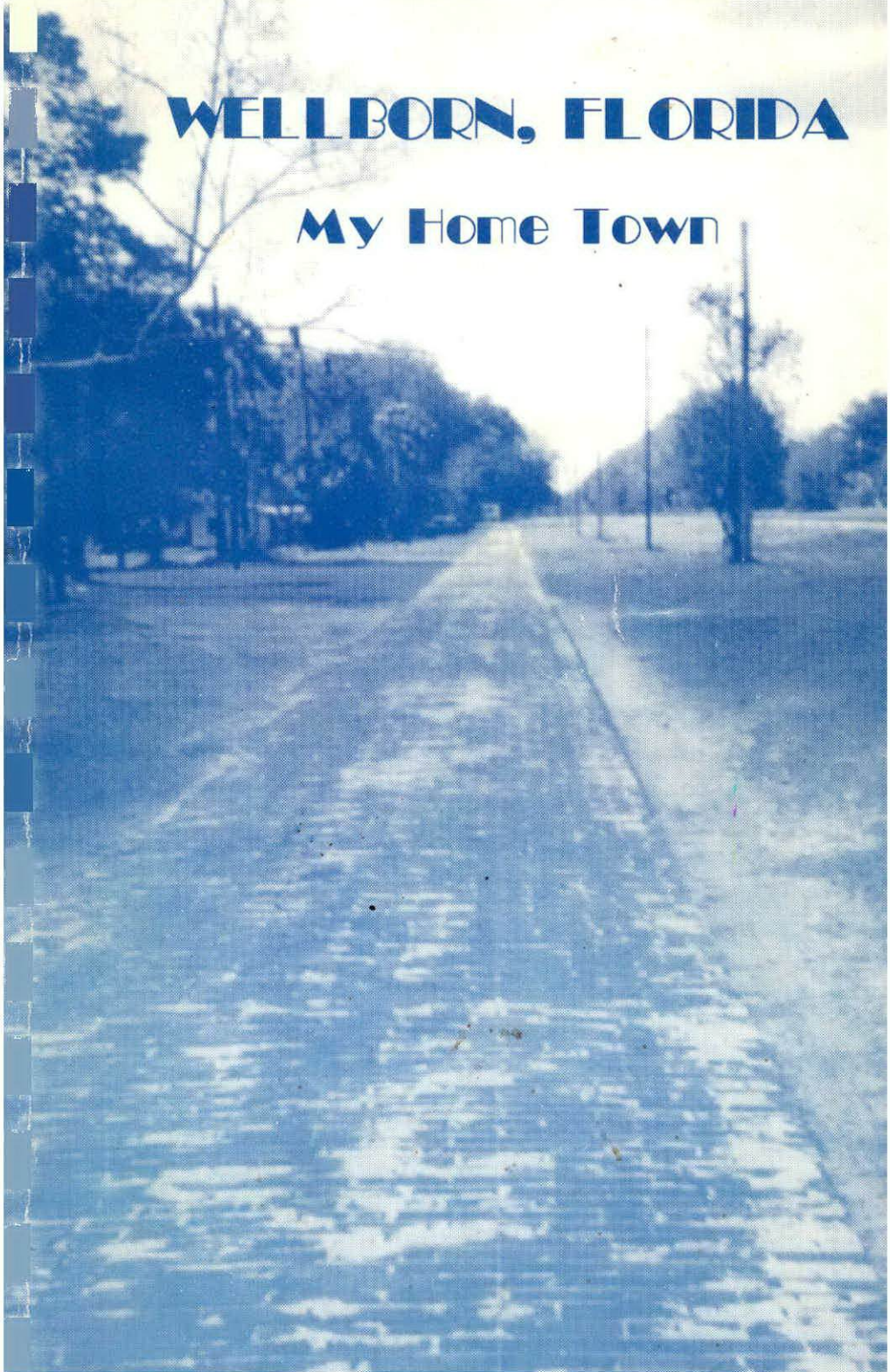


# WELLBORN, FLORIDA

## My Home Town



Bette McKeithen  
Rowland

A HISTORY  
OF  
WELLBORN  
FLORIDA

**HUNTER**  
THE PRINTING CO.

*Lake City, Florida*

1997

# Introduction

No history is ever complete. There are areas where information is sparse and that leaves many unanswered questions. In other areas you have such an abundance of detail, the problem is deciding what must be left out.

Naturally the more distant information is harder to find. At the time no one considered it any more important than we consider our daily activities.

All but a very few of the early settlers were people who considered themselves pretty well educated if they could write their own name and read a few words. They were far more concerned with daily survival than "book-learnin"; with the actual doing, rather than with reading about how to do it.

Diaries and letters from those days are scarce, whereas today we smother ourselves in paperwork. King Stockton's diary is still a coveted treasure that eludes us so far. When oral history stories are included they are identified as "hearsay".

We have come to feel a great admiration and respect for these hardy folks who established themselves here when this was all wilderness. Farms were created. Some chose to live on the farm and some, in town. Wellborn served as a center for shopping, visiting and trading. Even today people from CR 136 to south of SR 252 are served by the Wellborn Post Office and are proud to say "Wellborn is our hometown."

This account of Wellborn has been lovingly produced from material that is currently available.

## *These were the people who worked on The Wellborn Book:*

1. The one who first wrote things down to start the ball rolling was Billy Jernigan, encouraged by his son Warren.
2. The organizer and general promoter was Charlotte Arnold
3. Typist and story teller was Jinny Wilson
4. Most knowledgeable historian was Ann Geiger
5. Contributor at almost every workshop was Margaret Owens. Other meeting attenders were: Justin Rowell, Pearlle Mae Walker, Irene McCall, Elizabeth McMullen, Clara Mae Jernigan, Virginia Giebeig, Naomi Dennard, Martha Johnson, Virginia Severance, Geneva Brown, Jack and Linda Gaylard, Mittie Lee Stephens, Colleen B. Borklund, Viola Allen.
6. Dorothy Colvin of Hunter Printing, Lake City, layout and design.

Many, many local folks have contributed information.

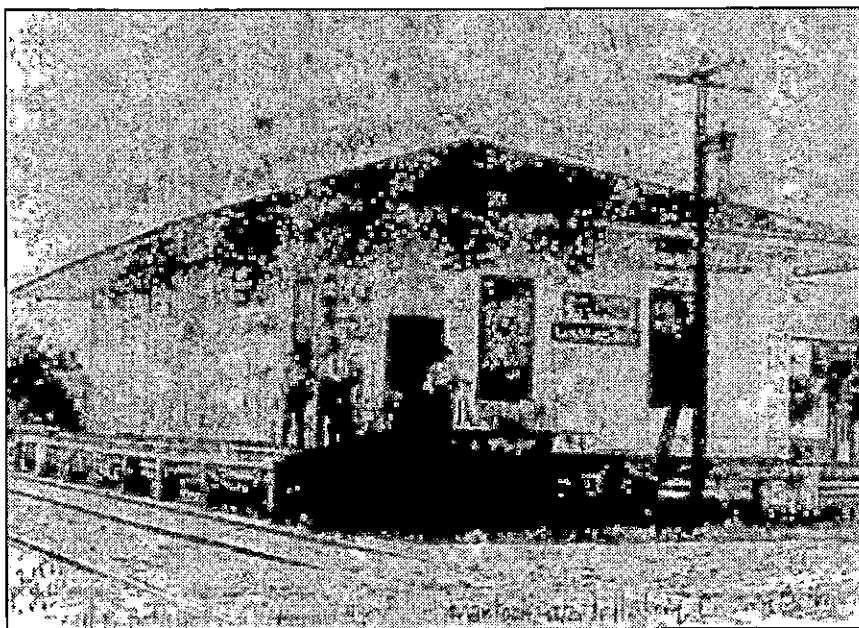
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# WELLBORN

## LOCATION:

January 7, 1867 Wellborn was described as a station on the Pensacola and Georgia Railroad located 92 miles from Tallahassee, 72 miles from Jacksonville and seven miles from Suwannee Springs. Wellborn community developed on the east side of Suwannee County in the center of the North Florida crown, close to the Georgia border. The railroad station was its center during its prime years. (1890-1920).



**THE ORIGINAL DEPOT SIGN SPELLS WELBORN WITH ONE "L".** The time of the picture is 1905. The station was on the north side of the track. The two story building (right background) is Mr. McLeran's store. In the distance at the left side of the picture is a home, probably built by Forrest Walter, known as the Spencer house, now occupied by Jarvises. Pictured: H.R. Bothwell, Al Hodges (Agent), (boy) Claude Hackney, W.F. Murdock, and Cason Bothwell (Seated) are on the depot platform.

Pine trees and hard woods with an understory of palmetto, hornbeams and dogwood grow here. Cypress, tupelo and maples are in the swamps. Walnuts, pecans, chinquapin, persimmons, mayhaws, muscadine grapes, wild plums, hard pears, blackberries, huckleberries and wild blue berries offer their fruits. Cultivated blueberries grow well. The soil is sandy with a limerock sub strata that allows percolation except where clay layers prevent drainage. Undomesticated animals include deer, raccoon, skunk, fox, o'possum, bobcat, armadillo, and beaver. Birds to be noticed include egret, dove, hawk, owl, heron, crow, vulture, bluebird, wren, bluejay, cardinal, sparrow, turkey, mockingbird, bob white, red wing blackbird, towhee, cowbird, wood duck, eagle, and migratory species of ducks, warblers, finches, hummingbirds, grosbeak, robin, oriole, meadowlark, chimney swift, thrushes, tanagers, purple martin, phoebe, and other flycatchers and sand hill cranes. Fresh water fish and alligators are in the lakes and streams. Rattlers, water moccasins and coral snakes are the poisonous snakes. Non poisonous snakes and lizards are here....and lots of insects.

#### TIME LINE FROM 150-750 A.D.

Before land was named Wellborn, Indians lived here.

Three Indian mounds were archeologically investigated by Florida State Museum experts. Mound "A" was a flat top hill rising to the north of Orange Creek, Wellborn. Mound "B" was a low round hill farther east and mound "C" bordered the creek. Dr Jerald Milanich, scientist/archeologist of Florida State Museum was satisfied that there was a settlement here in 150-750 A.D. These Indians predated Timucuan (Utina) and did not stay here later than 750 A.D. This property is owned by Lex McKeithen who bought it from the W.C. Jernigan heirs.

#### **PreColumbian: Utina Indians**

Property owners still find arrow heads and pieces of Indian pottery and implements. Villages of the Timucuan (Utina) were located near fresh water. The trail from White Springs to the Itchetucknee Springs and Branford Springs went through here on a similar path to CR 137. Therefore we are safe to imagine Indians walking here.

#### **First Spanish Period 1500-1763**

There was no European settlement recorded in this area of the state. Indians in the area became extinct due to warfare and white man's diseases. A string of Spanish missions was located from St. Augustine to Pensacola. Nearest verifiable mission to us was at Alligator Town (Lake City).

### **British Period 1763-1783**

This was the 14th British colony and no record of inhabitants living in Wellborn's area exists.

### **The Second Spanish Period 1783-1821**

During this Spanish period the Seminoles moved through this territory as they were driven from Georgia and the Carolinas by European settlement.

### **After the War of 1812**

U.S. citizens explored this area when they were en route to the Gulf for salt. Some settled near the Suwannee River during the 1820's.

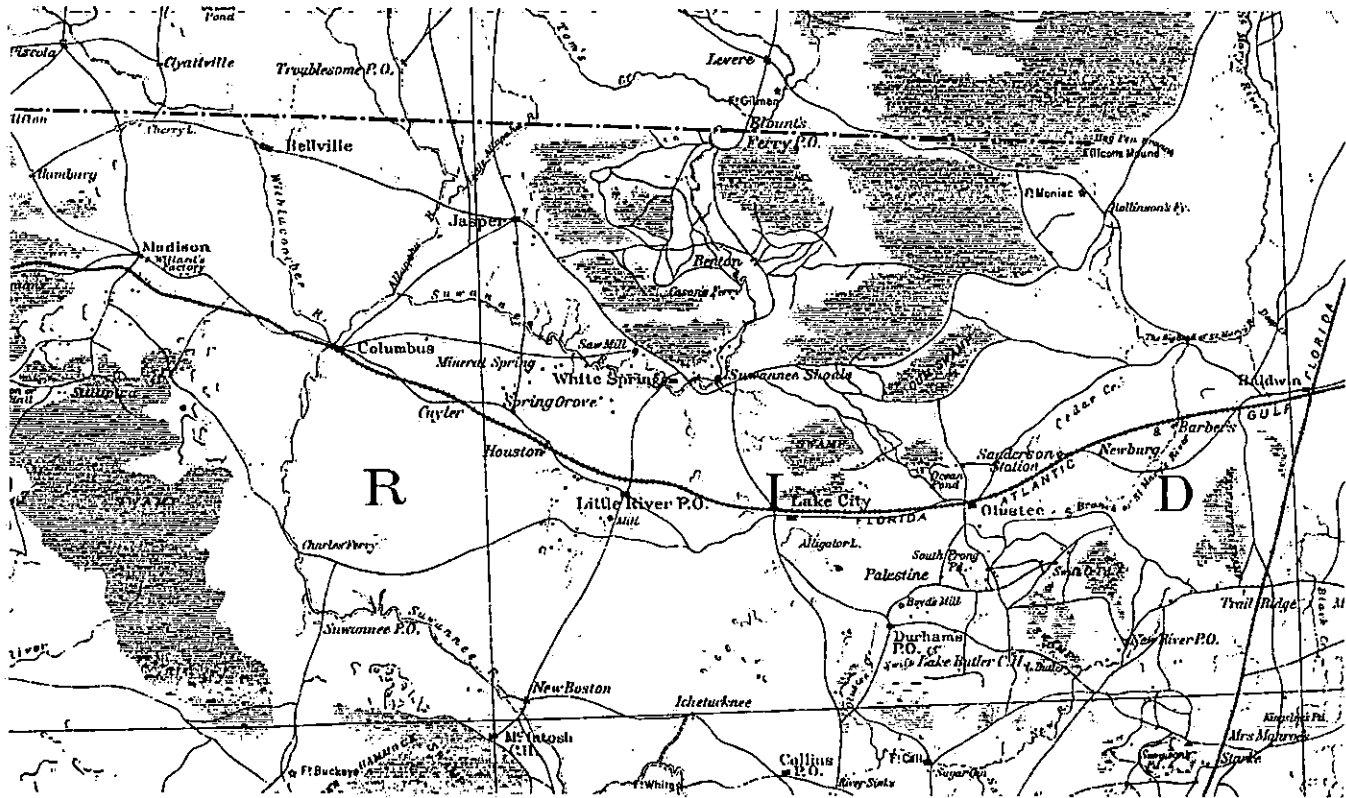
### **U.S. Territorial Period 1821-1845**

The first U.S. census in 1830 shows ten residents in Suwannee County, none near Wellborn yet. After 1830 the George McClellan family moved from Jasper and settled at the crossroads of the Jacksonville to Tallahassee stage road and the road from White Springs to New Boston (Branford). They had a stage relay station at their homestead. Blacks worked on the McClellan plantation. The 1840 census shows 16 residents here and gives the name for the area as Little River. The Little River originates here and meanders throughout the Wellborn area.

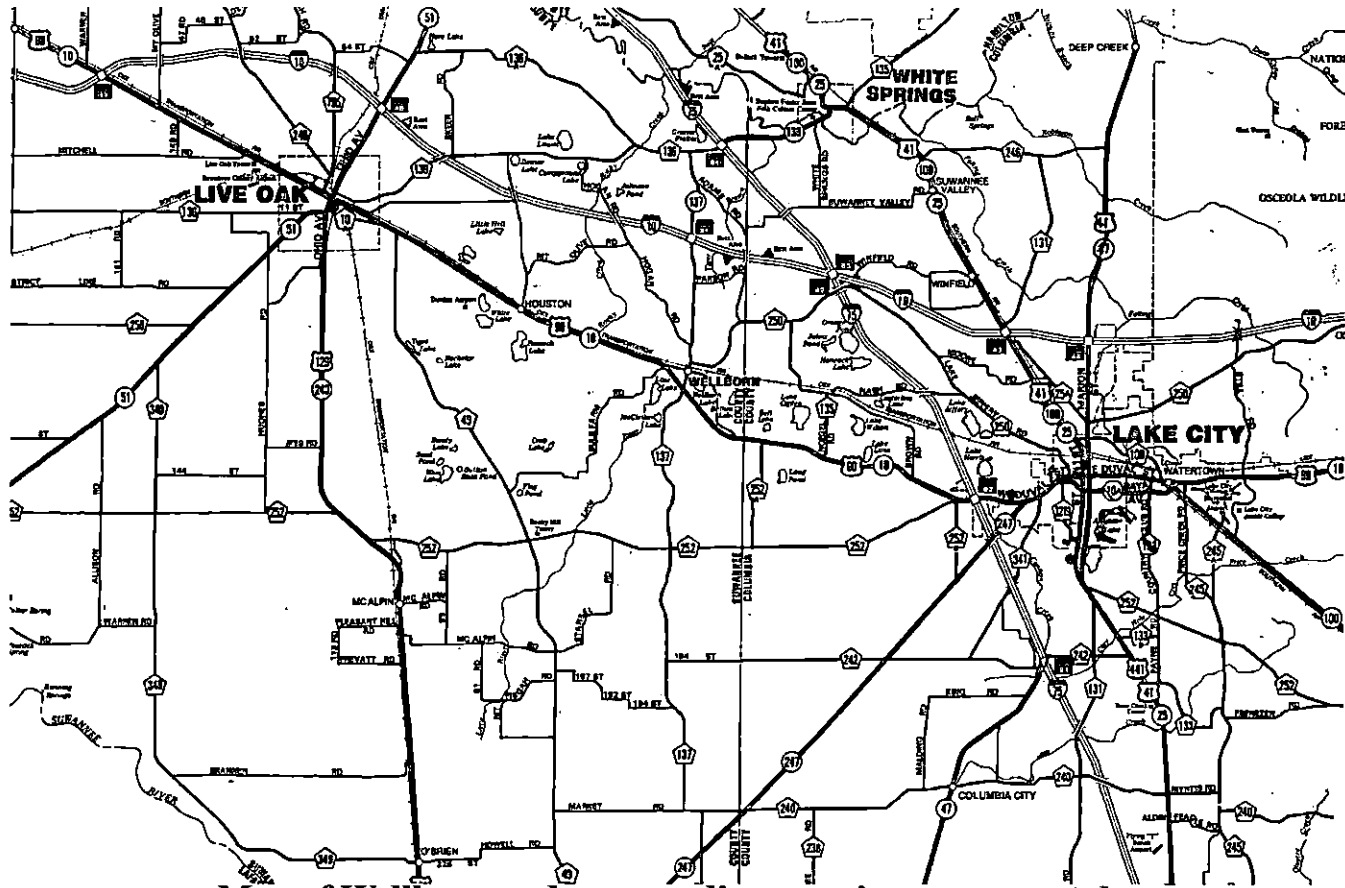
### **The Seminole Indian War dates 1825-1842, 1849, and 1857**

The story is that the last Indian massacre in Wellborn area happened in January 1841. Captain Angus McAulay needed the heart pine foundation blocks for a house for George McClellan. The black timber cutters were scared when five Indians were spotted. Angus McAulay and Zion Davis went by horseback to spread the alarm. When they reached the Tillis homestead (2 to 3 miles south of Wellborn today) they found the mother dead from a musket wound and the children killed by arrows. One child, Jimmy, survived and later served with distinction in the War Between the States. Dick Tillis, the father of the family also survived since he was off helping a neighbor at the time of the tragedy.

A hearsay tale is told of Sampson Carver, about 1857, spotting a campfire with about six Indians around it. It was winter, after a rainy spell, and they were in impenetrable woods and swamps, south of today's US 90 and north of today's 252, between the Valhalla area and CR137. Sampson aimed and fired. One squaw was shot in the head. The place became "Indian Head Bay".



1860 Map of Wellborn and surrounding area during the time of wagon trails.



Map of Wellborn and surrounding area in our present day.

## **EXPLANATION OF U.S. GOVERNMENT MAP DATED 1860**

U.S. Government Map dated 1860 was brought to this research by Charles Deese who upon his retirement has returned to the family home where his daddy grew up as one of twelve children, only one of whom died as an infant. Today's Deeses live east of CR 137, South of US 90. Many descendants of the old original families enjoy the continuity of living and working the same land. Gaylord, Stansel, McClellan, Kent, Moseley, McLeran, Geiger, Tillis, McMillen, Law, Sapp, Rowell, Edwards, Adams, Hogan, Bailey, Brannon, Taylor, McMullen, Foster, Butler, Moore, Redman, White, Cray, are some of the others whose Wellborn roots go deep.

On the 1860 map (reproduced here) there is no Live Oak or Wellborn. There is no road from Lake City westward, corresponding to current US 90, beyond the present junction of 252. A Stage Coach Road appears and roughly follows the route of present 252 to Charles Springs where it crosses the Suwannee River and continues northwest, intersecting with another road just a few miles south of Madison. The Stage Road forked at a point on 252 just south of Lake Lona. The right fork angled northwest to Little River Post Office. Wellborn's earliest mail handling point was Little River Post Office, located at McClellan place. West of McClellan Little River station the trail crossed the Little River as it exits the south end of Low Lake. For years there were logs laid across the river creating a "corduroy crossing" so that in the 1800's buggies crossed noisily and bumpily. In the early 1900's a bridge was built. The earthen embankments and culvert can be seen there today. Downstream cement foundation pillars remain from Phillip Lowe's water powered mill. The old stage coach road crosses the railroad at Houston and swings north of Gum Slough to the community of Spring Grove. It is intersected by a north/south road from Jasper (US 129?) Continuing west it crosses the Railroad twice before it crosses the Suwannee River at Columbus (Ellaville) and continues west to Madison. County Road 137 appears to follow approximately the current route from White Springs to Little River but then veers southwest to New Boston (Branford area) where it intersects with another Stage Road from the east. This road ran from New Boston, east to Ichetucknee, then southeast to Collins Post Office near Olena. (the Bellamy Road)

## SETTLEMENT

Florida and Atlantic Gulf Central Railroad was completed from Jacksonville to Lake City in March 1860. In early 1861 the railroad from Lake City to Tallahassee (Pensacola and Georgia Railroad) was completed. The day the first train went through was a day to remember. A wood burner steam engine was a huffin' and puffin' monster. Children, blacks and whites alike, shared anticipation but scattered when the reality hove in sight.

The Wellborn area has been part of five different counties. The Florida territory was originally divided into two counties. Everything east of the Apalachicola River was St. Johns County and everything west from the Apalachicola to the Mississippi River was Escambia County. On August 12, 1822, the Wellborn area became part of Duval County. On December 29, 1824, we became Alachua County and in 1832, Columbia County. Finally in 1858, Suwannee County was formed.

January 16, 1860, 240 acres were sold by the state of Florida to Louis Wellborn Dubois for \$1.25 an acre. The record is in the Suwannee County courthouse.

Someone wrote a story about 162 acres given to Louis Wellborn Dubois as recompense for civil engineering work on the east/west railroad track across north Florida. A second story is about an adjacent parcel of land which was owned by Dr. W. A. Dunn who had a son named Welborn and that the son was named after a J.M. Welborn of Warrenton, Georgia.

Was our hometown named after L.W. Dubois (who spelled his middle name with two "l"s)? Was Welborn named after W. Dunn or a Georgian J.M. Welborn (which would account for the early train station spelling as a one "l" Welborn)?

This history committee leaves it up to you, but Louis Wellborn Dubois's paper trail assures us he was here and did plat a town.

## **SOME WELLBORN DATES & DEVELOPMENTS**

January 16, 1860 L.W. Dubois purchases 240 acres from state of Florida at \$1.25 an acre (legal record of sale).

