dunked in cocktail sauce! Maybe this is a rediscovery of a Mississippi River delicacy. Any takers?

our community calendar

All information current as of e-press time.

We accept no legal responsibility for errors or omissions.

EXTRA EVENTS

CLICK HERE TO SEE EXTRA
EVENTS THAT DIDN'T MAKE
IT INTO THIS E-ZINE!

EXHIBITS

Planetarium: Winter Wonderlights 2005 through Friday, December 30

Seasonal shows for the whole family, ranging from traditional Christmas themes to exciting laser productions with different styles of music for many tastes. Check listings for current features. Admission. Russell C. Davis Planetarium. 601/960-1515 or www.thedavisplanetarium.com.

The Oaks House in Christmas Attire 2005 through Saturday, December 31

The Oaks House Museum at 823 North Jefferson Street is offering Christmas tours of Jackson's oldest house, decorated with old-fashioned natural greenery. Free. 601/353-9339.

What Came After the Dinosaurs? through Sunday, January 8

Prehistoric Mammals brings a lively group of full-sized stomping, roaring, animated creatures to the Museum. Admission. Mississippi Museum of Natural Science. 601/354-7303 or www.mdwp.state.ms.us/museum.

Shelter from the Storm: Art from the Gulf Coast through Sunday, January 15

MMA is safely preserving many works of art in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Storage in the adjacent Mississippi Arts Pavilion is preventing serious damage or theft to thousands of works of art rescued from the Coast. Admission. Mississippi Museum of Art. 601/960-1515 or www.msmuseumart.org.

Backbone: Dean Mitchell's Images of African American Men through Sunday, January 22

Presenting approximately 45 works by Missouri-based artist Dean Mitchell, this presentation focuses on realistic depictions of the human figure. An illustrated guide accompanies the exhibition. Admission. Mississippi Museum of Art. 601/960-1515 or www.msmuseumart.org.

EVENTS & HAPPENINGS

DECEMBER • DECEMBER • DECEMBER

Christmas at the Governor's Mansion through Tuesday, December 21

Traditional holiday decorations using seasonal greenery and fruit, and free guided tours Tuesday through Friday. Reservations for groups of ten or more. 601/359-6421.

Annual Christmas Tree Festival through Friday, December 30

A showcase of various civil, social, and religious organizations' decorated Christmas trees. Smith Robertson Museum. 601/960-1457

A Christmas Carol through Sunday, December 18

Discover true joy during the holiday season with this timeless story of the true spirit of Christmas. Admission. New State Theater. 601/948-3531 or www.newstagetheatre.com

Christmas at the Manship House Museum through Thursday, December 22

Daily tours feature authentic Victorian decorations at the Manship House. Free. Reservations for groups of ten or more. 601/961-4724 or www.mdah.state.ms.us

Christmas Village through Friday, December 30

The superbly handcrafted, miniature Christmas Village, on permanent loan from the Lester Alvis family of Jackson, displayed in Small Town, Mississippi. Free. Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum. 601/713-3365 or 800/844-3369 or www.mdac.state.ms.us.

Nutcracker: All Jazzed Up Friday, December 9–Sunday, December 11

Mississippi Ballet Theatre's fun and funky version of the Christmas classic. Admission. All proceeds go to the

American Cancer Society Relay for Life. Cain Hall at Hinds Community College in Raymond. 601/924-1060 or www.mbtdance.com.

McGee's Castle Holiday Open House

Saturday, December 10 and Sunday, December 11

Explore McGee's Castle elaborately decorated for the holidays in Raymond. Admission. 601/857-8997 or www.mcgeecastle.com.

Unburied Treasures: Building the Collection

Tuesday, December 13

Revisit art from the museum's Permanent Collection, exploring visual arts, music, and literature. Complimentary hors d'oeuvres and cash bar. Free with museum admission. Mississippi Museum of Art. 866/843-9278 or www.msmuseumart.org.