1860-1861 L.W. Dubois surveys and plats a 240 acre town at the junction of the new railroad and the main North-South (CR 137) artery.

1861-1865 "THE WAR" stops all growth. Nails and/or hardware were scarce.

1865 Welborn Post Office opens on October 17, 1865.

1865-1870 the new town develops as the South begins to rebuild.

1870-1900 Timber and Agra business flourish.

1896-1898 major winter freeze destroys citrus. Some moved South to Central Florida. South Florida didn't open up til later.

December 22, 1916 Freight train crashed East of Wellborn due to undermined trestle over flooded creek. Coal burning engine plus the barrels of rosin aboard resulted in a fire that lit up the land and sky for hours. Lives were lost. Dr. Pennington had a baby to deliver (Mrs. Virginia Parker Lowe) and the story goes that light from the fire 10 miles away made an easier trip through the night to Virginia's mother's bedside.

1890-1920 Timber, turpentine and cotton are major crops. Town's best years in spite of Spanish American and W.W. I.

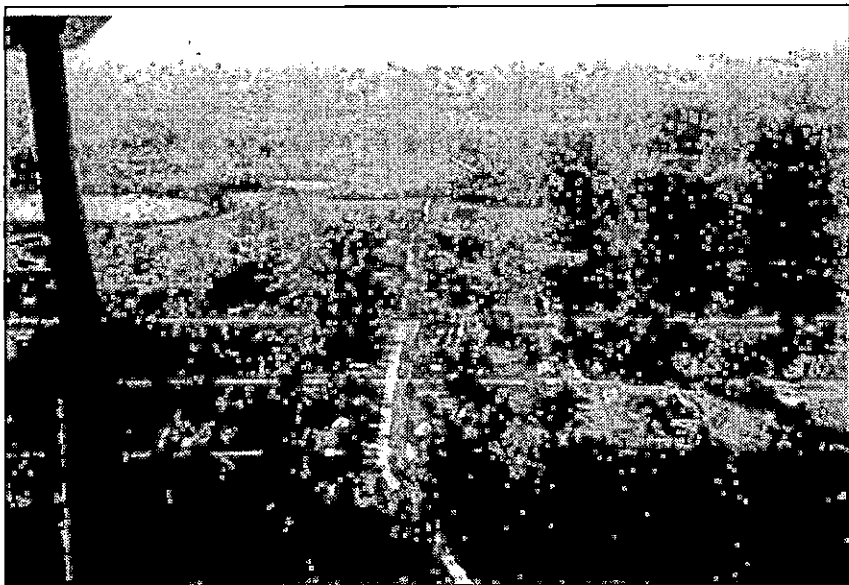
In 1903 a statute describing geographic limits created the town of Wellborn and thereby town government was established. Albert Wayles McLeran Sr. was president of the town council from the time it was formed until he died in 1927. Albert W. McLeran Sr. was also a state senator and a state representative. Paul L. Hemming was City Clerk, A.C. Selph was Mayor of Wellborn.

Wellborn had two baseball teams from 1921 to 1941. They competed and challenged other community teams as well. White team members were: Joe Hembree (centerfield and manager), Alex McKeithen (pitcher), Clay Mallory (catcher), R.E. Wright (first baseman), Claude Fralick (second base), Every McKeithen (short stop), Tom Stubbs (third baseman), Lyn McDonald (left fielder), Aubrey

## *Wellborn's Development*

Edwards (right fielder). Black Team members were: Clyde Harris (manager and third baseman), Joe Jackson Jr. (shortstop), James Dunbar (second baseman), Ernest Kaymore (first baseman), Barney Higden (utility), Robert Butler (catcher), Tom Cooper (center fielder), Clarence Neeley (right fielder), Clyde Young (left fielder), Collie Williams (pitcher), Freeman Cooper (pitcher).

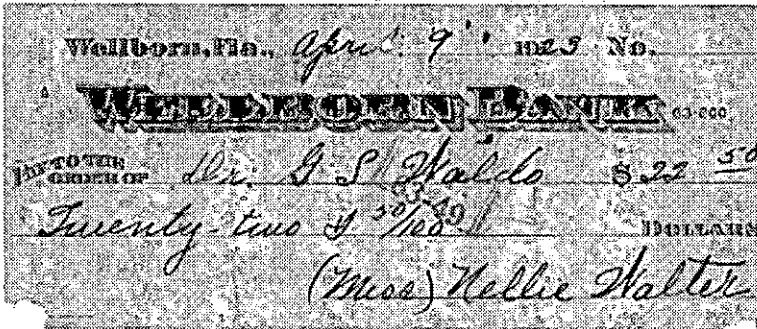
This photograph was dated 1949, taken by Lewyn Geiger. The ballfield was east of 137 and south of Old 90. They played by the lake. 137 runs north and south. The foreground curve is at the Methodist Church. The first crossroad is 250, then, the railroad and then, in the distance, Old 90. (US 90 was yet to come). The Wellborn School can be seen on the right side of the picture (west on 250/4th avenue).



**Wellborn 1949 - Looking South.**

Mrs. Thomas Stubbs (Sidney Belle) had a telephone office in her home in 1912. Her daughter, Winnie Stubbs, was bitten by a rabid cat. The girl suffered terribly before she died. The tragedy served to make locals aware of the danger of rabies. Her tombstone is in McClellan cemetery, dated 1921.

1910 the Wellborn Bank was built with E.B. McLeran Sr. as president and Harley E. Powers as cashier and notary. The Wellborn Bank had a capital of \$15,000.



In late 1920's one March day about a mile from McDonald's home a car broke down. Dave McDonald and son, Lyn, took the truck to go help. The broken down car was a stolen car. The occupants were fugitives on the run from robberies, jail break and shooting. They kidnapped Dave McDonald and Lyn, forced them into the wooden truck bed, and sped west on Old 90. Eventually the outlaws were captured and the Wellbornites came home safely. Bullet holes in the truck were proof that it all really happened.

This truck was owned by Dave McDonald in the early 1900's. Lyn McDonald and Tom Stubbs are in it. Note the water tower for collecting water which was piped into the house via gravity pressure to create "indoor plumbing." Dave's truck served as an ice truck which he drove into Lake City to haul back hundreds of pounds of ice for Wellborn customers. Note the wood truck bed and no screens on the house windows.

The "Florida Gazetteer" of 1925 lists nine general stores and owners were W.I.



Lyn McDonald and Tom Stubbs in Dave's truck.

## *Wellborn's Development*

Carver, A.C. Cobb, Hutcherson & Clark, C.A. Knight, A.W. McLeran, S.R. Mallory, Moseley Brothers, George R. Stansel and Anle E. Umstead.

In 1926 the bank was robbed. It was April. Tom Bailey was in school and remembered how the kids all wanted to be excused to go see the excitement. Odell Tillis added detail of Mr. Knight's shooting his gun across the street to attract attention. Other gunshots were heard. Murrell Jernigan told of being shot at and said the marble countertop made the bullet ricochet to perhaps save his life. The robbers locked Murrell in the vault and fled north to be apprehended by Sheriff Lyles when the getaway car broke down in the Pine Grove community. Several years later a plowed field turned up some money that could have been part of the day the Wellborn Bank was robbed. The bank was later sold to Dr. G.B. Smithson and the cashier was Murrell Jernigan.

In 1928 the former Governor Cary A. Hardee, president of the Commercial Bank of Live Oak, persuaded Dr. Smithson to sell the Wellborn Bank to him. Dr. Smithson agreed if he could keep Murrell Jernigan on as cashier. Jernigan and others worked all day Christmas, 1928, to move money, books, and other assets of the Wellborn Bank to Live Oak. The merger was effective when the bank opened on December 26, 1928, in Live Oak where Murrell Jernigan became the president later. The last vestige of the Wellborn Bank was the old vault and it was removed from the site in 1985.

1920's Florida East Coast railroad opens up southeast part of state for development. Many men emigrated to the new frontier and then sent for their families with a resulting severe economic impact on the Wellborn area.

1927 there was a tragedy at the railroad crossing and CRI37 when a whole family was killed. Today, in the McClellan cemetery a Victorian wrought iron fence demarks the family plot of the Moore family. They came from Jacksonville to visit relatives at the Mallory home. One child was the only survivor for having been somehow thrown clear of the wreck.

1930's were years of The Great Depression and times were hard for everyone: a challenge to ingenuity. Neighbors helped one another. McLeran's store was a food distribution center. The boll weevil wiped out cotton. Texas tick fever and the screw worm infestation made it essential to drive all stock through the dipping vats. Cows (see picture) would be milked in the morning and turned out into the streets of town. Calves were penned up at home ensuring the cows' return at evening. Zuma McDonald opens the gate on what is now 7th avenue. Some kids made a game of teasing a wandering cow with a watermelon on a rope as bait while they felt protected behind a fence. Others can only recall feeling afraid of the free roaming cows, especially the cows with calves when

protective instincts were evident.



**Zuma McDonald and free roaming cows about to be let out onto what is now 7th Avenue.**

In 1931 Wellborn town charter was abolished by legislative act

In 1936 Van McKeithen and John Morgan had an argument about the election when Cone and Pettaway were running for Governor. John challenged Van to a duel. John Morgan went to get his gun but died at his own front gate with his gun in his hand before the duel ever transpired.

1940-1945 WW II Wellborn, like most rural towns across the country, was nearly deserted because men were called to service. Camp Blanding, east of Starke, was developed and employed many from the Wellborn area.

1945 when Fuller Warren was Governor, the era of open range ended. No longer did the live stock wander down the streets of Wellborn.

1945-1960 with the end of WW II, Wellborn faced a challenge that wiped out many small towns across the nation. The younger generation left the farms for the cities.

In 1960 two more lives were lost at the railroad crossing on 137. It was an early morning delivery from Hackney's Wholesale Grocery Company, Lake City, to Wellborn merchants. The two black men on the truck were killed by the oncoming train. Shortly thereafter the crossing lights were installed and eventually the crossing gate too.

## *Wellborn's Development*

1950 a move to reestablish the town charter was connected with the need for a town water system. The town charter reestablishment remains unsuccessful. It took more than 20 years to bring a town water system to reality.

1960's The trend from farm to city begins to reverse itself. People who moved away in the 40's started coming back.

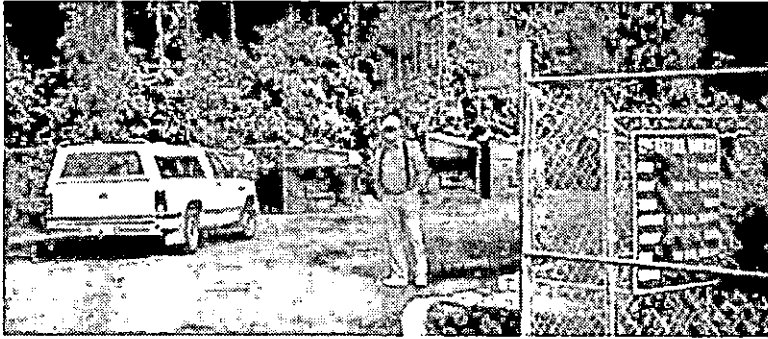
Wellborn's water system established in 1975 to serve 114 of Wellborn's 350 residents. A \$54,000 grant plus a \$94,000 loan from Farmer's Home Administration was required. Tommy Andrews Sr. was the man with the vision who, together with others, made it happen. The "others" included R.H. Edwards, L.F. Stansel, J.W. Foster Jr., Orville Emery, Pasco Jarvis, and Blake Lowe. Blake was the first maintenance man and was followed by George Perry, David Coney, and Pasco Jarvis. Lee. C. Willis was Wellborn's county commissioner in 1975. Jesse Wood was the friend at the F. H. A. Mary Andrews was the first "Water Woman" whose aim was simply to help along her husband's cause. In 1977 a small salary was voted for the "Water Woman" job. One Hundred Eighty bills were sent out monthly by Pat Andrews in 1996.

1970- 1980's Trend to country life continues. Real estate entrepreneurs buy old worn out farmland, subdivide and sell as country estates, ranchettes, mini farms.

September 21, 1981 Hometown Wellborn rallied around to help Melvin Gaylard's family through the horror of the loss of both of young Melvin's hands. He was on top of a grain bin using a piece of pipe to scrape it clean when the pipe came too close to a high power line. Electricity surged through his body. It took five years of surgeries, hospital stays and finally prosthesis, but the happy ending is that today (1996) Melvin is married to Janie Grant (from Pensacola), is gainfully employed and is an active and involved parent of a daughter and two sons. Melvin volunteers to talk with Shriner Hospital kids who are currently involved in their own recoveries from trauma.

Mid 1980's Wellborn felt threatened by a proposed hazardous waste site "in my backyard" north of town. A Concerned Citizens group formed with the catchy slogan "Dump the Dump". Leadership roles were assumed by Jerry Roach, Melba Carter, Charlotte Arnold, Charlton Dedge, Billy Foster, David Coney, Marion Catalano and Gayle Dial. Money was raised town wide, and a lawyer hired. The plans for the "dump" site were turned away from our hometown. In the late 1990's a site west of Wellborn, nearer Houston is under consideration as a proposed prison site; a controversial issue in current events at this history writing.

November, 1991. Wellborn became the first population area in Suwannee County to consolidate its dumpsters and add recycling tubs and bins in an effort to make the ugly and unsanitary single dumpster spots a thing of the past. People had



**1991, November, Wellborn became the first population center in Suwannee County to have a Consolidated Dumpsters Center at 137 and Hogan Road.**

gone from individual management of family trash disposal to scattered dumpsters. Collections were made by truck and carried to the county landfill. Five years later all the sites in the county became manned sites. Open hours were established and almost accepted.

February 12, 1997. The Wellborn Recreation Committee, under the umbrella of the Suwannee County recreation department, assembled a young children's climbing apparatus similar to the McDonald's playground equipment. It is on the old school site on 4th street west of 137. Picnic tables, swings, a basketball court and a baseball diamond in the same area, plus a walking path around, nearby Andrews Square, are the result of community minded effort of hometowners.

1994, 1995, 1996 & anticipated for 1997 is Wellborn's Annual Blueberry Festival on the first weekend in June. This Wellborn Community Association sponsored event features blueberries by local growers, a craft ingathering via booth rentals, Little Miss Blueberry & Little Mr. Blueberry Contest and Country Music entertainers.



**February 1997, Powerscope Modular Components assembled into a climber/slide on the old school site west of 137, on 4th Avenue.**

## The People of Wellborn

### PEOPLE WHOSE HOMES OR INTERESTS WERE IN TOWN

LOUIS WELLBORN DUBOIS was a resident of Leon County. He was in the Wellborn area in 1860 before it was mapped out as Welborn. He worked as a surveyor for the railroad. He was the city planner for Welborn's downtown and is the one we can thank for sixty-five foot wide streets and four acre blocks.



George McClellan

GEORGE E. McCLELLAN was born July 11, 1808 in South Carolina and died October 6, 1866 in Suwannee County, Florida. In 1827 George E. McClellan and Sidney Tyson McClellan moved to Hamilton County, Florida, where he was Clerk of the Hamilton County Court in 1828. They moved to Wellborn area in 1830. His brother, SAMUEL, married Jesse T. McLeran's sister, MARGARET McLERAN. George McClellan served as Justice of the Peace, auctioneer, and state senator from Columbia County, and as a delegate to the first state constitutional convention at Port St. Joe. He was a probate judge, farmer, and a respected leader in the Little River community

which preceded Wellborn. November 28, 1840, George enlisted in the Indian wars at Lancaster (Alligator settlement, Lake City). He served in Foots militia second Florida regiment. He was discharged April 10, 1841, as a Captain. In 1845 George E. McClellan owned three hundred and twenty acres of land and fourteen slaves. He was assessed \$7.92 in taxes ! Sidney McClellan died in 1860. George married Celeste Relief Holman in 1861. George and Sidney had ten children and George and Celeste had three; a son and two daughters (one of whom died young). The two surviving children, and their mother, left the Wellborn area after George's death in 1866. The McClellan home, on the old Spanish trail, was used as a relay station for travelers and stage coaches. The house was two stories, made of hand hewn timbers and the windows were heavily shuttered. Justin Rowell, a great grandson of George E. McClellan, tells of the grand house and the slave quarters which were located beyond the main house and in sight of the McClellan lake. Palm trees grew west of the homestead. A slave cemetery existed in addition to the McClellan family cemetery. The McClellan house burned to the ground on Friday, June 25, 1937. It was south of US 90 and west of CR 137. Fannie M. Rowell is remembered for faithfully tending McClellan cemetery as long as she was able. Azaleas that she planted grow there today. She

lived to be almost 95 (birth Dec 15, 1882, death November 18, 1977). She lived many years as a widow and reared two sons, Justin and Norman. Her oldest son, Norman, preached her funeral service at Wellborn Methodist Church. Her memory is an important part of Wellborn history.

GEORGE B. WALTER (Major) 1832-1921, and his wife E. A. Walter lived in a two story home on 8th Avenue (south railroad) north of C-10, (old 90). The house stood empty for many years and suffered vandalism. It is currently undergoing a long process of renovation. It is owned by Ronnie and Nuriah Jones. When his wife died in 1907, George B (Major) mourned grievously. He had a mausoleum built for above ground burial of his wife's body. At that time the land around the mausoleum was dedicated and became Wellborn cemetery.

FORREST LEE WALTER, 1871-1947, was married to Lora Ophelia Walter who lived as a widow twenty years past his death. Many of the turn of the century grand homes here were built by Forrest Walter. He built the 1909 McLeran House for E.B. McLeran. Both owner and builder were happy with the pricetag of \$2,000! About 1903 Forrest Walter built a two story house for A.W. McLeran Sr. on the corner of 137 and 4th avenue (SEE PICTURE) This old home is no longer here because the main section was moved to Lake City by a Mr. Clements who did not keep it intact but used the materials for a house there. One wing was left on the original site. Today it is home for the Lester Kents. In 1902 Forrest Walter and James Jones Powers worked a year to build the Powers home. In the 1930's the Robert Parsons bought the home. In 1950's Jesse Lee Parsons remodeled the old home into its current state of loveliness. It is north of downtown Wellborn on Parsons road.

GEORGE AND DELLA (KENT) WALTER were born at the turn of the century. They built and ran three different stores. Two were on either side of old 90 (C-10) and were grocery and gas stations (Groc. and Serv.). The third store still stands today, though not operational. It is on the north side of US 90, opposite Low Lake Road exit on the south side from US 90. George Walter's land ran from the railroad all the way across US 90 to Low Lake and was bequeathed to Eddie Joe McLeran and Ruth McLeran Mizell who were very special children to George and Della. The azaleas that Della Walter planted, with Bertha Manning's help, are lovely huge bushes to be enjoyed by all who pass by. Eddie Joe and Ruth intend to preserve and conserve their inheritance.

THOMAS C. BETHEA (1823-1894) and ESTHER J. BETHEA (1834-1901) cleared land, built a log house, farmed cotton and corn, and raised livestock. They were Kenneth L. Bethea Sr.'s great grandparents. After their death Kenneth's

grandparents, JOSEPH A. BETHEA (1869- 1953) and LELA C. BETHEA (1872-1958), settled on the farm located on the western side of Columbia county and considered a part of the Wellborn community. Both of these couples are buried at Huntsville Methodist Church cemetery. Kenneth's grandparents had six sons and one daughter: Joseph Gaston, Burton O, Walter, Virgil, Roy, Mable, and Alvin. JOSEPH GASTON B. married EULA MAE KNIGHT, daughter of CHARLES KNIGHT and SARAH ZIPPERER KNIGHT. They had three sons and one daughter. The girl died in infancy and KENNETH L BETHEA SR. is the only surviving son, the last of his family of origin. The Knight kin are buried at Mt Olive, L.O. church cemetery. Joseph Gaston Bethea served in World War I. After the war he worked in the General Store in Wellborn owned by his father-in-law Charlie Knight. (east side of 6th Avenue and CR137.) Kenneth's oldest brother was sitting on the store's porch the day the Wellborn Bank was robbed! (1926). Kenneth Bethea Sr. says "I remember in the 30's the railroad was lined on both sides (6th and 8th Avenue today) with beautiful homes. They had large porches on three sides. Some were two stories. Most burned during the latter years of the great depression. I remember when the first streamlined train was scheduled to pass through Wellborn. People gathered from miles around to see that train. They packed picnic lunches and waited for hours. It was probably about 1939." Eula Mae Bethea was first cousin to Ella McKeithen. Kenneth L. Bethea Sr. is first cousin to Genevieve Raines, Estelle Revels, Hazel Anderson and is also related to Selma H. Blackmon, Elsie Law, Joe Ann Foster and Pat Andrews. There are many many Bethea descendants in the Wellborn area today. The Bethea family history was told to Mary S Andrews by Kenneth L. Bethea Sr.

PAUL L. HEMMING (1882-1943) was a Justice of the Peace, a Mason, and a community leader. He substituted for Foy Land on the rural route mail delivery. ANNIE GRIGSBY had come from South Carolina because her sister Jessie, had come first and persuaded Annie to come to the Wellborn area. Annie Grigsby married Paul Hemming and their child is CLARA MAE HEMMING JERNIGAN. (SEE PICTURE) Girlhood memories of Clara Mae's include a spring of cool water near the house on C-10 south side, west of 137. Two of the Hemming neighbors were Murdocks, and Dennards.



Mr. & Mrs. Paul Hemming & Clara Mae

## HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

# Winning games

By Linda Formichelli

If you find one of the classics under the tree this season, you'll need these tips from champions.

**T**HIS SEASON, many families will find a board game or book of crossword puzzles in their pile of presents. So we asked for inside strategies from people who make real money playing games. Take Matt McNally of Irvine, Calif.: At last year's National Monopoly Championship, he won \$15,140 — the same as the total amount of play money that comes with the game. Here's advice from him and two other winners:

With 1  
With 2  
With 3  
With 4

### TITLE BOARD

RENT  
With 1 House  
With 2 Houses  
With 3 Houses  
With 4 Houses  
with HOTEL  
Mortgage Value  
Houses cost \$1  
Hotels, \$200. pl

If a player owns all the lots in a street, it is considered a monopoly.

Dimension™  
PC

# COLOR PRINTER

# ING

Combined offers valid 12/3-12/8.

## THE GAME: *Monopoly* OUR EXPERT: Matt McNally HIS ADVICE:

*Stay in jail.* "Don't shell out the bucks to pay your way out. If you have properties, stay in jail and collect cash. You avoid landing on other people's properties." *Location, location, location.* "The first rule of real estate applies. The money..."

SAVE  
\$357



ELLA and D. VAN MCKEITHEN reared ten children in a house that faced the railroad (6th avenue): Thelma, Alex, Ena, Virgie, Every, Jeff, Lenora, James, Travese, and Maggie Dell. Van weighed 250 pounds and was a big man in the naval stores business as well.

Van McKeithen had two turpentine stills, one right here in Wellborn in the early 1900's. He worked 10,000 acres of good timberland in Suwannee, Columbia, and Hamilton counties and had two farms. Many local folks were employed in Van McKeithen's naval stores business. Some of the houses



**The McKeithen Clan**

around the railroad and Lake Jeffrey road (250) were built by and for quarters for the workers. The foundation to the old pay office is still visible and is west of the commissary's location. (5th & 6th avenues). Oldest son, Alex, owned and operated a saw mill located two blocks east of the old bank building. Cook's had a saw mill too. A mountain of sawdust remained for years.

GEORGE SKINNER was born in 1904 to ALAN and MAGGIE (Stansel) SKINNER as one of thirteen children. During his lifetime he served as a master Mason for 54 years and treasurer for Wellborn Lodge #13 for 34 years. He was a deacon at Wellborn Baptist for 35 years. He was a watch repairman, a national guardsman, a county commissioner (1947 & 1948), an assistant postman, a constable-jailer (1962-1967) as well as a husband and father. He married LILLIAN STEPHENS in 1940 and had Susan (Corbin) and George . His research on the Wellborn home they lived in showed that the house stood on land bought in 1860 from L.W. DuBois who had acquired it from the State of Florida. It was built in 1867 by sheriff Wilson Session. (see Houses)



**Blake & Virginia Lowe**

BLAKE LOWE was born 1914, son of JESSIE and MAC LOWE with a younger sister Charlotte L. (Parramore). His father's father was PHILLIP LOWE whose name appears in Wellborn community life stories, too. Blake and Charlotte's two sets of grandparents made them cousins to Thelma McDonald Geiger and also to Clara Mae Hemming Jernigan. Blake and his first wife, Marion, had a son, Terry, who married Jane Tyree. Their two daughters and one son are Blake's grandchildren. Blake loved Wellborn and never really wanted for himself

and his second wife, Virginia (Parker) Lowe, to live anywhere else. The Wellborn Volunteer Fire Department meets and has training events at the Blake Lowe Building. Blake helped organize the W.V.F.D. and was the chief for twenty years. The Blake Lowe Building is available for interest groups and for family gatherings. Many, many folks gathered in February of 1993 to honor Blake on his 80th birthday. He died at 81, July 28, 1994. He left Wellborn a legacy of the W.V.F.D. Blake owned and operated Lowe's General Store, at the blinker light, for 40 years. Roland Hines worked at Blake's station for years. Blake loved to get and give a bargain. He grew a magnificent vegetable garden and had a pecan cracking business in the building behind his home which he smilingly called "The Nut House". Memories of Blake Lowe are precious ones for Wellborn people.



Jessie, Max, Blake and Charlotte Lowe.

DAVID E. McDONALD (1874-1960) was married to ZUMA LOWE (1877-1940) In turn of the century Wellborn, a man worked many jobs and so did a woman. Dave McDonald was a blacksmith and had a garage that faced the old brick road. When the day of automobiles came, Dave McDonald became an auto mechanic. He was an ice man who drove his wooden bed pickup to Lake City to haul back hundreds of pounds of block ice for Wellborn customers. He was a milkman who sold milk from his own dairy cows, and also sold butter churned at home. He picked up the newspapers from the train depot and delivered them along with the milk. He was the undertaker, although it usually was the neighbor women, and/or the family, who laid out the deceased in their own homes. Although Dave made some handcrafted furniture, McLeran's store annex building contained factory made furniture. Special orders would be brought in by train and sometimes carried home by mule and wagon. Dave and Zuma reared two children, Thelma and Lynwood, and they lived in a house on the north side of the railroad until Thelma was eleven when they moved across the street, and across the tracks, to the house where Thelma reared her own family. McDonald descendants (Gei-



David & Zuma McDonald

gers) live there today. Dave was a Wellborn Methodist Sunday School superintendent after A. W. McLeran. His daughter, Thelma, played the piano at the church for over seventy years. Many treasure the visual and auditory memory of Thelma McDonald Geiger accompanying her son, Maurice's, tenor solo voice. Maurice is one of Dave's five grandsons and one granddaughter.



Thomas J. Geiger

THOMAS JEFFERSON GEIGER, 1900-1971, and THELMA McD. GEIGER, 1906-1992, were school teachers who taught a combined total of sixty two years in local schools. Geigers taught at Wellborn school, intermittently to teaching in other Suwannee county and Columbia county schools. Since his mother died when he was an infant, Tommy was raised by his aunt Maggie McKeithen and his grandparents in Jasper. T.J Geiger



Thelma M. Geiger

was assistant principal and principal of Wellborn school. (school history) T.J. Geiger was born in Hamilton county in 1900. Thelma was born in Wellborn in 1906.

Tommy Geiger was a Mason and served as Worshipful Master of Wellborn Lodge #13. The Geigers reared three sons and were very active at the Wellborn Methodist church. Geiger Greenhouses produced orchids beyond comparison which were supplied to florists and to locals for special occasions. It was Thelma's hobby that grew into a business and is carried on by the family today. Their graves are in McClellan cemetery.



Ralph & Ruby Mallory

DR. W. C. and BETTY MALLORY built the original Mallory home on 137 at 4th Avenue in 1885 (houses). Their son STEPHEN RALPH MALLORY married RUBY MOORE, daughter of COLONEL and MRS. WALTER MOORE in 1901. The couple lived in the family home until their deaths (1960's). Ralph's sister, GRACE, was memorialized when the Eastern Star chapter named themselves GRACE Chapter, Wellborn. RUBY MALLORY's sister, MINNIE LEE, was similarly memorialized by the Lake City Eastern Star Chapter. Ralph had a General Store (businesses) with a skating rink upstairs and soda foun-



**B.R. & Naomi Dennard**

tain downstairs. He was later postmaster. His career with the Seaboard Railroad started as a flagman and continued as Express Agent for 15 years. Ralph and Ruby were both trustees of Wellborn School and members of the Wellborn Methodist Church. Their offspring were GLADYS (Mrs. Rogers Phillips), NAOMI (Mrs. Bernice Dennard), and CLAY (Virgie McKeithen). Gladys taught school in Wellborn and she and her husband, Rogers Phillips, are buried in Wellborn cemetery. Their daughters are Virginia Giebeig (Mrs. William L.) and Emily Roberts (Mrs. Gene) of Lake City.

Naomi taught school in Wellborn and also in Georgia. Naomi M. Dennard recently returned to North Florida to live at Dowling Park. Clay's wife, Virgie, (daughter of D.V. and Ella McKeithen) survives him and is resident at Surrey Place Nursing Home. Clay Mallory is buried at Wellborn cemetery.

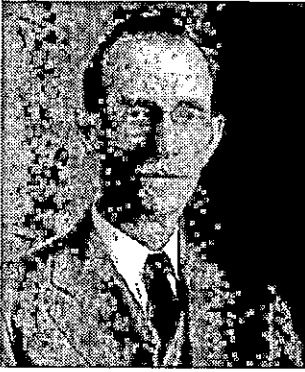
NEVIN McLERAN and REBECCA TISON McLERAN were probably the first McLerans to come to Suwannee County (1840). Their children were: Margaret, Fanny, Jesse Turner, Eliza and Isabella, JESSE T. MCLERAN (born 1832, died in Wellborn 1868) married MARY JANE LOWE. Their children were: Albert, Edward, Jesse and Nevin. The Jesse T. McLeran store was right next to the railroad and was built as Wellborn began. It qualifies as Wellborn's oldest store. (see picture).



**Jesse T. McLeran**

The A.W. McLeran store was built just across railroad street (6th ave) from the very first McLeran store. Albert Wayles McLeran was the first born of four. His father died when he was eleven.

In 1883 A.W. MCLERAN SR. was assistant Sargent-at-Arms in the Florida House of Representatives. He was Wellborn postmaster four years during President Cleveland's first term. In 1892 he was elected to the State Senate and served four years. He was a State Representative from 1919 til his death in 1927. He was a school board trustee and the president of the Wellborn town council for twenty seven years. He was superintendent of the Wellborn Methodist Sunday School for forty years, a delegate to the Florida Annual Conference of the church every year and a delegate to the General conference of the Methodist church for eight years. A.W. McLeran Sr. married JANIE E BRANNEN, (daughter of Frances



A.W. McLeran Sr.

avenue west of 137. Thurston succeeded his daddy as proprietor of the McLeran store. It was the center of Wellborn commerce from 1884-1967. MARION LEONARD came from Georgia to teach school in 1920. She became the wife of Thurston B McLeran. Their offspring are Margaret (Owens), Virginia Jane (Windsor), Thurston Jr. (m. JoAnne Chilton) and Leonard (m. Sylvia Childs). A veteran of World War I, he was a member of the American Legion Wellborn Post . He was a Master Mason and a member of Wellborn Masonic Lodge #13 for seventy-three years. His funeral was at the Wellborn Methodist church where he was active all his life. His grave is in the Wellborn cemetery. He was the first commercial pine grower in the area and he had chicken houses long before commercial houses appeared. The extended family and many friends gathered at the McLeran home on US90 to celebrate his 90th birthday. Thurston B. McLeran died Dec 22, 1991, after having lived six years as a widower.

Emily Powers Brannen and Rev. Edmund Brannen) and they had these children: Blanche, Nellie (Cobb), Ruth Frances (Hackney), Albert Wayles Jr.(m.Nita Gaines), and Thurston Brannen McL (born April 23 1897), (m. Marion Leonard) plus Rachel who died in infancy. A.W. McLeran Jr. descendants who live in Wellborn today are: Martha (Johnson), Joyce (Yates), Lounita (Barnhill) and Mildred Ruth (Salmons) and their offspring.

THURSTON B. MCLERAN and his daddy had the McLeran General Merchandise store on 6th



Thurston B. & Marion L. McLeran

THE W.C.JERNIGAN family (Gus and Sally and two children) moved from Columbia county to Wellborn in 1900 where he lived until he died in 1938. They had moved into a home purchased from Dr. Bothwell. Gus continued to farm on acreage about two miles from their home in town. From 1900 -1921 there were nine more children born to this couple: Ethel, Effie, Murrell, Carrie, Emery, Lamont, Wilbur, Gussie Mae, Rufus, W.C. Jr. and Irene. Irene Jernigan McCall is the survivor of her family of origin at this history gathering. She inspired,

encouraged and worked for The Wellborn History Book (1997).

DR. JAMES ELBERT PENNINGTON was born in Jasper 1877, the first son of William M. Pennington and Catherine Johnson Pennington. He married Frances Robinson Coarsey (1906) in Tifton, Georgia. Dr. Pennington practiced medicine in Wellborn for more than twenty years. He moved to Miami, Florida, where he practiced for several years before his death at age 49. Dr. Pennington and Frances Coursey Pennington had one child, Kathryn Gertrude Pennington. She loved her early years in Wellborn and even though she moved from the area she chose to spend at least one month a year in Wellborn throughout her life. (1910-1992) Kathryn Pennington married Clarence Carl Nielsen and they had three daughters who now have produced offspring whose surnames are Bouchelle, Sansbury and DuBois.

CEVERA PENNINGTON, born 1900, was the third son of William Madison Pennington Jr. and Loveda "Lordy" Bullard Pennington. Cevera was named for an Admiral of Santiago, Chile. His wife was Grace Stansel Pennington. Cevera, under the tutorship of his uncle Dr. James Pennington, became a druggist. Dr. Pennington rented a drugstore in Wellborn and Cevera was the druggist. Cevera and Grace had one daughter, Carolyn Pennington who grew up in Wellborn.

DR. THOMAS JEFFERSON HACKNEY married MINNIE LEE MOORE, sister of Ruby Moore Mallory. The Hackney house was a big home, white, with pillars on the front; located on what is now Andrews Square. Dr. Hackney practiced medicine. Their only daughter, Freda, married Henry Grady Forrester, a merchant entrepreneur who was working at McLeran's store when they met. Freda and Grady moved to Lake City to have a part in the wholesale grocery business owned by his father-in-law. Freda's three brothers Walter, Russell and Claude were also in the Hackney Grocery Co. Eventually the grandchildren, Walter's son, T.A., Walter Sr. and Freda's son-in-law (daughter Mary Louise's husband), Eddie Joe Long (Tiny) came into the business. Tiny Long is remembered as a football star at University of Florida. He coached Columbia High football and taught distributive education. Dr. Hackney's son WALTER HACKNEY married RUTH MCLERAN of Wellborn. Their offspring are T.A. Hackney, Rachel (Mrs. Clarence E. Brown, Sr.), Walter Jr. dcd. (m. Norma Sherrill Hackney) and Minnie Jane dcd (m. Ernest McColskey).

DR. G.B. SMITHSON practiced medicine 1868-1932. He was also a financier and organizer of the Wellborn Bank of which he was president for seventeen years.

DRS. GEORGE AND PHIL MCCLELLAN (brothers) lived here and practiced medicine.

DR. CLINE, DR. T.W. BOTHWELL, DR. J.W. LONG were doctors whose homes and practices were in the Wellborn area. DR. ROSS BARNETT lived and prac-

ticed at White Springs. When Wellborn was left without a doctor in 1929, he was asked to serve here on a part time basis. He set up an office and made regular visits in Wellborn for 33 years. He had to discontinue night calls but kept regular office hours until he was in his 70's. He encouraged and assisted many young boys in their search for educational and business opportunities.

**TOMMY ANDREWS Sr.** built many of the cement block homes in downtown Wellborn in the 1950's. He and his wife **MARY DIAZ ANDREWS** came to Wellborn from Tampa, reared a family here: Tommy Jr. (m. Pat Poucher), Dolores (Betha), and Mary Louise (Lewis), who with children and childrens children add up to about 40 folks who still call Wellborn "our hometown." Tommy Sr. was active in town politics and fathered the municipal water system. His builder's skills were part of the birth of Lake City Medical Center, now called Columbia Medical Center. Andrews Square on C-10, west of 137, is named to honor Tommy Andrews Sr. Mary's brother, Daniel Diaz, came from Tampa to Wellborn to live in 1990.

**LEONARD STANSEL** was married to **SUSIE WILLIAMS BYRD STANSEL**. His life span was 1914-1994. He was Wellborn Postmaster 1964-1987. The en-



**Susie & Leonard Stansel**

tire wall over Leonard's desk was an arrangement of certificates of appreciation, plaques, and framed honorings, which he had time to put together after his retirement from the Wellborn Post Office. There was one signed by the Postmaster General, himself, an honorable discharge from the army (WWII), and churchly awards. Leonard loved his Lord and Mt Beulah Baptist Church, Wellborn. There were recognitions of his years as County Commissioner and a plaque from the Wellborn Volunteer Fire Department. (see community activity tribute to L.S.) These were a testimony to how very many lives were affected by Leonard Stansel's. Surviving him are his wife, Susie, and son, James Bryd, and daughters, Phyllis S. O'Steen and Martha Sue S. Williams and their families.

**IRENE** and **JARED CRAY** were born in the early 1900's, married one another and reared a family of ten: Margarette C. (Gibson), Virgirel C. Grigger dcd., Junior, Hazel C. (Ford), Richard, Eddie, Betty C. (Randall), Nettie Cray, Billy, and Mitchell. Some of the older children remember their daddy's momma with hair so long that she could tie it around her waste. Today's Crays of Wellborn live in a family grouping of homes, north of the railroad at 1st Avenue. Irene and one sister are the survivors of her family of origin.

## PEOPLE WHO SETTLED NORTH OF WELLBORN TOWN



**William T. & Elizabeth Owens**

JOHN LAWTON OWENS came on horseback from South Carolina to the White Springs area at the last of the 1800's. In 1911 he and his wife, JULIA LENORA NORTH OWENS settled on the land on the east side of Suwannee county, four miles north of downtown Wellborn. Born to them were these children: William J., Pearl, Charley, Alfred, Elmer (m. Florrie Rivers). Florrie and Elmer's family were Hollis, Mary Ann, and Wayne who live on the Owens land today. Other offspring of Florrie and Elmer Owens were: Florrie, Odessa, Arthur, and Foy Mae. Infant Turner died and 16 year old Bonnie died. JOHN OWENS was brother to WILLIAM THOMAS OWENS who was married to ELIZABETH CASON OWENS, one of whose offspring was BENJAMIN OWENS who became father of CLYDE OWENS. PICTURE IS OF WILLIAM

THOMAS AND ELIZABETH C. OWENS (Clyde's grandparents). JANE OWENS was a sister to JOHN and she married JOHN WILLIAMS. The Williams farm is next to Owens land and descendant Ernest Williams family lives there today. The WILLIAMS-GODBOLD CEMETERY is a dedicated part of Williams land.

DAN ADAMS was one of six sons and two daughters born to MARION AND ROSE ADAMS. In 1906 they built and moved into a wood frame house that stands by the side of the road to this day. In 1842 JAMES ADAMS, son of MILES ADAMS, came to Florida from Burke county, Georgia, with his brother JOHN and a sister and brother-in-law, ELIZABETH AND FRANCES GROOMS. This was before the civil war and slaves were part of the group. They homesteaded seven hundred acres in the White Springs area. JAMES's son, MARION, was Dan Adams' daddy. Today land held by the Adams family members is one mile north of the I-10 underpass and east of CR137. In 1937 Dan, a product of Hamilton county school, married KATHLEEN SMITH when she graduated from High School. They reared four offspring. Kathleen, widowed in 1990, lives in their brick home. Dan farmed and he also worked for the state in several roles: wild life officer, beverage department, and agricultural inspector. Lloyd Adams (Dan and Kathleen's son) and his wife, Bonnie, and three teenage Adamses live nearby. The rest of today's Adams families live and work in



**Dan & Kathleen Adams**

Jacksonville. Adams road did not change its name when 911 came.

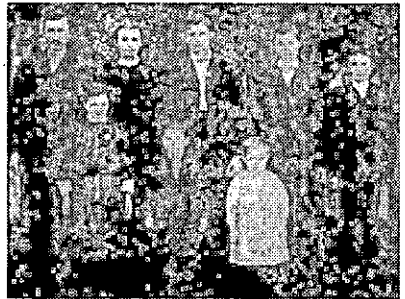
JOSEPH SANDLIN HOGAN and his wife PATIENCE JOHNS HOGAN settled



Montreal & Mattie Hogan

in the Pine Mount area. Their son ALBERT SIDNEY HOGAN married LAURA TEXAS ZIPPERER and in 1903 purchased land to live on and to farm from Gelon B. Smithson who had purchased the land from a Mr. Mickler who had homesteaded it in 1879. Son MONTREAL HOGAN married (MATTIE) ELIZABETH THOMPSON and together they reared eight children and lived on the 540 acres north of downtown, west of CR137. The names are: Geneva (m. W. Brown), Joseph Sutton, Winton M., Pete Leroy, Betty Jean (died at 2 years), Bonnie Imogene, Ashton Sidney, and Wilbur Parshley. Widower Mont Hogan married MINNIE LEE FOSTER (22 years his junior) and they had four children: Connie Leigh (m. Wm. Knotts) Judith Ann, Thomas Edwin and William Montreal Jr. After an inter-

lude in south Florida. Mont and Minnie, homesick, came back to Wellborn to live north of Hogan road on CR137. Four Hogan families live there today. Mont Hogan died in 1975. Hogan road runs by the original Hogan farm.



Albert Sidney , Laura, Thomas, Jesse, Albert Wilmer, Annie Joel, Montreal, Gelon Hogan.

JAMES JONES POWERS, born in Georgia, came to North Florida in 1840. He had a half sister, FRANCIS EMILY POWERS (1842-1930) who came and married widower REV. EDMUND



Edmond Brannen

BRANNEN

(SEE PICTURE OF REV. EDMUND BRANNEN1806-1877). Rev. Brannen and his wife Francis Emily were the parents of Janie Eliza Brannen who grew up and married A.W. McLeran Sr. THE TWO LADIES ARE FRANCIS EMILY POWERS (not long before her death, with her daughter Janie Eliza Brannen McLeran). The other offspring of Rev. Edmund and Frances Emily Brannen were: Sarah Edmonia (m. Jesse Taylor McLeran) and Ellen Brannen (m. Wm Franklin). JAMES JONES POWERS was a self-educated man and married MARGARET REBECCA MILLER in 1869. They had ten children over the next twenty-seven years. One of these was MABEL

POWERS BUSBY who was Roumyra Williamsons's mother. (who shared her genealogy story for this book) J.J. and Rebecca Powers had one thousand acres and grew cotton/ had a cotton gin, a grist mill, a saw mill and one hundred acres of virgin pine from which came the lumber to build the family home about three miles from downtown Wellborn. Today it is the Parson's home on Parsons road and is beautiful. J.J. believed in helping his neighbors and is remembered for building, then donating caskets in needy situations. His wife lined them with sheets. Margaret Rebecca Powers died in 1922, at 69 and J.J. lived one year longer. They are buried in Salem cemetery off Lake Jeffrey road.



Frances Emily Powers Brannen & Janie Eliza Brannen McLeran

CHARNIC WILSON MCMULLEN and JOSEPHINE ELLA DILDA MCMULLEN came from Georgia to North Florida in 1890 and acquired acreage at Wellborn off CR137 south of US 90. Charnic was a blacksmith. Most of the original acres are still in the family. Offspring included these: FLORENCE who married JOHN SMITH . They lived south of Wellborn in the Central Community. VALLIE (ELBER) who married neighbor WILLIAM HENDRICKS and moved to Jacksonville, JOHN ANDERSON McM who married SUSAN LOTTIE JOHNS and settled on the Johns farm north of Wellborn on CR 137 (where Cribbs and Cannon descendants are today), son Paul Elijah m. Myrtice Moody. LAWRENCE DALLAS MCM married MINNIE ALLEN and lived on the McMullen farm south of Wellborn. His second marriage was to FLORENCE HUGGINS. PONCE DE LEON McM married ELMA RUTH SNELGROVE and lived in nearby White Springs. When the parents died Ponce moved back to the McMullen farm at Wellborn. RUTH LILLIAN married CARSON DOWNING, a Seaboard employee, and they did not stay in Wellborn. The McMullen Farm on the north side has been awarded the Hundred Year Plaque by the state of Florida. (see Cane syrup story) The McMullens on the south farm moved the old depot to their land and made a home for the Partridge branch of the family. Virginia McMullen Severence lives in downtown Wellborn.

BENJAMIN LAW and his wife, NANCY CONNELL LAW (from Wellborn) signed the property deed of the Law old home place in 1899. Jerome Law is the genealogy buff in this family and Benjamin and Nancy are his great grandparents. Grandfather was WALTER LAW who married LULA CROFT. Their son, NORMAN married GRACE ELLIS whose family also homesteaded in the Mt. Olive area of Wellborn. Joe, Norman's brother, inherited the acreage that had been built up to 300 acres. JOE and ELSIE (Waldron) Law reared their family, Betty (Moseley), Dwight, and Dean. Jerome is one of eight children reared by Norman and Grace Law. They are James W., (wife Frances dcd, and Diane), Jeanette L. (Hatch), Jo L. (Bedenbaugh), Erin L. (Blassingame), Melba L. (Carter), Jerome L. (Michelle Parsons), Hilma L. (Rain), and Larry L. (Diane Alvis). When Walter died, Joe Law got the land. Norman bought the homeplace in 1953, 180 acres. During Norman's life he sold 80 acres to a timber company. He kept 100 acres and left it to his children. Melba L. Carter and Jerome Law chose to keep their portion and live there.

## PEOPLE WHO SETTLED SOUTH OF WELLBORN TOWN

KING STOCKTON was a McClellan slave whose son was ALBERT STOCKTON, whose son was MAJOR STOCKTON who had nine children some of whom live around Wellborn today with children and grandchildren of their own. This family story is in the same time frame as the Richard Tillis "Last Indian Massacre" story because some of the King's tales were said to be about indian and black encounters. (1830-1841) JAMES DUNBAR tells that King Stockton was revered by blacks and whites alike. "The King" traveled through the woods telling stories and preaching gospel for everyone to hear. Perhaps he was called "King" because he was a leader and responsible for other workers jobs. The King rode the train to Live Oak, free, and that was a privilege granted to no other. King died after an estimated one hundred years of God given days. James Dunbar (now in his 80's, was a boy about ten when King Stockton died. King Chapel of the Butler Community honors Christ, the King AND King Stockton in the minds of many local folks.