McGee's Castle: 2005 Christmas Drive Through

Friday, December 16–Saturday, December 24

Come drive through the brightly decorated grounds of McGee's Castle in Raymond. Proceeds this year go to support the Blair Batson Children's Hospital. Admission. 601/857-8997 or www.mcgeecastle.com.

Ballet Magnificat "A Christmas Festival"

Saturday, December 17 & Sunday, December 18

The Ballet Magnificat! Touring Company is joined by their School of the Arts students in the group's gala holiday performance that has become a tradition to many. This Christian Dance Company tours all over the United States and the world showcasing Mississippi's wealth of talent. Admission. Thalia Mara Hall. 601/977-1001 or www.balletmagnificat.com

Community Kwanzaa Celebration

Monday, December 26–Sunday, January 1

Its origins are in the first harvest celebrations of Africa from which it takes its name. The name Kwanzaa is derived from the phrase "matunda ya kwanza" which means "first fruits" in Swahili, a Pan-African language which is the most widely spoken African language. Medgar Evers Community Center. 601/373-7034.

JANUARY • JANUARY • JANUARY

Downtown Fondren: January Art Mix

Thursday, January 5

Enjoy the art and culture of the Fondren Renaissance. ARTMix in an after-hours series of gallery walks and shop hops featuring food, fun, community, music, and conversation. 601/981-9606.

Mississippi Symphony: Viennese Blend

Saturday, January 14

A mix of Brett und Strauss as the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra presents an evening of Richard Strauss and guest artist soprano Kathleen Brett. Admission. Thalia Mara Hall. 601/960-1565 or www.msorchestra.com.

Millsaps Arts & Lecture Series: Phillip Watson

Tuesday, January 17

Don't beautiful flowers during the cold winter sound inviting? Learn how to brighten your winter garden. Let Phillip Watson influence your design. Admission. Ford Academic Complex. Ford Academic Complex Millsaps College. 601/974-1043 or www.millsaps.edu/news_events/al-brochure.pdf.

Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill

Tuesday, January 31–Sunday, February 12

A riveting portrait of the legendary Billie Holiday and her music. Admission. New State Theater. 601/948-3533 or www.newstagetheatre.com.

FEBRUARY • FEBRUARY • FEBRUARY

Downtown Fondren: February Art Mix

Thursday, February 2

Enjoy the art and culture of the Fondren Renaissance. ARTMix in an after-hours series of gallery walks and shop hops featuring food, fun, community, music, and conversation. 601/981-9606.

Georgia O'Keeffe: Color and Conservation

Saturday, February 4–Monday, May 29

Explore the deep beauty and subtle color of O'Keeffe's painting methods in this engaging exhibition of thirty of the artist's pieces. Admission. Mississippi Museum of Art. 601/960-1515 or www.msmuseumart.org.

Millsaps Arts & Lecture Series: Laurie Smith

Thursday, February 9

Laurie Smith of The Learning Channel's *Trading Spaces* will share her expertise, warmth, whimsy, and practicality. Ford Academic Complex Millsaps College. 601/974-1043 or www.millsaps.edu/news_events/al-brochure.pdf.

Mississippi Symphony: Flashback with Flash Cadillac

Saturday, February 11

On Valentine's Day, treat your sweetheart to an evening of nostalgia at *Flashback with Flash Cadillac*, featuring the band Flash Cadillac and their familiar brand of classic American Rock 'n' Roll. Admission. Thalia Mara Hall. 601/960-1666 or www.msorchestra.com.

Mississippi Symphony: By Popular Demand

Saturday, February 25

Welcome the return of popular guest violinist Stefan Milenkovich, who first appeared with the MSO in the 2003-2004 season to rave reviews. Admission. Thalia Mara Hall. 601/960-1666 or www.msorchestra.com.

Mississippi Gem & Mineral Show

Saturday & Sunday, February 26 & 28

Come see Mississippi minerals, fossils, and gems stones. Exhibits and demonstrations plus dealers in gems and minerals. Admission. Mississippi Trademart. 601/956-9997

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