EDNA DUNBAR is the oldest of the five children born to GRANT and SALOMIE DUNBAR. When Salomie died, Grant married Dessie Williams. Edna helped her stepmother, DESSIE WILLIAMS DUNBAR, raise the family. They lived in Lake Butler community in the early 1900's and were members of the King Chapel A.M.E. church there. Edna Dunbar is remembered as Cousin Edna to the Redmans of Wellborn because their daddy, Earl Redman's, and Edna Dunbar's mothers were sisters. Treasured memories are of visiting church dignitaries in the Dunbar home and of providing care for anyone in need. Edna Dunbar's 100th birthday merited a grand gathering at the



**Edna Dunbar**

the Suwannee Care Center in 1992. JAMES DUNBAR is Edna Dunbar's son. This is a picture of his mother on her 103rd birthday. Edna Dunbar has seen two world wars and the Great Depression. She lived when walking was the way folks got from here to there and she knew the days when cars on the road were something that scared the horses and/or people. The year this picture was taken she fell and broke her hip. She recovered so that, come August 15, 1997, Edna Dunbar will celebrate a 105th birthday at Suwannee Health Care Center in Live Oak.

In the late 1800's JOSEPH MOORE married MANDY GREEN and they had four sons, one of whom was FRAZIER MOORE (1907-1980) They lived as part of Lake Butler community. At the same time GRETHEL WHITTINGTON was the eighth baby born to JOSEPH AND ELLA DAISY WHITTINGTON, also of

the Lake Butler community. Of the ten Whittington children, seven were reared to adulthood. Grethel Whittington Moore is the only surviving member of her family of origin. FRAZIER MOORE and GRETHEL WHITTINGTON married March 9, 1930 and moved to part of Joseph Moore's acreage about two miles south of where Grethel was born in Lake Butler community. They had nine boys and six girls. Their second son recently retired and came from Chicago to the family land in Wellborn and built a home. Moore children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and great great grandchildren come to Wellborn and the old home place each fourth of July.

The original Butlers (late 1800's) of the Lake Butler community could have been ROBERT and SYLVIA BUTLER. Robert and Sylvia Butler were parents of CHARLES BUTLER SR. who married RUTH CAPS of Monticello. Ten children were born and nine of them grew to adulthood. Today CHARLES JR. in consultation with his uncle Robert, are two of the Lake Butler community of Wellborn who helped with this family history. Katie Padget was Ruth C. Butler's momma's name. Charles Butler Jr. married CLARA LEWIS of Pinemount, and they reared children, grandchildren and great grandchildren who keep Butler community full of Butlers.

WASH REDMAN and IDA WILLIAMS REDMAN reared four girls and one boy in the late 1800's. The son was EARL REDMAN who married MELISSA TOBIAS from Springville community in 1914. They made their home in the Lake Butler community and repeated the family pattern of one son and many (8) daughters. Earl's only son, though, had six sons and one daughter! Lake Butler community was also home to these folks at the turn of the century: Sylvester and Verdie Mobley, Willie and Bertha Brookins, Janie and Monroe Smith, Mac and Josephine Williams, Frank and Nancy Williams, Alfred and Moses Benjamin.

JOHN and KATE (Stevens) STANSEL pioneered. John owned and operated a sawmill and cut timber from his land to build a home one hundred years ago. Stansel land is south of 252 and in 911 language Stansel road became 53rd Road. They had thirteen children: Jesse, Virgil, Etta, Roxie, Paul, Clyde, Raymond and Bobbie. James, Claude and Leslie died in infancy and Ebner and Allie Mae died as children. These were the days before easy hospitalization with penicillin and intravenous medicine delivery readily available. Bobbie is the surviving offspring of his family of origin in Wellborn today. The family farmed. Jesse Stansel was Leonard's daddy (see Post office history/ businesses). Bobbie Stansel and Maudell S. reared a family who still enjoy and appreciate the family land. Son Dwight and his family received accolades in January 1997 as the Suwannee County Farm Family of the year.

A land grant dated 1885, signed by President Cleveland, for 120 acres on the

eastern edge of Suwannee county (CR252) went to SOPHIA ROGERS. She sold 80 acres of the property to JOHN T. TAYLOR and MINNIE FLORENCE PARNELL TAYLOR in 1891. John and Minnie's last child was Ivey. As a final gift to posterity Ivey added to the state's information verifiable assurance that Taylors have lived on and worked the family farm for over one hundred years and are eligible for a State of Florida recognition plaque. Ivey's recent death meant that all the charter members of Fellowship Baptist church have gone to be with the Lord. Aaron and Clifton were brothers to Ivey and inherited part of the land granted. CLIFTON TAYLOR married LESSIE REGISTER and they had nine children: Carlton (Bumpsie), Edward, Robert (whose twin died as an infant), John, Frank, Witt and Bobbie Jean. Widower CLIFTON's second wife was LOIS BLANTON and from their union came Margaret, Ruth, and Daisy and a still born son. In 1959 Robert and Joyce Taylor bought Clifton's part and in 1968 Aaron's part. Three of Robert and Joyce's four offspring plus spouses and grandchildren live in Wellborn's Taylorville. So do nine of Robert and Joyce's grandchildren which includes two sets of twins!

JOHN THOMAS BAILEY and JULIA MELISSA NEELEY BAILEY were the Baileys of the late 1800's here. Their seven children were Josie, Thomas John, Barney, Burton, Dorothy, Woodrow, and Marie. Bailey names are still on property along Bailey road which became 29th road with 911. Tom's widow, Esther, and Burton and Mittie Ruth's daughter, Marilyn, are the only family members that actually live on Bailey road today.

NATHAN RICHARD GAYLARD was born in 1819 in South Carolina, died 1899 in Wellborn. He is listed on the 1859 tax list. His wife ABIGAIL McCASKILL GAYLARD died in Wellborn in 1882. Nathan Richard Gaylard served in the Confederate Army and received a land grant dated 1886. He and Abigail had seven children, one of whom was NATHAN ADVILLE GAYLARD who married LAURA BLUME in Wellborn. Nine children were born and BENJAMIN FRANKLIN GAYLARD (1883) was one of them. He married EMILY LEWIS and they had fourteen children: Roger Franklin, Mittie Lee, Barney Franklin, Melvin Odell, Wilbur Woodrow, Walter James, Archie William, Hazel Emily, Freddie Anna Lou, Jessie Mae, Virginia, Isaac Wayne, Emmett Cline and Jack Lewis. This is ancestry of many many Gaylards/Gaylords. Roger married VERA HURT (whose momma was a Neeley). Today two of their offspring and several generations of family live on family land off Lowe Lake road. Gaylords live on 29th road and Gaylords live on Valhalla road and Gaylords live off 49th road. There are six 963 exchange listings for Gaylards/Gaylords and the yearly reunion gathers hundreds. Fred and Goldie Gaylard computerize the geneological records these days.

ROBERT A. HILLHOUSE was born in Hamilton county in 1880. He came to Wellborn as a young man and his family established themselves on acreage lo-

cated on the east boundary of Suwannee county, south of US90. He married BERTHA KNIGHT and their offspring were Ruth, Arthur, Mallory, Wesley, Robert A. Jr., Georgia Mae, Revis and Erma, plus two who did not grow to adulthood. Hillhouse livelihood was one hundred percent local and was part of Wellborn's prime time. Many Hillhouse descendants still choose Suwannee county. The geneology buff in this family is Jimmy Hillhouse of Live Oak.

GEORGE R. STANSEL 1869-1945 married LULA GARDNER in 1895. They settled on acreage running between CR137 and 29th road, 760 acres, about three miles south of Wellborn. George and Lula built a house big enough to rear their thirteen offspring. Grace S. Lee and Jewel S. Williams are the survivors of the George and Lula Stansel family. They reminisce about the house with 8 rooms, 5 fireplaces and many big porches. They remember a black cemetery to the east of their property with gatherings there. At the most productive time of his life, George Stansel had a saw mill, a grist mill, cotton gin, five cropper houses and a store. The store failed because people couldn't pay their bills. (The Great Depression). The original house burned to the ground in 1948. Today a big white attractive house stands on the east side of CR137 at the curve of the road. It was built by Charles Miller during the 1960's and now belongs to his son Dusty Miller. Stansels moved to a smaller farm and then into Wellborn where baby daughter, Grace, cared for her father until he died at age 76. The old store and the old barn still stand picturesquely by a pond and are photographic subjects to this day.



**Brince Brannon**

BENJAMIN URSERY BRANNON arrived in Suwannee County before 1860 and settled south of 252 on Brannon Circle. Benjamin served in the Confederate Army, and died of bronchial disease after the war. His wife, MAHALIA's pursuit of a widow's pension left a paper trail for family geneologists to find. In 1899 Mahalia Brannon finally was awarded a pension of \$60 a year. Brannon history is also found at Beulah Baptist cemetery. Born to Benjamin and Mahalia were these: Martha, Citie, Wes (whose wife was a Stansel), John, Elizabeth, William Brinson (1868) and Sol. WILLIAM BRINSON BRANNON married CARRIE S TUCKER

and had two sons, Ralph Benjamin B. and Marshal Brinson (Toby)B. When Carrie died in 1902, he married her niece, ANNIE DAISY GODBOLD and they had eight children: Robert D., Annie Laurie, William Burton, Alva (Shortie) Julia Atter (Juliette), Hale Gordon (died in infancy), Juanita (infant death), Lamon



**Bob & Katie Brannon**

Connie (L.C.). ROBERT D. married KATIE HOWELL (whose mother was a Neeley) and their offspring are these: Stafford, Howard, Willard, Joe, Colleen, Wayne(Punk),and Allene. He, like his father before him, was a farmer and a butcher, who became well known for his smoked sausage. Wayne continues the family interest in making good sausage. Many Brannon descendants live in the area today. At reunion time Brannon, Neeley, Gaylord, Bailey, Howell, Deese, Geiger, Stansel, and Godbold family members all come and refigure out how they are related. Colleen Borklund is the geneology buff in this family.

JESSE D. and ELIZABETH C. HOWELL and six children moved to Suwannee County in 1883. He farmed four miles south of downtown Wellborn until his death in 1930. Six more children were born here. These are the twelve: Arthur Velpo (married Maria Neeley), Annie (married James McHenry Deese), Minnie (married J.H. Tison), Richard Franklin (married Ada Stansel), Belle (childhood death), Vera (infant death, buried in Whitesville cemetery), Lindsey (childhood death, Whitesville cemetery), Susie, Jesse Bothwell, Remmie Drew, and Barney Bryant. Some Howells are buried in McClellan cemetery and also Leona Methodist Church cemetery. Howell descendants are here today.

JAMES and SARAH DEESE's son, ISHAM, married MARTHA POWELL (late 1860's) and lived in the Whitesville (Valhalla today) area. Their offspring were JAMES MCHENRY, JOHN, NOAH, and a daughter LILLIE. John and Noah both lived in Wellborn and married Murdock sisters. JAMES MCHENRY DEESE (Mack) married ANNIE HOWELL and their offspring were nine sons and three daughter. All grew



**Mack & Annie Deese**

to adulthood except one daughter. Elmer (m. Mable Carver) Jesse (m. Maude Hurt), Dewey (m. Helen Gray), Willie (married A.J. Miller), Lessie, Lindsey (m. Blanche Mobley), Tony (m. Grethel Stansel), Wesley (m. Margarite LaTourmey), Lillie (m. Robert T. Parker), Harry (m. Mary McMullen), Dupont (m. Louise Horne). Dewey and Helen Deese's son, Charles, and his wife, Hilda (Stansel) Deese, retired to the family land south of Wellborn.

VINNIE CARVER TILLIS (pictured on her 95th birthday in 1956) was born to HENRY and MARY CARVER in 1861 in Suwannee County. She married JOHN HENRY TILLIS in 1874. They homesteaded 200 acres in 1885. Tillis land lies where 252 and CR 137 meet. Ten children were born, eight survived infancy, and five lived to adulthood. JOHN HENRY Jr. and GEORGE R. were their offspring who chose to live in Wellborn area. GEORGE TILLIS married LILLIE COATS and they reared Odell, Jack and Johnny (whose mother was a Brannon). Jack and Frances Louise Tillis descendants live on the family land. ODELL married LENORE MILOSCH and they had rental cabins, a restaurant and then a store on old 90 (C-10) for many years. Widower Odell continues to keep it open. (see businesses section).



Vinnie Carver Tillis

JOHN HENRY TILLIS married DELCIMER RIVERS and their daughters are LONNIE T. (HUTCHINSON) and LOIS T. (COURSON). John Henry Tillis was owner/proprietor of the general merchandise store at the corner of 6th Ave. and CR 137. Daughter Lois Tillis Courson and her daughter, Dell, and her grandson live next door to the store on 6th Avenue today. Lois T. Courson attained 96 years and has beat the family longevity record previously held by Vinnie Carver Tillis, whom everyone loved and appreciated as a "Granny" always ready to help and to share her flowers. John Henry Tillis married a second time, Alice Tompkins, and a third wife, Loretta Foster (J.W. Foster's mother).

ROBERT FURMAN ROGERS (b. 1847 in South Carolina, died in Wellborn in 1884) came to Florida in 1857 and farmed land south of 252 on either side of 137, served with the Florida regiment the later part of "the War" and married SARAH J. ROBERTSON (of Suwannee County) in 1864. They reared nine children. He was ordained as a Baptist minister in 1878 and the original Beulah Baptist church site was on his land. While he and his family lived in Wellborn, he was chairman of the Board of County Commissioners and Chairman of the Suwannee County School Board. He was a delegate to the Constitutional Con-

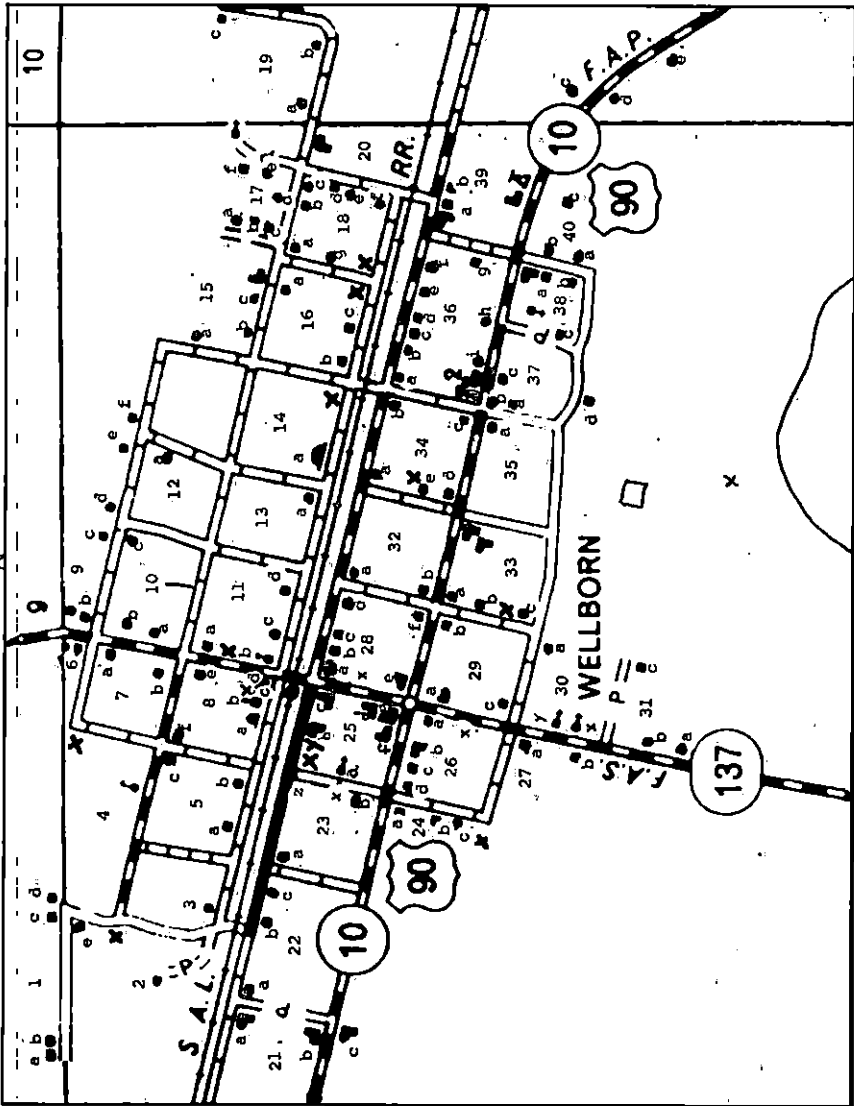
*The People*

vention of 1885 and in 1887 was elected senator from the Seventeenth District and reelected in 1889. Politician Robert Furman Rogers became known for his official connection with the Florida Grange in which he served as secretary and for four years he was president of the Farmer's Alliance.

WALTER LEONIDAS ROGERS lived on his father's farm in Wellborn and reared a family. He farmed and was interested in local politics, like his father, and served as a County Commissioner. Among his children was WALTER ROZZIE ROGERS who married MYRTICE KENNEDY and they produced six offspring: Walter R., Arnold R., and Raymond R., Marybell R. (Houston) and dcd. Lillie R. (Drew) and dcd. Robert F.R. Walter Rogers was the one who alerted us that the Rogers family has been in Wellborn for one hundred years. Today's Walter Rogers lives north of Wellborn and east into Columbia County at Oak Haven.

# SPOT MAP FOR HOUSES - 1956

E



W

## HOUSES

This is an attempt to create a list of Wellborn homes which can be classified as "Old Originals" because they were built between 1865-1925.

The grand old homes were usually built with a crawl space underneath, sometimes tall enough for a child to walk under. Early homes had no screens and were built to allow the breeze to blow through for good ventilation. The cooking wing was separated by a breezeway sometimes. When the dining/kitchen became part of the main house, evidence of screen doors inside the home has been found, probably put there to isolate these rooms from flying and crawling nuisances. Wellborn homes have gone from candlelight to electricity, from outdoor facilities to indoor plumbing, from washpot laundry to washing machines, from wood stove cooking to microwave, and from singing around the piano to T.V. Stories of some houses, built later than Old Original Homes time period of 1865-1925, slipped in to the narrative to help the reader identify location. The Wellborn map here is a 1956 map. Blocks are numbered. #1-#40 for identification purpose. Houses are lettered a.b.c.d. Houses that were Old Originals, which had disappeared by 1956, are designated x.y.z.

Block 1, house "a" is where Clyde and Bertha Harris lived in the 1920's. One of their children was Theo. House "b" was where Preacher Dandy White and Josephine White lived. House "c" could be one hundred years old. Allie Bell Adams lived there.

House "e" is where Elmer Moseley lived.

House "x" is where Sam Jackson and his wife Evalina lived. He and his son, Israel, drove the horse drawn delivery wagon for McLeran's store. Some of the Jackson children were Bidley, R.E., Mae Bell, and Lizzy.

Block 2, the only house on Block #2 in 1956 was built for Celeste Relief Holman McClellan, George's second wife. After George's death she married again and moved to Ohio. The house was moved from McClellans, South of US90, to its present location. Imagine house moving across the Wellborn Branch and across the railroad, too, with nothing but man's ingenuity and mule power! It is remembered as "the old Moseley



**Moseley Home**

home" (Elmer Moseley). It is currently owned by Curtis and Barbara Smith.

Block 3 house was the old Van McKeithen home which was a big, two story house: eight rooms, two bathrooms (plus a path to the outhouse), four fireplaces, a front porch and a back porch with a pitcher pump. Here is where ten McKeithen children were born and reared: Thelma, Alex, Ena, Virgie, Every, Jeff, Lenora, James, Traverse, and Maggie Dell. This house burned to the ground April 1, 1979. It had been the home of Ed and Glenda Rewis at that time.



**McKeithen Home**

Block 4 shows the site of the Wellborn School. Currently the Blake Lowe Building sits there.

Block 4, house "x" was there in the 1920's and was the home of Alice Green with her son, Sidney.

Block 5, house "a". The Bentons lived here in 1920-1940. John Campbell bought it from Pasco Jarvis in 1996 and would be grateful for any information about this house whose estimated date of origin is 1900.



**Old Spencer House**

Block 5, house "b". Mrs. Jennie Spencer lived here. It appears to be a one story house in the background of one of the old (1900) photos. It had a well where she kept her buttermilk. Ms. Spencers daughter, Allie Bell Adams, lived here after her mother died. This was one of the houses that was used for a school when the school burned in the 30's. It was probably built by Forrest Walter in the

early 1900's. O.N. Powells lived in it about 1945. O.N. was a butcher by trade. Nina and Lina were twin Powell daughters. Powell graves are in Wellborn cemetery. The people there before the Jarvises had a story. The owner said that he secured a mail order bride. He aimed to live to be 100. In his 90's he climbed

## Houses of Wellborn

into a railroad car and needed to be rescued. He finally created a widow, and she sold the place to the Jarvises thirty(plus) years ago. Pasco and Loretta Jarvis live here and have reared their family which includes foster children. Some are still Wellbornites.

Block 5, house "c". Kate and Os Ogden lived here. Ben and Kate Gaylard (Os Ogden's widow) lived here in 1940's. A family of Stansels lived here. A Burke family lived here. Mrs. Mobley lived here and taught in Wellborn school.

Block 6 shows the Wellborn Methodist Church & hall. (see church history)

Block 7, house "a" is the Cobb house built by Forrest Walter in the early 1900's for Albert Eugene and Nellie Cobb. The family lived here for about 80 years. Blake Lowe bought it and sold it to the Christy family.



Old Cobb House



Kitchen/Cook House Wing of  
McLeran Home

Block 7, house "b" is the kitchen/cook house wing of the grand old Albert W McLeran Sr. house. It is currently owned by Mr. and Mrs. Lester Kent. It was built by Forrest Walter in 1903. It's twin was built by Forrest Walter for the Parsons. In the remodeling (1960's) the scroll that Forrest Walter often left as his trademark, was discovered in the Parson house, appreciated, and returned to the inside of the newel post at the foot of

the stairs. If Forrest Walter left his "signature scroll" somewhere in the A.W. McLeran Sr. house, no one found it yet. The Geigers have a newel post in their Forrest Walter home and have done all they can do to probe it in search of a signature scroll. They did find a dated board that satisfied



A.W. McLeran Home

them. They were glad not to have to take apart the newel post in their home on 8th avenue and 7th avenue corner.

Block 8 house "a" is the main McLeran Store.

Block 8, house "b" is the McLeran Furniture Store

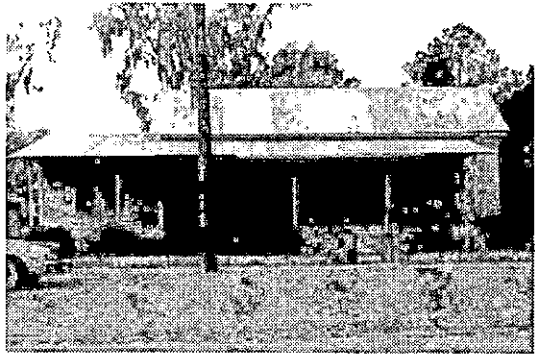
Block 8, house "c" is the building that was barbershop and Post Office. (in 1950 picture this building is in the background)

Block 8, house "x" was the Wellborn Bank. People remember it as built with the old concrete block with the decorative cut stone effect. It was a heart breaker to the researchers for this book that no picture of the Wellborn Bank turned up before our deadline. After the bank moved to Live Oak, folks remember a fish market, meat market, and a grocery store all located along Block 8. The old bank vault was the last part of the Wellborn Bank to be removed from the site in 1985 when it became part of Karl's Salvage.

Block 8, house "d" was the Mallory Store with a Post Office nook and a soda fountain. It was a two story frame building with the second story as a skating rink at one period.

Block 8, house "e" was built in 1885 for Dr. W.C. Mallory and his wife, Betty. In 1901 Dr. Mallory's son, Stephen Ralph, married Ruby Moore. The couple reared Gladys, Clay, and Naomi. (see Personal Profiles) Some of the doors in the present house were rescued when the old original 1885 house burned. The ripples caused by the excess heat are reminders. Clay and Virgie (McKeithen) Mallory lived in the family home when Clay

chose to come home to Wellborn in retirement from the Seaboard Railroad. The corner of 4th avenue and CR 137 was home to Moores and Mallorys for over one hundred years. Births, deaths, weddings, a golden wedding, Ruby's famous chicken dinners and waffle suppers are all treasured memories. The current residents are the Watkins.



**Mallory House**

Block 8, house "f". The Noegel family lived here before 1920. Thurston B. McLeran lived here from 1920's to 1960's. All four McLeran children were born and reared here.

Block 9, house "a" is where Grace and Robert E. Lee live now and is a late 1800's house. Grace was a Stansel and was married to the late Cevera Pennington

## Houses of Wellborn



Pennington House

who had a drug store in town. (see businesses) Cevera was nephew to Dr. Pennington. After Cevera's death Grace S.P. married Robert E. Lee. Cleveland (Cleve) and Della Stansel Pennington reared four children in this house, Billie, Virginia, Martha Jean & H.C. Jr.

Block 9, house "b" is the Wellborn Methodist parsonage built in 1955. There had been a two story parsonage built in the late 1800's. Before the house became a parsonage, it was Frances Powers Brannen's boarding house.

Block 9, house "c" was built by Alex McKeithen who reared a family here.

Block 9, house "d" is where Mrs. Dena Floyd and two sons, "Sambo" (Samuel), and "Pat" (Albert), lived.

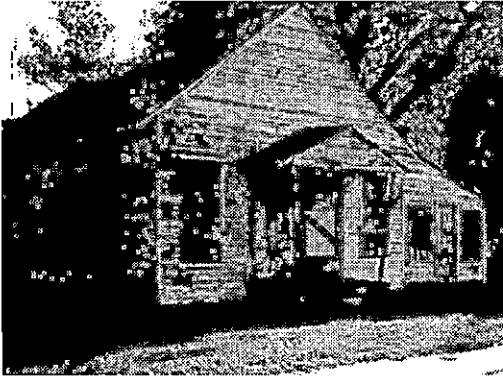
Block 9, house "f" was a Johns family. Mr. Elliott is also remembered as resident here.

Block 10, house "b" is where Blake Lowe's widow, Virginia Parker Lowe lives. House "a" was the Phillip Lowe house, an old original Wellborn home. It was moved to the Cray family group of homes on First avenue between 4th and 6th avenue on April 16, 1961.

Block 10, house "c" is where Martha and Winston Johnson now live. It is one of the Forrest Walter houses and was built for Martha's daddy A.W. McLeran Jr. Martha was born here (as were Martha and Winston's children) and so were Martha's three sisters: Joyce (Yates), Lounita (Barnhill), and Mildred (Salmons), the four daughters of Nita Gaines McLeran & A.W. McLeran Jr.

Block 11, house "a" is the house where Granny Jarvis lived, but the old original home on this location was a big, white house with a porch and the Cumbees lived here.

Block 11, house "b" is the corner store. This map has a cross on the top because it was used as a church in 1956 by Rev. Coleman (Esther Bailey's daddy) who was a Church of God preacher. The building has served as a store several differ-



**Corner Store**

ent times: C.A.Knight General Merchandise is remembered, also Rossi's furniture, Mr. Roper's meat market and groceries, a Suwannee (chain) store (managed for a brief time by Rufus Jernigan) Oliver McCall owned it in 1938 and John Henry Tillis's General Store was here. Tom Bailey owned it and used it for storage and to keep calves from freezing one winter cold snap. (THE PICTURE

SHOWS HOW IT LOOKED BEFORE FISHER'S OWNERSHIP). The Keene's Wellborn General Store was the most recent attempt at general store keeping. Keenes offered a mini-restaurant. The kitchen had been put in when the American Legion activities were there. Current owners, H.G. Fisher and sons, have had "Country Classics" wood crafted furniture there. Now it is a show room for Fisher fine furniture: Suwannee Valley Wood Works. John Henry Tillis descendants live next door and can show price lists and bookkeeping from the old store.

Block 11, house "c" is where Foy Mae Owens lived. Her married names were Long, Curl, Lee, and Lewis.

Block 11, house "x" was A.W. McLeran Sr.'s first home where all five of his children were born (PICTURE IS 1908 at the A.W. McLERAN Sr. home. The baby is Joseph Eugene Cobb born Jan 26, 1908).

Block 12, house "a" was a family of Lizzie Simons long ago. Emerys (1960's) lived on the same spot and currently the Charles McNallys live there.



**A.W. McLeran Home**

Block 13, house "a" is a turn of the century house. These names are connected with this house: Hill, Hemming,

Geiger, Cotton, Kennedy, and most recently, Julia Smith, (widow of Glenn Smith).

Block 14 is where the Alex McKeithen saw mill was located. It was part of the lumber industry. Before the saw mill, this was the location of Dave McDonald's huge barn which housed a blacksmith shop and stored hand made coffins. Mr. W.P. Warren also used the barn for storage. (see story and pictures of tornado of 1915). On the southwest corner of Block 14 was a house occupied by Birchfields. Alex and Louise McKeithen lived there. Justin Bryan built the house that stands on that spot now.

Block 15, house "a" has a four sided tin roof and the old time look. It is currently occupied by Hatcher/Harper. Mrs. Keen was an earlier owner who thought the house was made by joining two houses together.

Block 15, house area "b" the names Ibb Chatman, Evelyn and Jesse Jackson and Mary Jackson come to mind. Neighborhoods (Blocks 15-20 and 36-40) were built for the lumber/turpentine workers. "The Quarters" identification lingers on.

Block 15, house "c" could date to turn of the century. It was where Madella Missouri Queen Victoria Savannah Bell Williams lived in the 1920's. She must have been a black lady who liked to make children giggle because she would say all her names in a sing-song way. Everyone knew her and loved her as "Queen". Block 15, shows a store marker. It was a juke joint owned and run by Alonzo Dunbar.

Block 16, marker "x" is the old commissary run by Van McKeithen.



**McDonald/McKeithen House**

Block 16, house "a" is where Senior and Viola Allen live in a modified mobile home which replaced the old original home. Bertha and Harry Smith preceded Allens on this location. When Louise Perry watched her home burn, it was here.

Block 16, house "b" was bought and lived in by John Edward McDonald in the 1890's. It was inherited by Dave McDonald. Thelma and Lynwood McDonald were born and lived there until 1917, when they moved across the

street and tracks to the house on Block 34, "b". Around 1926 deeds show the Block 16, house "b" was owned by McKeithens. The next owner was T.J. Gei-

ger and McKeithen family members continued to live in it. House "b" is currently lived in by the Whitts.

Block 16, house "c" is another of the turn of the century (or older) ones. It was occupied at one time by Every McKeithen. It was owned and occupied for years by Thorntons. Now it is a rental owned by Bill Lang.

Block 17, house "a" was Enoch Jonas's. Block 17, house "b" was Henry Jones. Block 17, house "c" was Ms. Rebecca's

Block 17, house "d" was Annie and Arthur Lee's, house "f" is the Martin family.

Block 18, "x" is the old turpentine still which burned in the late 40's.

Block 18, house "a" was Rover Hudson and Pearl. House "b" was Wig and Lou. House "c, d, e & f" are associated with these names: Florence Hicks, Dad Caymore, Coursey and Clarence Perkins.

Block 18, house "g" is the house where Luther and Addie Mae Bess lived til she became a widow and she continues at home there today. Addie Mae and McKeithens helped each other out through many of life's chapters, so it was a natural thing when Alex McKeithen's strengths were failing that he asked Addie Mae to come to his Live Oak home to prepare a weekly luncheon for him and a few friends, all of whom shared earlier years in Wellborn.

Block 19 shows a church which is Mt. Olive 72 (see churches)

Block 19 "a" was a black elementary school. These names are remembered as residents in Block 19: Sylvia Allen, Joe Cooper, Lillie Drew and Charles Dickson.

Block 20 is where the old Cook saw mill was.

Block 20 is where the Cray family homes are now: Randall family (Betty C) Irene and Jared Cray (dcd), Nettie Jean Cray, Ford family (Hazel C.) and Jerry Cray (dcd.) and the Richard Cray family. Picture is of Phillip Lowe house moved in 1961.



**Phillip Lowe House**

## *Houses of Wellborn*

Block 21, "c" was a Walter barn set amidst grape vines planted for their fruit intended to make wine. Building "c" was the filling station and store run by George Walter. Across Old 90 was Della Walter's filling station "c".

Block 22, "a" was the old George Walter house that stood empty for years but is now occupied and into a gradual restoration by Ronnie and Nuncia Jones.

Block 22, house "b" was built by Murrell Jernigan when he and Ruby Hunt were to be married. Billy Jernigan was born here 70 years ago. Later, when the Wellborn Bank moved to Live Oak, and Murrell and his family with it, Murrell worked a



**George Walter House**

trade with Mrs. Vida Howell. Jernigan's house and lot became Vida Silas Howell's home. She was widowed young. After her children were gone she married again. The Flints bought the house from Vida S. H. Hawthorne.

Block 22, house "c" remembers these names: Benton, Berry, Godbold and McMillen. Now James Conner lives there.

Block 23, house "a" belonged to Ms. Callie Hemming and was a big, two story white house. Paul and Annie Hemming and daughter, Clara Mae, lived here. Edward and Anna McCall lived here. After Mrs. Mott bought the house from the McCalls, it burned. A small house was built and it was where Mrs. Mott lived out her days.

On the corner of Block 23, house "z" was the original Hemming home where the A. Dupont Hemming family lived. In the 1900's this was a lovely, big, two story home. After Hemmings, Dr. Pennington and family lived there. Will Cason lived there and Will's sister, Maude, hosted the neighborhood children with juice and cookies. Some remember the biggest rattle snake skin they ever saw was laid across the piano in the living room.

Block 23, house "z" was the Everett house. Wellie Everett taught first grade in the Wellborn school. The name Noegel is connected with this house. Eula Noegel

had a beauty shop. W.T. Newsome lived here at one time and was principal of Wellborn school, pastor of Wellborn Baptist church, and Superintendent of Schools.

Block 24, house "a" is a home Joe Law built that replaced an older home. Willard Brannon family lives there today.

Block 24, house "b" is the Land house. early 1900's.

Block 24, house "c" is remembered with the names Law, and Roscoe Knight.

Block 24, house "x" is remembered with the name of Onslow Grim.



**McDonald's Garage**

Block 25, building with cross, "a", is the Presbyterian Church. It was on the west side of block 25 facing today's 15th avenue.

Block 25, house "x" was the two story house that belonged to the Hackney family.

Block 25, house "y" was the Hembree

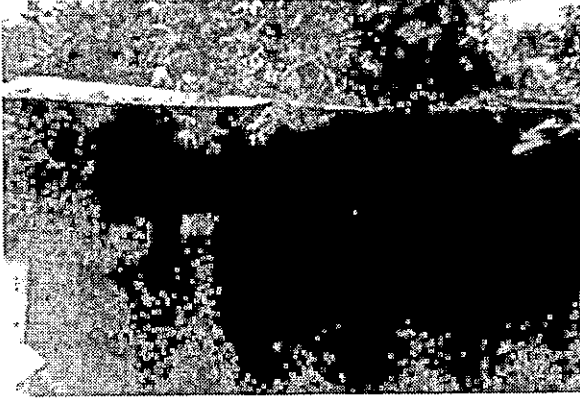
house.

Block 25, "b" was McDonald's garage (Fisher & Thompson Cabinets today) west of the brick store on the corner. (PICTURE) Block 25 This block had too many businesses during Wellborn's prime time to have a map lettering system work well. On the northeast corner of block 25, where 137 and 8th avenue intersect (west side of 137), stands the brick store "c". (see Kornucopia history under businesses). A small empty lot separated the corner store from these other businesses: Palmer Ellis's barbershop, (PICTURE) Dr. Barnett's office, Cevera Pennington's drug store, (PICTURE) Cobb's store, Frank McClellan's Fish Market, Dr. Cline's house and then Blake's Standard Oil service station at the corner of Old 90 and CR137. The station was managed by Lamont Jernigan in 1930. It is "e" on the map and today is Arnold's Country Hair Station & Thrift Store. In the 1950's, building "f" was an ice cream store that faced Old 90.



**Palmer Ellis's Barbershop**

(PICTURE) In 1940 Thurston McLeran Jr. stands on the north side of the rail-



**Pennington's Drug Store**

shed roof out across the sidewalk. (Moseley Store at that time). Just beyond it is a barely visible shed roof, probably from Cevera Pennington's drug store. It was owned by Mildred Weldon of Live Oak and rented by Cevera Pennington to operate a pharmacy in the 1920's-1950's. Dave McDonald stored caskets here before it became a drug store. On the left of the picture, the Masonic Lodge is visible. This side of the Lodge, see the original part of Blake Lowe's brick service station which was the bus depot and the old fashioned "Jiffy" of Wellborn.

road track. Behind him is the Wellborn Depot. It stood between the railroad track and the brick street. The depot is now south of US90, west of 137 and is home for Ken and Mary (McMullen) Partridge. The first building behind the depot is what is now the Kornucopia, with a tin



**Thurston McLeran, Jr.**

Part of Block 25 land is now a memorial honoring Tommy Andrews Sr. and is called Andrews Square. It became famous for Blueberry Festivals sponsored by the Wellborn Community Association. The Jiffy Store has been in business on that west side of 137 since 1975. The metal "d" building, erected in the 1930's as a cold storage, now serves as the indoor part of Hank's Cypress Furniture manufacturing.



**Bernice Dennard & Blake Lowe**

Block 26 house "a" is the old Hugh Dennard house and before the Dennards, Naomi Mallory (Dennard) remembers her aunt lived there and took in boarders. When the Dennards moved from the country into Wellborn they bought the house and Mrs. Hugh Dennard continued with boarders for several years. She had a small building, behind the home place, where she sold milk

and gingerbread. Currently, 1997, it is being renovated by the Blackmons (Selma Waldron Hicks Blackmon).

Block 26 "b" is currently some new greenhouses under construction, owned by Tim Boyette. Building "b" was formerly Bernice Dennard's mechanic shop. PICTURE of Bernice Dennard and Blake Lowe at Dennard Shop.

Block 26 House "c" was home for Judge Hemming family at the turn of the century. Cleveland Hunt lived here and reared a family.

Block 26, house "d" Lucius Murdock lived here in a house that was built in the 1800's. This is board and batten, and one of the very early houses. Bernice Dennard bought it from Mr. Murdock. Currently Tim Boyette owns and renovates "b" "c" and "d".

Block 26, house "x" sat between Laws and Stansels is believed to have been George Hawkins' house.



**Hawkins House**

Block 27, house "a" is the old Julia Hawkins house, currently occupied by Arthur and Jeanette Roberts who have lived there almost 30 years and reared the family there. Estimated date "a"

was built is 1900. A banker named Carver may have built it and lived in it.

Block 27 house "b" was a Lee family homesite. The house dates back to the 1880's. Currently it is owned by Paul Winney who spends most of his time in Jacksonville.

Block 28 building "x" a two story home was there in the late 1800's. It belonged to Ellen and William Franklin who reared a family there.

Block 28, house "a" is where the post office is now. Maxie (Max)



**Post Office**

## *Houses of Wellborn*

Lowe (Blake Lowe's daddy) once had a service station and store there. It was a concrete block building that sat diagonally on the corner. This was gone by 1950. Children (1920's and 30's and 40's) went skating around the service station as an added place to skate while enjoying the brick road for roller skating. Maurice Geiger's big brother, Lewyn, had a photographer's eye and the camera to go with it. This history committee is indebted to Lewyn Geiger for this and other pictures in THE WELLBORN BOOK.

Block 28 house "b" In the 1880's Robert O' Neal lived there for a few years. In 1936 after the schoolhouse burned some of the classes were located here. Elmer Roper and family lived there. (1940's) Tom Stansel and his family lived there in the 1950's. Part of the house, renovated, stands behind the post office today.



**Maurice Geiger**

Block 28 house "c" is the two story house that was the millinery shop owned and operated by Mrs. Morgan in the early 1900's. Wellborn was famous for Mrs Morgan's wonderful hats and sewing supplies. People came by train from as far away as Jacksonville to buy a hat at Mrs. Morgan's Millinery Shop. Several ladies moved to Wellborn from Georgia and worked in Mrs. Morgan's store when business was thriving. Blake Lowe's mother owned the property after Deputy Sheriff and Mrs. Morgan. Virginia Lowe treasures a collection of buttons on their original cards and trim, ribbons, and other goodies that have landed in her possession. There were renters until Mr. and Mrs. Key bought the old house 20 years ago.

Block 28 house "d" had a big, two story house built in the late 1800's. Ms. Annie Wilson lived there. It was a boarding house. Marion Leonard boarded there when she was teaching school in Wellborn. The house disappeared in the 1940's. Today, there is a cement block building that Mr. Cushman lived in. Currently, A1 Estevez and family live here and have an upholstery and canvas sewing business.

Block 28 "e" Blake Lowe's store and filling station also was the Wellborn Greyhound bus station in the 1930's and 50's

Block 28 house "f" is the house that Blake and Marion Lowe lived in 1950's. Currently, T.J. Kents live there and in Jacksonville.

Block 29 "a" is the old Masonic Lodge building. Forrest Walter worked on it.

Block 29 house "b" is currently the home of Lynwood and Becky Brown. Originally there was a log home (before 1904). Forrest Walter built this house (some say 1910). It was built for D.H.



**The Jones Home**

Jones who was an engineer on the railroad. His widow, Missouri Jones, lived there and the Jernigan younguns helped her through the first days of widowhood by taking turns overnight in her home. She let them slide down the bannister. The house was sold to Roscoe and Gladys Knight in 1946. Brown bought it in 1976. Rufus and Clara Mae Jernigan lived here and their daughter, Shirley, was born here in 1934.

Block 29 house "c" is where Eddie Joe McLeran, Ruth (McLeran) Mizell and Charles Mizell live. It was Ruth and Eddie Joe's grandparents home. They were Mr. and Mrs. A.C. Selph. Ruth remembers her grandmother told her that she moved there at age 6 or 7. Estimate on when this house was built is about 1920 and it was built by a Mr. Green.

Block 30 house "a" was the home of George Skinner and according to the Skinners the house was supposed to have been built in 1865. It was torn-down in the 1980's. A newspaper story ran that claimed this to be the oldest house in Wellborn.

Block 30 buildings with cross designation are the Wellborn Baptist church and education building (see church history)

Block 30 house "x" was the Thomas Stubbs house which burned in the early 50's. Other names connected with this house are Allen, Burke, and Hines.

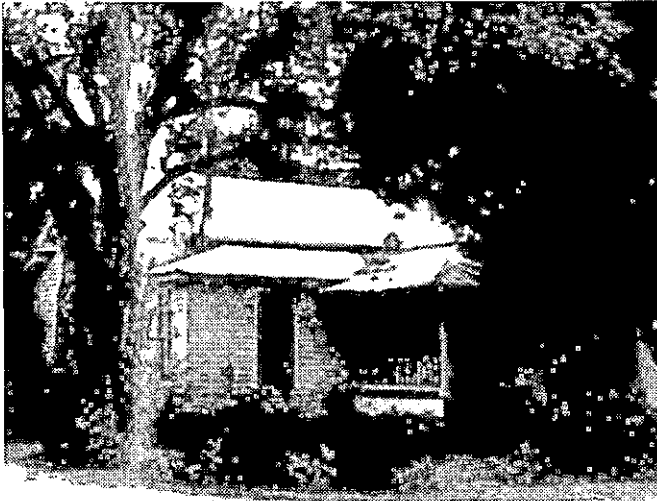
Block 30 designation "y" was a livery stable when Wellborn was in its prime. Virginia Severance's home was built after this 1956 map.

## Houses of Wellborn

Block 31, house "a" is the 1909 McLeran House, a Bed & Breakfast, whose restoration makes Wellborn so very grateful to Bob and Mary Ryals. Two of the outbuildings are now gift shops displaying choice antiques and collectibles.

Block 31, house "b" no longer exists, but lumber from that house which Noah Deese lived in was used to panel the pantry in the 1909 McLeran House.

Block 32 "a" is where Miss Maude Moseley, who came from Lake City, gave music lessons here in the 1930's. People who lived in this house were: Hunt, Oliver, Usury, Cotton, Case, Rossi, and Walker.



**The Jernigan Home**

Block 32 house "b" was the Baptist parsonage (1956) The original house was built by Dr. Bothwell and purchased by Jernigans for \$3500 in 1900. Behind this house are remains of the old original barn. It had been a drug store at the turn



**Mr. & Mrs. W.C. Jernigan**



**W.C. Jernigan, Jr.**



(L to R) Irene Jernigan McCall,  
Louise Bond Valentine & Elizabeth  
Bond McMullen

of the century. Irene J. McCall remembers playing house in part of the barn and that daddy stored farm produce in it. Their big farm was about a two mile walk, partly along the railroad ties. She remembers the year a share cropper grew long cotton and was so successful that his share of the profit allowed him to set himself up with house and land in south Florida. Irene tells of hog butchering and roasted sweet potatoes to accompany the cooked pork, and of happy children allowed to participate and help. Irene and Oliver McCall sold the house to the Wellborn Baptist church for a pastorium. The price was \$5000 in 1945. It was a sad day when the old family place/ Baptist pastorium burned to the ground in 1978.

Block 33 house "a" is where the A.C. Selph family lived in 1921. Sam Godbold family lived there for many years. Block 33 house "b" is where Horace Bond family lived. House "x" is where "Highpocket Young" (on account of his extraordinary height) lived. He married Ethel Cook. House "c" used to be Tom Allen's, then Cowart's and it is Sweat's today. The corner building has a business designation because, in 1956, it was Allen's groc. and serv. with pecans and bait and other miscellany. Today, it is David Thompson's Cabinet Shop.

Block 34 house "a" is where the Guthries lived in the late 30's.

Block 34, house "b" was originally built by Forrest Walter for W.P. Warren and completed in January, 1912.



**McDonald / Geiger House**

## *Houses of Wellborn*

Maurice Geiger's granddaddy, Dave E. McDonald, worked on the house construction, probably as a carpenter. Dave bought the house in 1917. Dr. Smithson, of the Wellborn Bank, backed him for the loan. The house was inherited by Dave McDonald's daughter, Thelma, who together with T.J. Geiger reared a family of three sons, Lewyn, Donald, and Maurice. Currently, the home is occupied by Ann and Maurice, since 1992, with their three daughters, Alice, Marcia, and Joy. Four generations of family have loved this old home.

Block 34 "c" is where Lyn McDonald had 1/2 acre and a house. Lynwood and Mr. Ketchum did plumbing. An old garage still stands there. A Mrs. Munson lived there. T.J. Geiger bought the property and sold the house to Barney Bailey who moved it to Bailey Rd (29th Road). Houses "e" and "d" were railroad section hand houses. Sam White and his first wife, Eva, lived in "d".

Block 34, House "x" was originally two Camp Blanding buildings, purchased by W.T. Parker in 1948 and moved to Lake City. They were joined and remodeled into a home for him and his wife and daughter, Virginia Parker. Several remodelings later, in 1977, the house was moved to its present location in Wellborn, where it became home for Maurice and Ann Geiger and their three daughters until 1992.

Between Block 35 and Wellborn Lake was the ballfield where the men played ball regularly and competitively and the ladies and children cheered for the team of their choice. House "x" by the ball diamond was Lena Walker's.

Block 36, house "a" was built as a railroad section foreman's home, probably in the late 1860's. It was bought by Robert Edwards in the late 1940's. He and his wife, Ruth Hillhouse Edwards, had two children, Wayne and Judy. Tim Boyette owns and renovates it.

Block 36, house "b" was also originally built by the railroad for workers. It was rebuilt in the 1950's for Lois Wilkes by her brother Robert Edwards. Another of Robert's sisters, Minnie, also lived in house "b" with Lois Wilkes. A Tim Boyette restoration is underway here.



**Juanita Williams**

Block 36 houses "c" and "d" were probably built in the 1930's. "e" and "f" were probably earlier because they were board and batten (seldom used after 1900). These are names connected with this block: Quilla Wooten, Juanita Williams, Joe and Nellie Jackson, Chatman, Sam White.

Block 36, house "h" was where Rev. Dandy White lived.

Block 36 had been railroad property. Currently "i" house is owned by Webbs and was probably built in the late 1800's. It has been owned by Stansels (Edward and Alton) before Webbs. John Baker family lived there.

Block 36, southwest corner, shows three buildings in this 1956 map. "j" marker is an old concrete block groc. and serv. built by the Bentons in the 1930's. Vacant for many years, it is presently a Tim Boyette renovation. To the east is a small frame building moved here by the Odoms in the 1950's. Odoms lived there and also operated a store in Benton's building. Opal's Restaurant was a business in this neighborhood in the 1950's. Just north of Benton's store, in the same location that is now a concrete block garage, there was a barn like structure that was home for Willie Lane. He had one leg and was a railroad pensioner.

Block 37 "b" was the house where Becky and Joe Gaylord had the horror of experiencing their home burning. Gaylords rescued their children, lived to tell the tale, and both the parents, Becky and Joe, and son, Phillip, are dedicated W.V.F.D. fire fighters today.

Block 37 house "c" is a 1920 style house, belonging to the Morrell family.

Block 38 shows a church; Allen Chapel A.M E. Wellborn. (see churches)

Block 38, house "a" is the designation for Brady's house and store.

Block 38. Sam White built house "b" for himself and his second wife, Lucille,



**AUNT BREACYA'S BIRTHDAY DINNER OCTOBER 1990**

**(LtoR) Bertha Manning, Melissa Redman Reed, Breacya Burke, Priscilla Redman Williamson, Doris Redman Williams, Altor Brown.**

## Houses of Wellborn

(Jesse Jackson's daughter) in the 1930's. Sam built several buildings in the neighborhood. Block 38, house "c" was home for Rev. W.M. and Breacya Burke. Altore and Australia Brown lived on Block 38. Osher Skinner, also.

Block 39, house "a" is the Cook's house from the saw mill days. Jr. Cook had a small store and garage. House "b" is the 1920 style bungalow we see now and was a Fralick residence.



Breacya Parker Burke

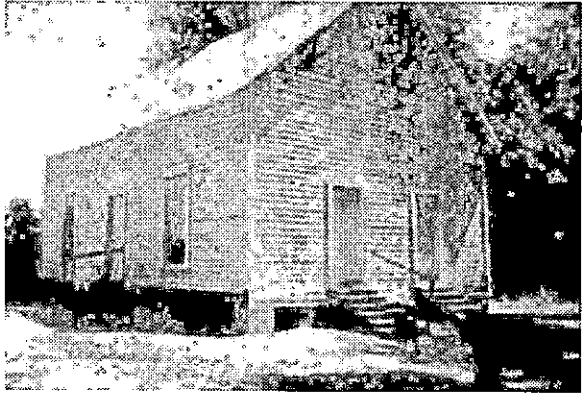
Block 39 business designation is at Tillis's. There were cabins for tourists. The business was bought and run by Odell and Lenore Tillis, along with a restaurant. Lenore Tillis was the proprietor who changed the name from "The Halfway Inn" to "The Belwood Cafe". She ran the cafe until 1962. After the tourist cabins closed the Tillises combined two of them and modified them into a home for themselves. The Antiques and Used Merchandise store opened in 1968 and continues to this day.

Block 40, house "e", is where three of the five surviving daughters of the Earl and Melissa T. Redman lived after they moved into town from the Lake Butler community where nine Redmon children grew up. Priscilla R. Williamson, Doris R. Williams and Melissa R. Reed enjoyed this home until Melissa's death in 1992. 1997 finds Doris at Surrey Place temporarily. It is satisfying to live by the road that their own father helped lay the pavement upon.

## CHURCHES IN WELLBORN

1830 to 1860 the pioneers here acknowledged a dependency on God and felt the need to gather in worship to praise and give thanks. This was before they were able to build buildings or support preachers. George McClellen was son of a Methodist preacher and so it is likely that the stage coach station at the McClellen plantation could have had a time and place set aside for worship. The oldest church building in Wellborn's downtown is the Methodist church. It's first meeting place was a building that was used for the Masonic meetings, school and community gatherings. 1857 or 1859 are the two dates that have surfaced as the

beginning of Wellborn Methodist Church. The circuit rider system meant that the preacher served many small churches grouped in our area. The Wellborn Methodist church has been part of a nine church circuit. Names like Bethlehem. Leona, Whitesville and Union Park (PICTURE IS TYPICAL OF



Old Union Park Methodist Church in 1952

SMALL RURAL CHURCH APPEARANCE), This one was north of downtown about three miles on the east side of 137. New Hope, Houston, White Springs, and Pine Grove, are part of the changing composition of the groupings called parishes. Currently the Suwannee Valley Charge consists of four churches, Corinth, Falling Creek, Huntsville and Wellborn.

Mt Pleasant Baptist, located on Old 90, celebrated a 140th homecoming in 1996, which makes 1856 the established date of the oldest church in the Wellborn area.

Here is a brief history of the seven churches of the Wellborn area today (arranged alphabetically)

**ALLEN CHAPEL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL, WELLBORN** Location: It is on C-10 A and is four blocks east of CR137. The cornerstone tells that when the first chapel was erected August 14, 1927 Rev. Kingsy was pastor. It also tells that the building we see today was erected August 28, 1948, when Rev. W. M. Burke was pastor. Trustees were J. Williams, S. White, B. Smith, Jr. Williams, T. Thomas, R. Hudson, and Wm Wooten. Rev. Franklin Pompey comes



**Wellborn Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal**

from Tallahassee on the first and third Sundays to lead worship. New directional signs to the church, new siding and a new church steeple are all evidence of new life in 1996 at Wellborn Allen Chapel. A recent black history celebration

program listed some of those who served the church through the years: Br. Sam White (1926-1981), Br. Earl Redman (1901-1987), Sister Bertha Brookins (1893-1987), Sister Ruth Butler (1890-1985), Br. Braxton Holsey (1894-1988), Sister Edna Dunbar (1893 til this day), Br. Jerry Cray (1910-1976), Sister Hester Jackson (1895-1973), Br. Edward Chapman (1902-1961), Sister Josephine Williams, Rev. Frazier Moore, (1907-1980) Sister Juanita Williams (1914-1987) Br. Truby Williams (1898-1973), Br. Alfred Benjamin, Sister Altoria Brown (1920-1991). Some of today's family names are Randall, Ford, Butler, White, Chatman, Perry, Martin, Freeman,

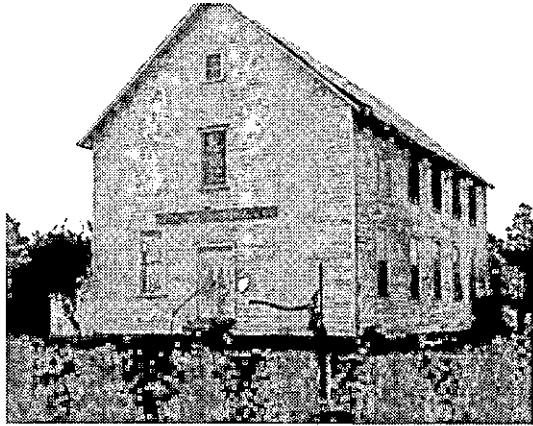
#### **BETHEL MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH**

Location: It is one mile east of CR137 on the north side of US 90. Br. James Merritt came to Wellborn from Birmingham, Alabama to establish a Missionary Baptist church. A double-wide served at first before land was purchased from Lewis Chamberlin. A one story cement block building was built in 1980. To enlarge the facility became necessary in 1996 and plans were made for building expansion. Family names connected with Bethel Missionary Baptist are: Merritt, Strickland, Knight, Beatty, Dobbs, Smith, Bryant, Kile, O'Cain, Williams, Walker, Dorsett, Brown, Brewer, and Ward.

#### **MT BEULAH BAPTIST CHURCH, Wellborn.**

Location: It is south of 252 and west of CR137 and is on Mt Beulah Road. The first recorded membership was Nov 18, 1877: H.M. Blume, B.A. Lane, Mary J. Blume, Amanda Lane and the first service was Jan 1878 with Br. Moseley. The earlier location was at Cypress Lake, a mile south of the present location and it was called Pinemount Church of Christ or the Baptist Church of Christ at Pinemount. Additional names connected with Mt. Beulah Baptist, Wellborn, are Holmes, Rogers, Braddock, Caldwell, Brannen, Gaylard, Tillis, Teddar, Cham-

bers, Riley, Smith, Copeland, Parnell, Bailey, Stansel, Barnes, Miller, Deas, Allen, Strickland, Parker, Jones, Knight, Kent, Parrish, Howell, Hunt, Hawkins. The church's name evolved to Mt. Beulah Baptist Church and October 1884 was the first service at the present location. PICTURED is Mt Beulah Baptist, Wellborn, as it looked at the turn of the century. The second floor



**Old Mt. Beulah Baptist Church**

was used by Corinth Masonic Lodge. Rev. Robert Furman Rogers great-grandson, Walter Rogers, loaned this picture of the church where his great-granddaddy preached. The church had to be rebuilt after storm damage. In the 1950's, Leonard Stansel chaired a building fund which allowed the congregation to have the brick building we see, today, as Mt Beulah's sanctuary. The educational building floor was poured Oct 9, 1977, 40' by 60'. The building was brick-veneered to match the sanctuary. The church cemetery lies east of the buildings.

**MT. OLIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, LIVE OAK.** Location: It is located about 6 miles north and west of Wellborn's downtown on Mt Olive Church Road. The church was Methodist in its earliest days. In 1879 it was "Mt. Olive Baptist Church of Christ." Records show that Mount Olive Baptist Church was organized in 1892 with 14 members and W.C. Lee pastor. In 1915 the frame building

located in back of the current sanctuary was constructed from huge yellow pine cut from the property. This building remained the place of worship until 1954, when the present sanctuary was dedicated. Since establishment in 1892, the church has had 25 pastorates with some of



**Mt. Olive Baptist Church, L.O.**

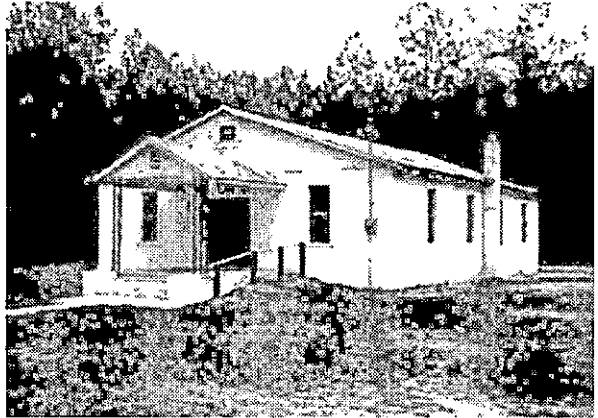
the pastors repeating terms. Rev. John Harrison has been the pastor since March of 1991. In 1996 a building program was accepted to expand the capacity of the sanctuary. Some of the prominent names through the life of the church are these: Adams, Allbritton, Boyette, Brown, Bryan, Carter, Cason, Cheshire, Craft, Cribbs, Doirman, Ellis, Foster, Gray, Hammock, Hastings, Hicks, Hogan, Hutchingson, Ingram, Neel, Norris, Owens, Raines, Reeves, Smith, Thompson, Woods, Zipperer.

### **MT. OLIVE BAPTIST 72**

Location: north of Lake Jeffrey (CR 250) about a mile east of CR 137

This congregation moved from a location south of US 90 on a road that was known as 72, (perhaps because it was 72 miles from Jacksonville). Church members tell us that location was the second one and that Mt Olive #1 and Lake

Jackson Baptist church preceded it and met in the 1800's. First pastor was Dan Cason, with the next pastor Rev. Ware. Dessie and Grant Williams home was where visiting church dignitaries always stayed in the old days (early 1900's). In 1951, the church relocated to the acreage off Lake Jeffrey road on the north side of



**Mt. Olive Baptist 72**

Wellborn. The cornerstone reads, "Mt. Olive M.B. Church erected in 1951. Rev. Dandy White, pastor." The second pastor to serve this church in its 70 year history was Rev. Paul Fountain (until his family insisted he move to Maryland because of failing health in 1996). January 1997 the congregation called Rev. Wyart Martin. Family names connected with this church are: Cray, Dunbar Williams, Williamson.

### **MT. PLEASANT BAPTIST CHURCH**

Location: It is on C-10 about a mile east of Wellborn's blinker light.

Mt. Pleasant Baptist church began in 1856 when a small group of east Suwannee county residents met for prayer and Bible study. A log structure was erected on the property of Washington and Tibitha Helton. In 1878, James and A.R. Moore built a frame building. In 1893 the church purchased four acres of land for \$24 and gave the church a permanent home with adjacent cemetery space. In 1960 the present cement block sanctuary was dedicated. In December, 1981, the cement block fellowship hall was finished and dedicated. Rev. Ed Tharpe finished



**Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church**

his pastorate here in 1996 and the church called Rev. Marlin Tompkins. Through the years a partial list of active families is this: Stuarts, Barwick Ne l m s ,

Hillhouse, Dennard, Woods, Cague, Perry, Hunter, Rucker, Gray, Long, Lowe, Bales.

#### **WELLBORN BAPTIST CHURCH**

Location: It is in Wellborn on CR 137, south of the blinker light. It describes itself as at "the heart of downtown Wellborn".

This church was founded on Sunday, May 22, 1910. Rev. H.A. Jordan was the first pastor and charter members were: Mrs. A.S. Stansel, Mr. P.W. Warren, Miss

Claudia Warren, Mrs. A. W. Moseley, Miss Pearl Mosely, Mr and Mrs. A.C. Selph, Miss Georgia Carver, Mrs. Annie Carver, Mr. and Mrs. J.W. Bell. Services were held in the Masonic hall until a church building on the present



**Wellborn Baptist Church**

site could be completed. In 1975, Wellborn Baptist was #1 in the Suwannee Baptist Association for new members and Rodney Watts was pastor. March 15, 1977 Wellborn Baptist parsonage (originally the Jernigan home) was leveled by fire but without personal injury. The explosion of the parsonage propane tank woke the neighbors. Gone was the home that had hosted taffy pulls and other youthful fun times. By May, 1978, the church purchased the E. E. Page house

## *Churches of Wellborn*

directly behind the sanctuary and it serves as the parsonage to this day. Most of the youthful activities are in the fellowship hall as well as monthly covered dish suppers, gospel sing refreshments, V.B.S. and more! Current pastor is Larry Bell. Through the years these additional family name are connected to Wellborn Baptist: Andrews, Jarvis, Waldron, McLeran, Mizell, Stubbs, Jernigan, Hawkins, Moseley, Gaylord, Johnson, Lewis, Smith, Dennard, Lowe, Key, Taylor, Murray, Robinson, Cribbs, Hersey, Hicks, Kirby, Sharp, Sweat, Chauncey, Tilley, Steedley, Kirby, Rogers, Rucker, Jessup, Bailey, Brannan, Brown, Thornton and many others.

### **WELLBORN CHURCH OF GOD**

Temporary location is in the Blake Lowe Building on 4th avenue west of CR137. The first worship service in Wellborn was in spring of 1996. March, 1997, is the first Homecoming celebration. Rev. Dale Brannon and his wife, Priscilla, welcome family and friends who want a worship service in Pentecostal style. This congregation is under the umbrella of the Live Oak Church of God and looks for growth and land to build a sanctuary of it's own, in God's time.

### **WELLBORN METHODIST CHURCH**

Location: It is on the west side of CR137 across the street from where Second Avenue enters CR137.

Around 1857 twenty-three people met to become an organized Methodist church. The first sanctuary of its own was built around 1885. A two story house was



**Wellborn Methodist Church**

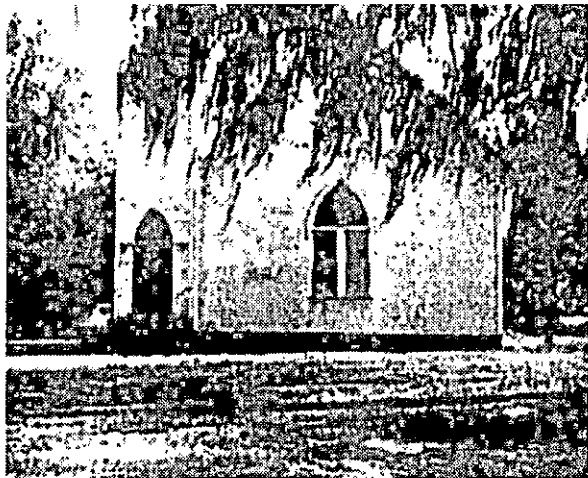
purchased from Francis E. P. Brannen to become a parsonage in 1892, replaced in 1955. In 1933, the present sanctuary was built and has been lovingly tended ever since. In 1960 the fellowship hall was built. Through the years these family names have been connected with the Methodist church: McLeran, Geiger, McKeithen, Gaylard, Mallory, Dennard, Lowe, Hemming, Jernigan, Deese, Cobb, Benton, Brannon, Walter, Neeley, Bailey, Howell, Mott, Simon, Floyd, Yates, Moore, McDonald, Emory, Lee, Keene, Woods, Sharp, Burnham, Smith, Duval, Wilson, Arnold, Linville, Zobel.

Since 1988, the Wellborn Methodist Church publishes a monthly newsletter, **WELLBORN WHISPER**, mailed to all Wellborn Postal Customers and 80 individually addressed out of towners. In 1996, a monthly Food Source distribution is part of the gap-standing action of this servant church.

## **CHURCHES WHOSE BUILDINGS ARE GONE**

**KING CHAPEL** was erected in October of 1951 and was recorded as the King Chapel of the Lake Butler Community with Rev. A.M. Burke as pastor and trustees were R. Butler, A. Benjamin and B. Holsey. This church family has annual homecoming every July 4th weekend. The weekly worship service is at Allen Chapel, A.M.E., Wellborn and at Mt Olive 72, Wellborn. There is a cemetery beside the church. The King Chapel was destroyed by fire in the spring of 1996.

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN WELLBORN** Location: It stood on the west side of present day Andrews Square. (PICTURE) Rev. R. O. Wright and Rev. Gregory served here and services were Sunday afternoons. Hackney's house on the corner became the Presbyterian manse. Lewyn Geiger remembers the pump organ during the 1940's, because Thelma Geiger played it when T.J. Geiger was the substitute preacher. It reminded Lewyn of bagpipes. The Presbyterian church building was moved to Lake Bethea in the 1950's by Lawrence McManus, and it was called Grace Chapel. It is now owned by Roger Lovelady with plans to develop the properties into a retreat and conference center. In 1973 Grace Chapel was part of the Boys Club at Beth Haven Center on the shores of Lake Bethea. Bonnie Bethea tells them the lake, located a mile east of C-10 and a mile North of US 90, got its name from his ancestors who lived there.



**Grace Chapel  
originally  
Wellborn Presbyterian Church**

## WELLBORN CEMETERIES

Research done by Harold Bennett on Suwannee County Cemeteries resulted in several books with location, description and listings. That information includes Wellborn's cemeteries and is available in his published work, a copy of which is at the Suwannee County Historical Museum located at the old train station in Live Oak.

Four of the Wellborn churches have cemeteries adjacent to the sanctuaries: **Mt. Pleasant Baptist cemetery, Mt. Olive Baptist L.O. cemetery, Mt. Beulah Baptist cemetery, and King Chapel of the Butler Community cemetery.**

**Wellborn Cemetery** is located on the west side of CR137 less than a mile south of US 90. The oldest grave there is (hearsay) that of Rev. Savage. When George B. Walter needed a place for his deceased wife, E. A. Walter in 1907, he built a mausoleum and dedicated surrounding acreage for a cemetery. Her body rested there until her husband's death. Her body was placed beneath the ground and beside her husband, George B. Walter, when he died in 1921. Eddie Joe McLeran, Margaret Owens, and Marion McKeithen are trustees of the Wellborn cemetery.

**McClellan Cemetery** is located about a mile south of US 90 on the west side of CR 137, at the end of a wooded lane. In the 1830's it was established by the George E. McClellan family for relatives, friends and neighbors. The first grave is said to be that of an eight year old girl killed during an Indian raid on the stage coach as it forded the creek, (Little River), outlet from Low Lake about one quarter mile west of the McClellan station. No marker for this grave has been found. The earliest markers are for McClellan children who died in 1835. Many unmarked graves are here because of the lack of natural stone suitable for markers. Early settlers used heart yellow pine or cypress which lasted for several decades. As they rotted, sometimes they were replaced by bricks. When power mowers and lawn grass replaced the swept-bare dirt of the cemeteries, the bricks were removed for mowing and supposedly replaced after lawn care. Although efforts were made to replace markers, it was easy to forget where they belonged; and bricks as markers were finally abandoned. Not far to the southwest of the McClellan cemetery is a small and, until recently, unmarked place that was the burial place of several McClellan slaves. No one knows exactly how many slaves were buried there; but it is thought to be 5 or 6, no more than 8. Sydney McClellan (Mrs. George E.) asked that her personal servant's grave be in the family plot's area. Location of the slave cemetery was a "guesstimate" by Justin Rowell, a great-grandson of George E. McClellan. The site was shown to him by his mother, Mrs. Fannie Rowell.

**Whitesville** was a small mill community in the late 1800's, located where Valhalla Farms is today. **The Whitesville cemetery** contains Powell, Howell, and Deese markers and others.

The **Blackmon** family donated an acre of land 3 miles south of 252, and 2 1/4 west of 137 for a church.(**Leona** Methodist) and a **cemetery. Howell, Blackmon** and others have markers here.

The **Carver Family Cemetery** is located east of Wellborn. One of the first settlers, Sampson Carver, is buried there. A number of unmarked graves are said to be slaves who were connected to the Carver family.

The **Godbolt-Williams Cemetery** is located east of Adams road on Ernest Williams farm.

**Lake Jackson Cemetery** is located north of US 90 in the Wellborn Lake area. It is a black cemetery established on land north of US 90 and east of CR 137, perhaps donated by A. W. McLeran Sr. Thurston McLeran did some research and corrective work at the courthouse clarifying title records. Today's McLerans believe the land became a cemetery long before McLerans ownership of adjacent land. It just seems to have always been there. Baptism in nearby Wellborn Lake is remembered as well..

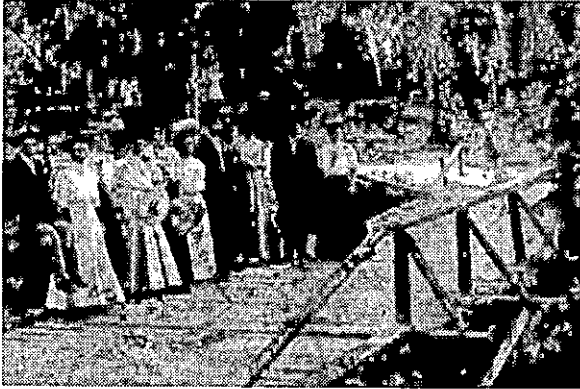
Arthur **Howell** donated one acre for church and cemetery that lies south of US 90 and north of 252, east of 137 and west of Bailey road (29th) for a **black burial ground**. The last known burial there was Rev. Charles Dickson mid-1960.

**King Chapel Cemetery** is located beside King Chapel of the Butler Community and is on the west side of Bulb Farm Road. King Stockton's body was probably laid to rest there. He came from Georgia in 1827, lived to be 100. The cemetery deed shows the land granted to King Stockton and donated and dedicated in 1890 for the church and the cemetery.

## COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

### LITTLE RIVER ATTRACTED WELLBORN FOLKS IN BYGONE DAYS

In the 1800's (and as late as the 1940's) Fourth of July picnics, Easter Egg Hunts and other community celebrations were in a park, north of the current US 90 and west of where 137 crosses Wellborn Branch (Little River).



Standing on a bridge over "The Branch".

(PICTURE) Wellborn ladies and gentlemen stood on a bridge over "The Branch" (Little River) at a community picnic around 1910. Identified folks are (R. to L): Max and Jessie Lowe, #3, 4, 5, unknown #6 Mamie Zachary, #7 Edna Bell, #8 unknown, #9 Liza Moore, #10 Blanche McLeran, and Thurston McLeran (12 years old and perched

on the railing of the bridge). In the days of the open range and the periodic burnoff of underbrush the flowing water was more plentiful and more accessible.

Grethel Moore tells a "good old days" story about fishing in the same Little River, a bit downstream. Grethel was born here in 1915, married here to Rev. Frazier Moore in 1930. Grethel and Frazier eventually had nine sons and six daughters, all born here. The Moore land is east of Bulb Farm Road and about 4 miles south of US 90 Grethel went fishing at a hole on the section of Little River on Moore land. Fish were biting and she landed one right after another and just kept on until she was fishing by moonlight. Grethel toted two full sacks back home and found her husband and all the kids, and even the mule, had been out searching; ready to rescue her. She said that the two sacks full fish made a good peace offering.



Donald, Leonard McL., Maurice fishing at Wellborn Lake (1949)



Lewyn Geiger, Virginia Phillips (Giebeig), Donald Geiger, background jeep 1948.

Susie Stansel's best Little River story is a fish story too. She and her sisters were supposed to mop the floor, but the sisters snuck off to go fishin'. Susie, the martyr, anticipated mama's switch applied to the truant's behinds. Their catch was so good that they never even got scolded.

Thurston McLeran's Little River story was about

when he and Noah Deese and some other guys tried to dam Little River to raise the level of water so as to be able to go between Wellborn Lake and Classy (some said "Chassy" and others "Glassy") Pond by boat. The Little River water had its own way. The broken dam suddenly released enough water to scare the dam builders/amateur engineers.

Harnessing the flow was accomplished, though. Possible sites of grist mills that used water power were these: one at the south end of Low Lake on Phillip Lowe's property, Hemming Mill on Valhalla Farms today, on Woodrow Fourakers property, (off 252 and 49), and at Moore's. The Works Project Administration in the 1930's cleaned out all the creeks so remains of water wheels are not to be found easily today.

Why is Little River so insignificant in Wellborn life today? The end of the open range allowed for undergrowth to tangle the edges of the stream. Beaver territory has extended into Wellborn area and the beavers have changed the river.. Lifestyles have changed.



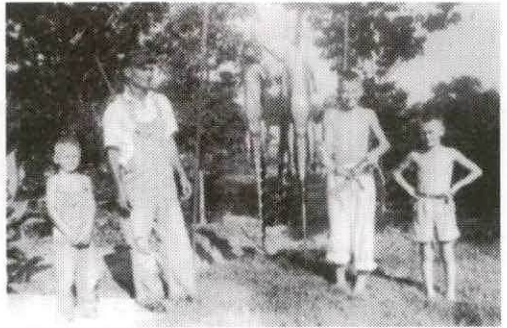
Alex McKeithen & Herschel Skinner - 1948 Bear Hunt.

1948 A successful bear hunt took place north of town. PICTURE One other bear killing was remembered to have been necessary to save cattle also. That one was in the 1920's and that bear was killed south of Wellborn.

1948 Two alligators hang from the clothesline and Donald Geiger holds a third gator up for the cameraman. Estimated lengths of the larg-

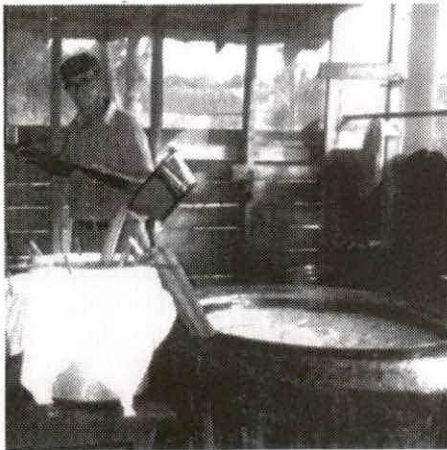
est gator was seven feet long. The hunt took place in a local lake. PICTURE.

**NOVEMBER WAS HOG KILLING TIME** Ann Geiger was Ann Parker and a little girl-tyke of three. She draws a word picture of her three uncles: Uncle Dewey, Uncle Lessie and Uncle Harry who worked together with Joel Cray. The women in the scene are Letha Cray, and Aunt Helen and Lillie Parker (Ann's momma). The children were Ann Parker and Charles Deese (age 9) and several small Crays. The hogs were shot to kill instantly with a Sears ordered, single shot 22 rifle. The animals were skewered near the ankle bone and ligament and then hoisted to hang head down in order to cut the jugular for bleeding. Hog hair removal was done by scraping with a hoe while the hog is in the boiling water of the huge sugar kettle (40-50 gallons). Both kettle and fire were in a big hole in the ground.



**David & Lyn McDonald, Donald & Maurice Geiger - 1948 Gator Hunt.**

**FALL MEANS CANE SYRUP MAKING** Levi Johns was one of the very early settlers, before 1850. Four generations later the great granddaughter Helen McMullen Cribbs and her husband Wilmer Cribbs and their children and grandchildren grow cane for syrup and boil down the watery natural juice to syrup in a 12 to one ratio. The plopping bubbling stage is still called "hominy kicks" and the "polecat" is the scraping from the boil down pot's edge. Syrup making is a fall activity for Grethel Moore's family, Kents, Copelands, Rodehavers, (who make sorghum syrup) and others. It is work. It is an art to keep an efficient fire and to judge how long to cook it. Syrup production was a time when folks would socialize. It still is.



**Wilmer Cribbs**

*POKE MCHENRY (Times-Union columnist Vic Smith)*

***These folks know their syrup stuff***

*WELLBORN — One day, this car carrying some people passed the farm home of Wilmer and Helen Cribbs and the driver screeched his brakes, backed up hurriedly, jumped out and yelled to Helen that her barn must be on fire.*

*"There's a big cloud of white smoke pouring out of it," said the excited tourist.*

*It was an understandable mistake, particularly for one unfamiliar with Southern ways.*

*What it was, was syrup cooking down inside the farm's "Syrup House," as it has*

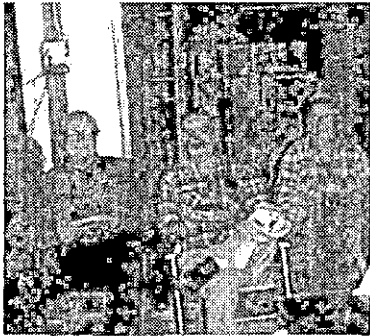
been doing in practically the same spot for at least 75 consecutive years, and as it was when I was over here earlier this month.

The Cribbs' farm is on Florida 137 about a mile or so north of Interstate 10. It is the original homestead of Levi Johns, who was the father of John Blaxton Johns, who with wife, Sophia Bryan Johns, were the parents of Susan Lotie (Johns) McMullen were the parents of Helen McMullen Cribbs, sister Thelma McMullen Cannon, and brothers Tony, C.B., Melvin and J.L. McMullen. All these siblings still live in Suwannee County.

Levi Johns, by the way, enlisted at age 50 and fought with the Confederate Army as a member of Co. B, 1st Regiment, Florida Reserves. Good man, old Levi.

I got into all this by writing of my yearning for sorghum syrup. J.L., along with his charming wife, Kitty, tried to find some sorghum and could not, but they did send me a bottle of sugarcane syrup made by Wilmer Cribbs.

I found it very good, and one thing led to another, which led to me showing up at Wilmer's place to watch him and Tony boil 60-gallon kettles of cane juice down to 6 to 7 gallons of clear amber, pristine syrup.



Poke Henry (columnist) sits between McMullen brothers, Melvin & J.L.

They do it just like in the old days, except that a tractor replaces mule power in operating the cane-grinding mill, and gas replaces wood as fuel to heat the boiler.

And a garden hose now transfers the juice from a barrel at the grinder to the kettle — another labor-saving device rigged up by Wilmer. Used to, you had to tote buckets of juice till you filled the kettle.

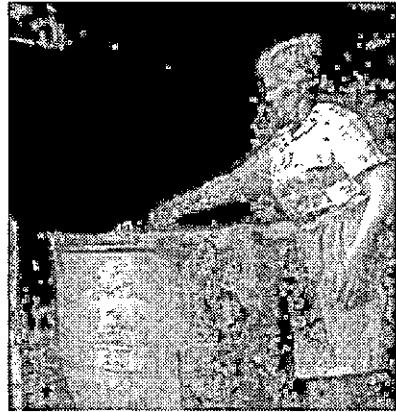
It takes two to 2 1/2 hours to run off a "boiling," and the great secret in making prime syrup is knowing just when to take it up. This knowledge separates the men from the boys in syrup-making.

When I got to Syrup House, Tony was beginning the tedious and constant process of skimming the dregs and dross off the bubbling juice. This is a vital part of the "making" — without the proper skimming, all sorts of unlovely things can, and do, happen. It takes a real pro to perform the task just right.

Whilst Tony skimmed, Wilmer arrived from the surprisingly small cane field, which is in the same place it was on the original 40-acre tract that began the farm so many years ago. Wilmer will boil down and bottle probably 500 gallons of the delicious syrup from his patch this year.

The skimmings and the overflow from the boilings go into a "buck barrel," the contents of which can be rather potent stuff when taken internally. Countless pigs have been known to wobble about deliriously inebriated after sampling the buck barrel, and many an enterprising rooster has come to an untimely — but no doubt happy — end by virtue of falling, probably due to inhaling the fumes, into the buck barrel.

In fact, J.L. recalls with considerable glee how, about 50 years ago, a bunch of teenagers once sneaked a few surreptitious sips from the buck-barrel spigot, then decided to take a croker sack off the top and see what the stuff looked like on the inside. One of the



Helen Cribbs

## Community Activities

*farm's long-missing roosters was floating in the gunk.*

*It probably made lifelong teetotalers out of the boys.*

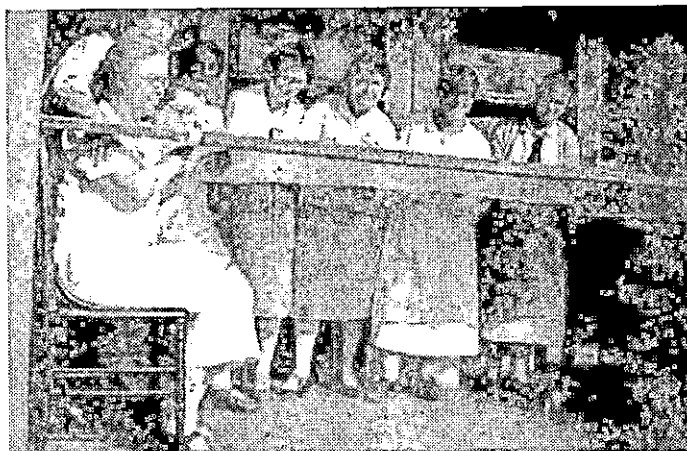
*I have heard talk to the effect that cane buck has been known to have strong effects on other people, too, but that's probably just a nasty rumor.*

*That "white smoke" so alarming to the tourist was vapor from the boiling juice, and few smells can compare with it in pleasing the olfactory senses. It ranks right up there with the smoke drifting around barbecuing pork and the odor of onions frying at a carnival hash house.*

*It's great to have a job where you get to know people like the McMullen and Cribbs families.*

### CLUB LADIES MET ON THE WIDE FRONT PORCHES

Sometimes the quilt frame was set up on the porch and the ladies visited and worked together.



Left - Callie Hemming, sitting, 2nd, Ruby Mallory, 2nd from rt. Lizzie Lowe. This picture was taken on the S.R. Mallory front porch as the ladies enjoyed a pleasant afternoon of quilting.



Standing: Mrs. Callie Hemming, Miss Cora Parker, Miss Nellie Walter, Mrs. Ruby Mallory, Mrs. Jessie Rouglan. Sitting: Mrs. Daisy Green, Mrs. Eliza Moore, Mrs. Florence Dearnard, Mrs. Scaggs, Mrs. Janie McLeran, Miss Thelma McKeithen, Mrs. Rosa Hembree, Mrs. Lora Walter. Club meeting on the porch of E.B. McLeron's home.

## **WOODMEN OF THE WORLD FRATERNAL INSURANCE SOCIETY, WELLBORN.**

In the early 1900's an active group held business meetings in the upstairs of the Masonic Lodge on the corner of C-10 and 137. Attendance, dues, drills, benevolences, and socials, as well as carrying out the details of helping the members with birth benefits, death benefits and sickness benefits, were all part of the club activities. Mrs. A.C. Selph was treasurer. Recently the Woodmen of the World Field representative has contacted Irene Jernigan McCall for the loan of some of the memorabilia on 107th anniversary of the founding. Wellborn chapter was #134..

## **FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONIC WELLBORN LODGE #13**

Wellborn Lodge # 13, Free and Accepted Masons, is one of the oldest Masonic Lodges in the state. 1866. Earliest lodge meetings (1866-1881) could have been at the old original Methodist Church. Vera Gaylard's hand written historic rememberings make that seem possible. Masons owned property (and probably met) at the southwest corner of CR137 and 8th avenue for twenty years before the lodge on C-10 was built (1881-1901). Deeds show that land was purchased in 1901 south of the blinker light and east of CR 137. A 20' by 20' wooden building was built specifically for a Masonic temple. The second lodge meeting place was built in 1922 and is the large two story wood building at the blinker light at C-10 and CR137. It served well until 1995. Some can remember A.E. Cobb summoning the brothers to a meeting in the 1930's with a great horn blast from a second story window of what has become the old Masonic Lodge. The new lodge meeting place is an attractive concrete block one story building, 40' by 100', that was under construction 1992-1994 and is now the center for a most active lodge in this district.



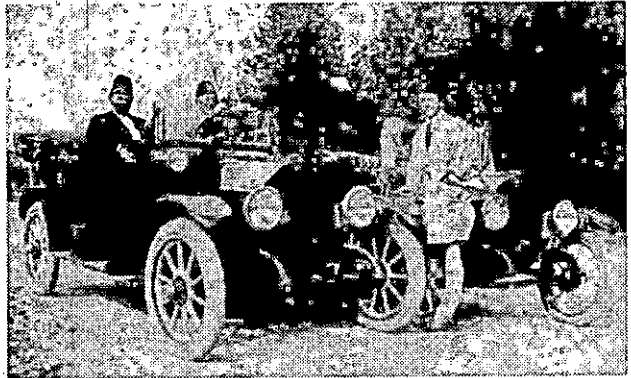
**Old Masonic Lodge**

before the lodge on C-10 was built (1881-1901). Deeds show that land was purchased in 1901 south of the blinker light and east of CR 137. A 20' by 20' wooden building was built specifically for a Masonic temple. The second lodge meeting place was built in 1922 and is the large two story wood building at the blinker light at C-10 and CR137. It served well until 1995. Some can remember A.E. Cobb summoning the brothers to a meeting in the 1930's with a great horn blast from a second story window of what has become the old Masonic Lodge. The new lodge meeting place is an attractive concrete block one story building, 40' by 100', that was under construction 1992-1994 and is now the center for a most active lodge in this district.

Listed now are the Past Masters of Wellborn Lodge #13. Philip E. Lowe, (1866,1875,1876, 1885), Thomas A. Carruth (1867-1869, 1871,1873-4, 1877), George Allen (1870), M A. Klonts (1872), J.W. Campbell (1878-1880 and 1882-1884 and 1886), W.R. Moore (1881,1888-1890, 1895, 1897-8.), S. W. Gary

*Community Activities*

(1887, 1893-4,  
1899-1902, 1905),  
C.B. Olliff (1891,  
1892, 1896, 1903)  
G.B. Smithson  
(1904), D.E.  
McDonald (1906,  
1907, 1916-1924,  
1931), S.R.  
Mallory (1908),  
W.B. Zachary  
(1909) A.J.  
Hembree  
(1910-1911) J.F.



Dr. Pennington owned Wellborn's first automobile. Seated in car are Forrest Lee Walter and George B. Walter



Masons pose for their portrait. Estimated date 1905. Front row: George B. Walter (called Major). 2nd row: (l-r) Dr. Gelon B. Smithson, Dave E. MacDonald (holding the fez on the hounds head), 3rd row: E.B. McLeran, Forrest L. Walter, Jack Hembree. 4th row: Dr. J.E. Pennington.

Roger Creamer (1987), Fred O. Gaylard (1988), Leonard K. Keen Sr. (1989), William J. Keen (1990), Leonard K. Keen Jr. (1991), Juanice S. "Ted" Fralick (1992-3), Jeff A. Osburn (1994), Kenny Ellis (1995), Will McClama (1997).

1996 saw a change of location for precinct #12 voting place from the Blake Lowe building to the new Masonic Lodge.

The Eastern Star Grace chapter #8, organized in 1902 and chartered in 1903, has history paralleling the Wellborn lodge #13 and the sisterhood has been recognized often as an important part of what is accomplished in raising a building and promoting good works.

Here is a list of the Worthy Matrons since 1931. (earliest records were lost by fire in the secretary's home.)

Worthy Matrons: Alice Green, Annie Wilson, Mary McLeran, Naomi Mallory, Hattie Howard, Louise McKeithen, Mary Dennard, Janie McLeran, Thelma Wester, Lillian Skinner, Margaret Thomas, Mamie Parsons, Elsie Foster, Margaret Owens, Minnie Lee Hogan, Sarah Johns, Sue Davison, Foy Mae Curl, Virgie Johns, Elsie Foster, Evelyn Williams, Ovie Long, Nancy Fulton, Arie Gaylord, Mildred Dancy, Mary Ann Tuckey, Goldie Gaylard, Nancy Moseley, Virginia Derrington, Debi Creamer, Joyce Taylor, Christina Jones, Mary Ann Green, Julie Buckner, Donna Parsons, Charlotte Kirby, Goldie Marie Fralick, Patty Roach, Sandra Fink. Worthy Patrons of the Eastern Star have been these: W.P. Moore, L.A. McKeithen, Dan Howard, M.A. O'Hara, George Skinner, H.L. Johns, Arthur Byrd, Morgan Chambers, Bob Davison, Colon Skinner, Coy Knight, J. W. Foster, Glenn Smith, Kenneth Long, Walter Gaylord, Fred Gaylard, Kenneth Hicks, Marvin Derrington, C.W. Tuckey, Robert Taylor, Roger Creamer, Larry Moseley, Glenn Buckner, Billy Keen, John Kirby, Ted Fralick, Jerry Roach,

## **AMERICAN LEGION, POST #132**

by **Odell Tillis**

American Legion Wellborn Memorial Post #132 was organized Oct. 9, 1944. The charter members were: Thurston B. McLeran, Elmer F. Moseley, Clifford S. Stevens, Byron E. Prince, Grover B. Zipperer, Ernest Cook, Albert W. McLeran, Handen P. Ellis, Wilson F. Smith Jr., A.B. Benton, Thomas Jefferson Geiger, C.E. Whittemore, Elver D. Waldron, Oscar M. Milton, Foster H. Bulinger, E.M. Williams, Allen Johnson, Charles R. Knight, Henry Cleveland Pennington, Norman Marvin Rowell, James A Taylor, Robin B. Doughtry, Cal Brantley, William D. Hawthorne, Andrew J. Miller, Roy C. Powell.

Some Wellborn men who gave their lives for this country were: James Ealie Byrd (killed in Sicily in W.W. II), Phillip Leroy Hogan (Pete) Killed in WW II in Belgium) Ashton Sydney Hogan (Bubba) Killed in Korea, Melville Adams (Veteran of WW II ~ killed in Korea) Carlton Dewitt Knight (WW II killed in Germany), James Pafford Morgan (WW II killed in Okinawa) Charlie M. Young (killed in Vietnam), Joseph S Hines, (WWI) Joseph S Cason (WW I)

## THE WELLBORN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

### A history submitted WVFD

The Wellborn Volunteer Fire Department was officially incorporated on May 23, 1972, and was comprised of the following local citizens: Blake Lowe, Robert H. Edwards, Leonard Stansel, Wayne Edwards, Edward Stansel, Alton Stansel, Paul McKeithen, J.W. Foster, W.P. Jarvis, George Perry, James Lewis, W.R. Matthews, Jeff McKeithen, Clay Mallory, Willard Brannon.

The first Fire Chief was Blake Lowe who was considered the guiding force behind the formation of the WVFD. The first fire truck was obtained from the Florida Department of Forestry and kept in Wellborn near Chief Lowe's home. This unit was soon replaced with another converted Military truck from the Department of Forestry. As the community grew, so did the need for increased fire protection and plans to construct a fire station were implemented. Chief Lowe donated a portion of land in Wellborn. The site was centrally located and presently serves as the #1 fire station. This station was constructed by the firefighters and other concerned citizens entirely by donations including \$200 from the County Commission. This facility was erected in 1981 and through the years has been modified to include an office and TV room. During this time period a new truck was obtained from the Department of Forestry for \$8000 with half paid by Suwannee County and the other half paid by the WVFD donations.

In 1983/84 the department made arrangements with the Suwannee County School Board to lease a portion of the old Wellborn School site to erect an activity center for the use of WVFD training and to give the community a place to hold events such as a polling place during election years and other community events as well as fund raisers. This building is also available for rental by private parties.

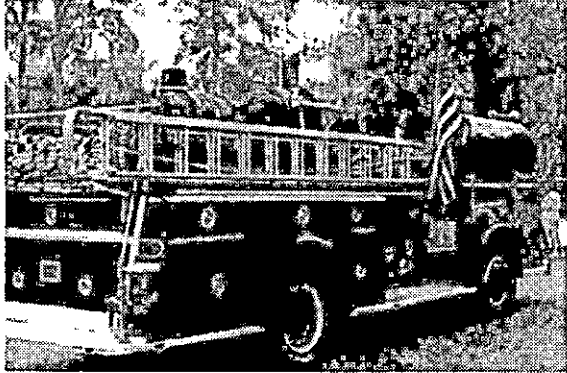
In 1988 the first "real fire truck" came to Wellborn from Damascus, Maryland Vol. F.D. With this truck the WVFD had the ability to pump large volumes of water and attempt to get a favorable insurance rating. Up to this time the community had an insurance rating of 10 which indicated no fire protection and resulted in higher rates for home and businesses in the community. Investigation revealed that a rating request had never been done so the Insurance Service Organization (which provides rating service for all carriers) was contacted and the rating process started. The inspection of the WVFD resulted in a rating of seven which was the best in the county with the exception of the City of Live Oak which had a better water system and paid firefighters and their rating was a six. The new rating resulted in lower insurance rates for many home and business owners in the community.

During the late 1980's Pasco Jarvis served as Fire Chief and presently is still an active member on the Board of Directors. In 1989 Charlton Dedge became the Fire Chief and the following year a second fire station was erected on the North

side of the railroad tracks to insure fire protection north of Wellborn in case a train was blocking the roads in Wellborn. During this same time period it was recognized that training was an important issue and all firefighters were put through the state of Florida's volunteer firefighters minimum standards. In addition they also received courses in forest fire control and some members were sent to the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Many other courses, local, and at the University of Central Florida, Orlando, were attended. Medical rescue knowledge became a necessary part of firefighter training here just like everywhere and so our volunteers added medical rescue training and some hazardous materials training.

In 1992 the training center was renamed the Blake Lowe Building, in honor of the guiding force in the formation of the WVFD.

Another guiding light in the operation was Leonard Stansel who served continuously as Board member and Secretary/Treasurer until his death.. Mr Stansel was the WVFD's father figure because you could always turn to him for council when the going got tough or you just needed a valued opinion concerning daily operations.



During this same time span, a second truck was obtained from the Bowie Maryland Vol F. D. This truck provided the department with increased water carrying and pumping capacity and assisted in maintaining our insurance rating.

In 1994 Tom Maynard became the fourth Fire Chief in 22 years. Under his leadership the department has continued to grow by updating equipment and operating a truck out of a third fire station in the Suwannee Lake area. In addition, we have revised and upgraded our operating guidelines and continue to seek out additional training. Presently the department operates two Class A Pumpers, 1966 Pirsch and a 1973 Seagrave, one Class B Pumper, a 1954 Dodge Rescue/Burch unit equipped with "jaws of life," and other rescue equipment, 1988 International tractor-trailer tanker carrying 5000 gallons of water, and a 1984 International tanker-pumper carrying 1500 gallons of water. A total of six units is what is required to maintain the insurance rating.

As we move toward the 21st century we will always remember the many unnamed people who have helped this department move ahead. What it takes to serve the community is dedicated members, firefighters, and community sup-

port by people who have the desire to be fire safe. Contrary to popular belief we do not receive all the fire assessment dollars that are collected in our area.

## THE WELLBORN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

The Wellborn Community Association started in 1985 as a chamber of commerce for Wellborn and was primarily the local business people banding together to promote Wellborn. Karl Wolff was the first president with George Skinner and Jerry Roach succeeding him and Charlotte Arnold the vice president who succeeded Jerry Roach. General meetings were held on the old school site in a building now called The Blake Lowe Building. Fourth of July parade as a community celebration was a W.C.A. project for several years.

W.C.A. was incorporated as a non profit organization in 1989. Jack Berry, M.L. Lewis, Betty Barnes, stepped forward as leaders and the emphasis shifted to promoting a sense of well being for everyone who lives in Wellborn area. The following names are some of the people interested in this work of the W.C.A. at



Lil Miss Blueberry - 1996  
Francheska Barrett

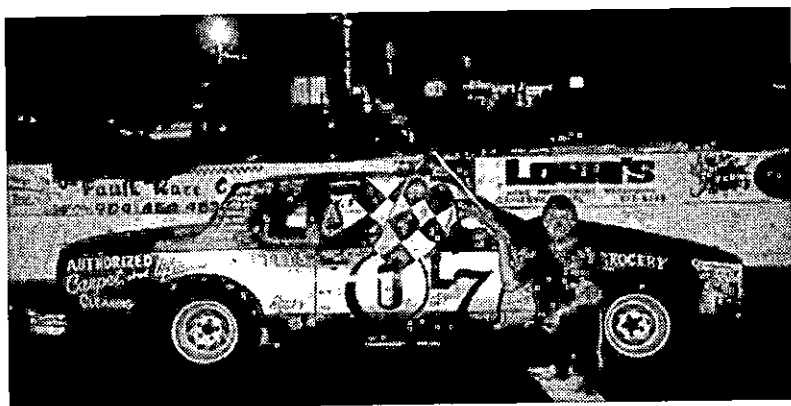
different periods of its history: Jinny Wilson, Goldie Gaylard, Linda Dye, Jack and Linda Gaylord, Priscilla Williamson, Eugene and Annabell Lewis, Mary Andrews, Jan Smith, Audrey Sipes, Alice Berry, R.H. and Jo Bedenbaugh, Dale Barrett, Daisy Morse, Juanita Cleckley, & Harry Harper. Charles Simpson held the presidency for several years. Currently the office is held by Betty Barnes. Vice president is Carolee Kimble. Activities sponsored by the Wellborn Community Association are listed: Village value days on Andrews Square (corner of 137 and C-10) Benefit dinners; Political rallies & voter registration; Harvest moon celebration & Halloween fun day; Community Thanksgiving dinners & silent auction, with carryout meals delivered to shutins; Holiday fruit baskets to shutins; sympathy cards and gifts, Charitable monetary gifts where local need is real;

An annual awards banquet with recognition of community service; Annual savings bond award to honor two top graduating seniors; Christmas celebration with Santa's arrival and a stocking for each hometown child; Easter egg hunt and community dinner; **AND THE ANNUAL BLUEBERRY FESTIVAL THE FIRST SATURDAY IN JUNE.**

## **WELLBORN KNIGHTS RACING TEAM**

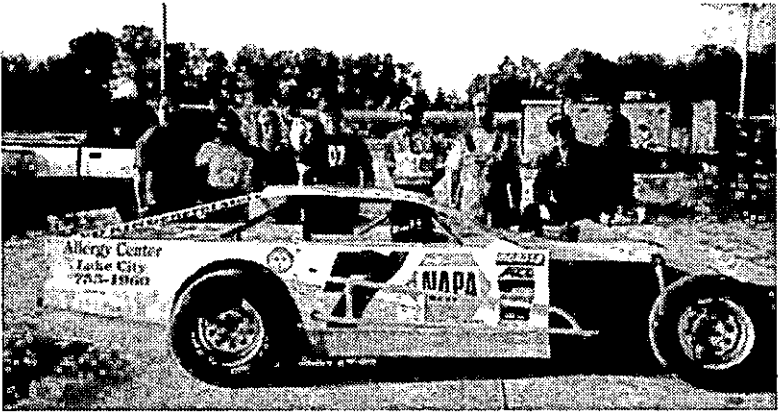
**by Lewis Weeks Sr.**

Wellborn Knights Racing Team began in 1991 as a participant in the street car stock division and raced eight races of that season. In 1992 WELLBORN KNIGHTS finished the season in second place in the points race. In 1993 it was second place in points again. In 1994, third place in points; in 1995, second place in points. IN 1996 WELLBORN KNIGHTS WERE POINTS CHAMPS; first place in twelve races and that was by far the most wins of any car in the division. The #7 car was a 1983 Buick Regal powered by a 350 cu. in Chevy engine. WELLBORN KNIGHTS RACING #7 enters in the Modified Division at Columbia Motor Sports Speed Way in Ellisville, FL. in 1997. The car owner and driver is Jeff Prescott. Crew chief is Lewis Weeks Sr. Pit crew members are: Leon Stansel, Danny Clark, Denise Clark, Deanna Prescott, Jamie Prescott, and David (Yankee) Waldock. Ricky (Tic) Tillis, deceased, is remembered as a team member. Current sponsors are: Po'Kin General Store (formerly J&J's), Betty's Upholstery, NAPA of Lake City, and Allergy, Sinus, and Asthma Center of Lake City. Special thanks go to Scott Matthews of Lake City NAPA for his expertise in engine building, to J.C. and Mattie Prescott (Jeff's parents), to Deanna Prescott (Jeff's wife), to David and Wanda Hogan (special supporters), to Glenn and DeLinda Bennett (Deanna's parents), and Daisy Weeks (Lewis's wife) especially for her understanding about the hours spent away from home preparing the car to race. The Wellborn Knights racing name came from the long hours spent at night preparing this car to race.



**1996 Points Champ with Jeff Prescott, driver.**

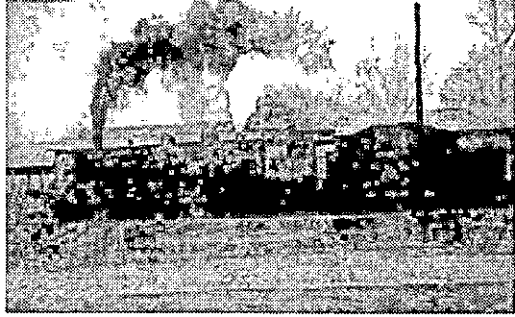
*Community Activities*



**Wellborn Knights line up behind 1997 car.**

## BUSINESS IN WELLBORN

L.W. DuBois envisioned Wellborn as a shipping point for products of the community. Cotton, lumber and naval stores, vegetables, eggs and poultry were produced in Wellborn and dispersed from Wellborn. It was also a market place for the goods and services needed to support itself. The Pensacola & Georgia Railway Company that L.W. DuBois signed the agreement with in 1859 became the Florida Railway & Navigation Railroad which later became Florida Peninsular Railroad. It was sold to



About 1940

Seaboard Airline and merged to become Seaboard Coastline. Today it is CSX that carries freight through the town. When trains no longer stopped at a station here, the commercial center aspect of Wellborn town started to fade. The Wellborn station depot that was here was sold 1970 and moved 1971 to McMullen property on south CR137. Today shipping is accomplished by truck. Although Amtrak carries people through our hometown, passenger train travel to or from Wellborn is only a memory.



First Cotton Warehouse (when cotton was king)

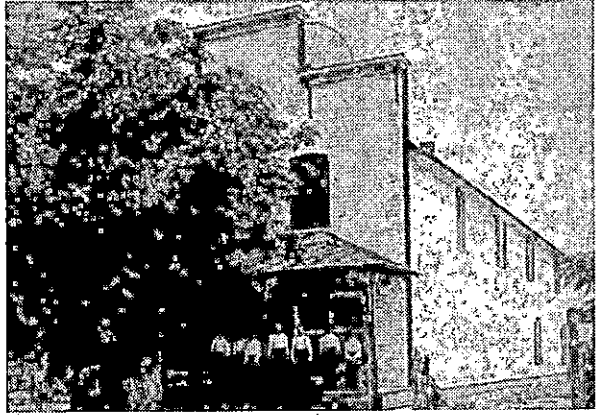
#1 SEE PICTURE OF SCENE NORTH OF THE RAILROAD (estimated 1870's)

This cotton warehouse was by the railroad depot across the street from the McLeran store. A.W.

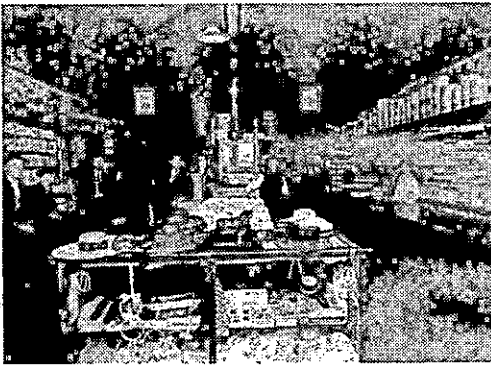
McLeran Sr. stands and looks toward the cameraman. It was probably a professional PHOTOGRAPH taken by a man who traveled from place to place and sold his pictures to the subjects. Moe Thompson is seated beside A.W. McLeran Sr.

**#2 SCENE IS ON THE FRONT PORCH OF MCLERAN GENERAL MERCHANDISE STORE.**

The seven people posing on the store porch for the photographer are identified as Albert W. McLeran Sr., Nick Williams, Mr. Jesse Hogan, E.B. McLeran Sr., S.W. Gary (book-keeper), Clark McLeran, and Blanche McLeran.



**McLeran's General Merchandise (front porch)**



**Inside of McLeran's Store**

**#3 PICTURE IS HOW THE INSIDE OF MCLERAN'S STORE LOOKED.**

A. W. McLeran Sr. house was a block north and around the corner from the store on the northwest corner CR137 and what is now 4th Avenue. It was home for A. W. McLeran Sr. and his wife Janie E. McLeran and their family. Cousins Margaret Owens, Virginia Jane Windsor,

Martha Johnson and Mildred Salmons remember the big house and the grandparents who lived there. Wellborn Volunteer Fire Fighters Blake Lowe and Roger Gaylard remembered how high its roof was and how they kept this house



**The McLeran stores look like this in 1996. They are the non operational survivors of the row of stores which included the Wellborn Bank, a building used as a post office and a barber-shop, and Mallory's store. (early 1900s).**

from burning down by climbing up on the wood shingle roof to use chemical extinguishers. Many of the elegant homes were destroyed by fire. This one was bought and moved to Lake City (See Houses Chapter).

The railroad provided jobs and income. Some Wellborn railroad station depot agents were Phillip Lowe (1870's and 1880's), Joe Hembree (1920) R.D. Mardre and M.M. Thomas (1935). Section foremen were: H.H. Jones, Albert D. Ketchum, Carson Downing (1930) and Dan M Howard. Men who worked for the railroad were James Dunbar, Dave Williams, Sam White, Joe Jackson, Oscar Rolland, Buck Stockton, and Earl Redman.



West end of old brick streets.

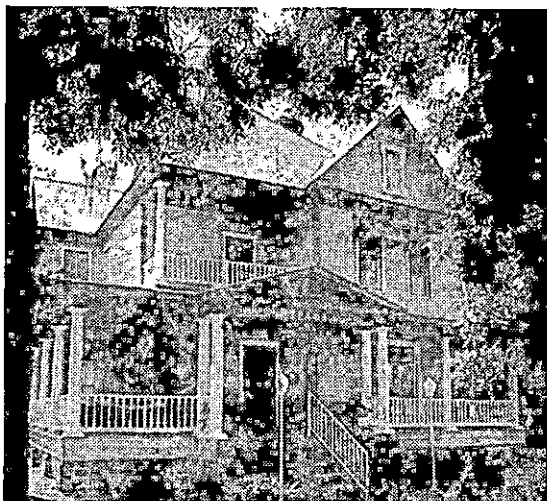
In 1917 a three/quarter mile length of south railroad street was paved with brick. At that time railroad street (present 8th avenue) was the main east/west road through town. In 1926 and 1927s a new state road (10) was paved through town one block

south of the railroad. Mr. Bennie Hutchinson was foreman and Wellborn men were hired. On a 1930's map, 10 is labeled the Old Spanish Trail. Sometime in the 1930's, 10 became US 90. It remains intact as it goes through Wellborn at the blinker light. It became Old 90 (and also C-10) when new US 90 bypassed downtown Wellborn in 1965/1966.

Ralph Mallory was the Southern Express Agent. People remember Mr. Ralph hanging up the mail sack for pickup from the moving train. He was also postmaster of Wellborn for many years. The Mallorys lived on the southwest corner of CR137 and present day 4th Ave. Ralph Mallory also had a store with a post office and a soda fountain (first half of the 1900's). It was on the west corner of CR137 and north Railroad street. (6th Ave.) On the second floor at one time was a skating rink. The marble soda fountain slab from Mallory's soda fountain store/post office is incorporated in the 1909 McLeran House Bed and Breakfast dining room.

**SEE PICTURES OF THE 1909 MCLERAN HOUSE BED AND BREAKFAST**

The 1909 McLeran House was built for E.B. McLeran by Forrest Walter and is



**McLeran House is now Bed and Breakfast.**

road station as cotton, grain and vegetables. R.B. Mardre served as agent and telegraph operator for the railroad. A.W. McLeran was postmaster and also grain dealer and export agent for cotton. A directory lists these businesses and people: K T. Bell, (grist mill & cotton gin and General Merchandise); Mrs. F.E. Brannen, (boarding house); J.A Gresham (poultry and vegetables and general merchandise); H.M. & W.E. & M.H. Grice (general merchandise); H.M. Grice and E.B. McLeran (saloon); T.J. Hackney (physician & drug store with P. Hemming) A.D. Hemming (general merchandise and cotton gin); Mallory & Sons (W.C., Frost & Ralph) (general merchandise); W.B. Mickler (blacksmith) Walter B. Moore (state representative); C.B. Olliff (general merchandise); James Parrish (county commissioner); B.J. Roberts (general merchandise); H. Simon, cooper (a barrel maker); J.J. Taylor (shoemaker); Williams brothers (livery stable); S.L. Williams (saw mills & cotton gin). Planters: J.B. Godbold, J.L. Hodges, T.P. Lowe, R.W. Moore, L.C. Murdock, J.J. Powers, S.L. Williams, J.A. Gresham, K.T. Bell, Benjamin Bryant, Jack Ellis, James Hagan, S. Hunt, T. C. Bethea, J.W. Campbell, A.D. Hemming, A.J. Johns, J.B. Johns, Matthew Johns, P.F. Mickler, M.M. Knight, H.H. Moseley, J.Y. Neeley, S.M. Parker, H. Smith, W.J. Stansel, Rev. J.H. Taylor (Methodist), W.A. Tyson, W.W Williams. Doctor M.T. Huchingson's name appears on a May 1877 legal document.

As Wellborn entered the 20th century, additional businesses were: Ernest Cook's father, John Cook's, saw mill; Van McKeithen, turpentine still; Steve Adams, grist mill; George Stansel's saw mill and grist mill; Moseley's grocery and dry goods; Knight's grocery and dry goods; A.E. Cobb grocery; I.W. Carver grocery; Wellborn Cold Storage; Richard Hunt and Bernice Dennard garages; D.E. McDonald garage; Pennington drug store; Morgan millinery shop; Forrest Walter builder & contractor.

on the east side of CR 137, the first house north of US 90. Mary and Bob Ryals purchased it from Tom and Esther Bailey in 1988 for \$50,000. Now, \$200,000 (plus) dollars later, this old home has been restored most graciously and invitingly.

Historian E.K. Hamilton describes Wellborn. He refers to a population count of 150 in 1885. E.K. Hamilton tells of principal shipments from the rail-



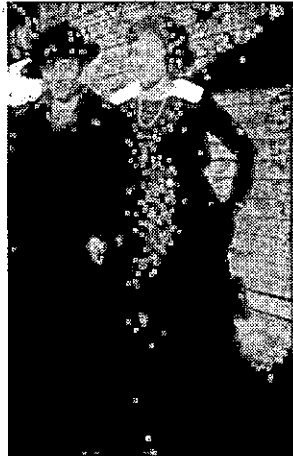
**Millinery Store**

SEE PICTURE OF MORGAN MILLINERY SHOP building on south railroad street (8th Ave) east of CR 137.

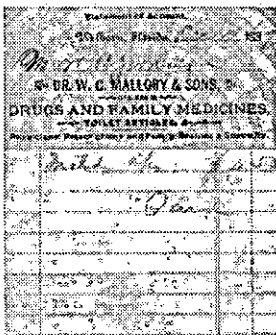
When this building was a store it was famous! Ladies came to Wellborn by train to buy a hat from Mrs. Morgan. THE TWO LADIES ARE MRS. JOHN MORGAN and NITA GAINES who was a sales lady at Mrs. Morgan's Millinery Shop.



**Ladies modeling hats.**



**Mrs. John Morgan and Nita Gaines**



**Receipt from Dr. W.C. Mallory & Sons**



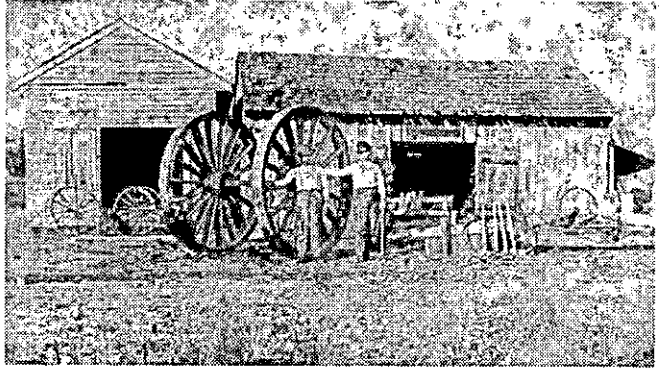
**Louise Dennard and Clara Mae Hemming**

These FIVE LADIES MODEL THEIR HATS. Mrs. Morgan's hats were originals, custom creations, tastefully assembled to suit the wearer/owner and to please the viewer.

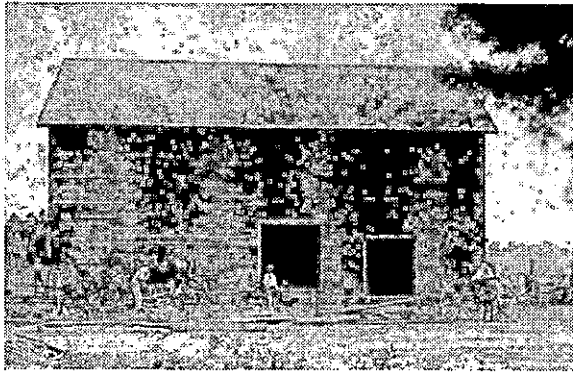
**SEE THE PICTURES OF DAVE MCDONALD BLACKSMITH SHOP/GARAGES**

**#1 PICTURE**

The first barn contained a blacksmith shop and tools for the wheelwright industry that was part of horse and wagon transportation. The wheels beside which the two men stand must be 8 foot diam-



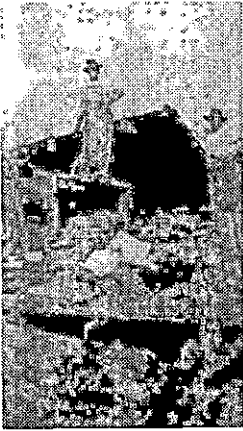
**D.E. McDonald's 1st Blacksmith Shop**



**2nd Blacksmith Shop before destroyed by tornado**

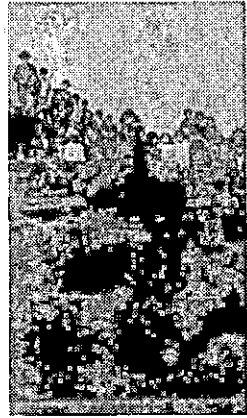
eter and could have been used in the logging industry, mule drawn, to haul the cut logs to the local saw mills. The naval stores industry, (rosin and turpentine production), was another income producer here. Van McKeithen was the biggest operator. The transition to cars changed the name from blacksmith shop to garage. The following letter indicates that the work was at least partly garage repairs on cars when the once-in-our-history tornado came through Wellborn. The letter is dated Jan 6, 1915. Emmett Everett writes this.

"We have just had a storm. It is raining now but the wind has stopped blowing quite so hard. Mr. Dave McDonald's shop blowed down and fell on Mr. Prichard and Mr. Warren's cars. Just broke the top and did not hurt the engine very much.



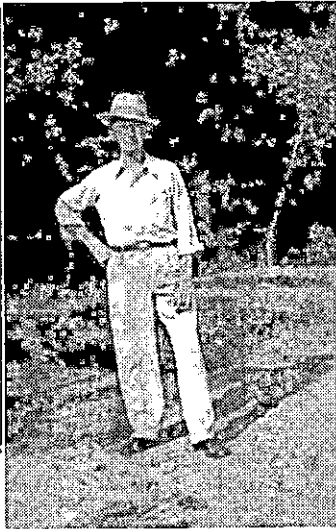
Aftermath of tornado.  
1915

It blew down his coffin house also. And ruined nearly all of the coffins. Mr. Ralph (Mallory) was down there and he was in the back end so he could not get out so it hurt his back and foot but not bad. The house fell flat on the ground. Wonder it hadn't killed him. Scared Warren mighty bad. "(SEE PICTURE of the ruined structure and the neighbors who came to see the DAMAGE).



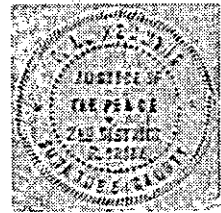
Aftermath of tornado.  
1915

Town Marshals and Constables were in the business of peace keeping. The two room jail was on the southeast corner of 137 and C-10 and the marshal/constables were John L. Morgan, Sam Godbolt, Noah Deese, Bob Edwards, Hugh Dennard, Woodrow (Buck) Bailey, Cleve Pennington, George Skinner, and Winston Johnson. A Justice of the Peace was Paul Hemming whose seal has been inherited by the last of the Hemmings, Clara Mae H. Jernigan.



P.L. Hemming Justice of the  
Peace

#### A REPRODUCTION OF P.L. HEMMING JUSTICE OF THE PEACE SEAL



From the turn of the century until 1929 several doctors practiced in Wellborn. Dr. J.W. Long, Dr. W.C. Mallory, Dr. Thomas W. Bothwell, Dr. J.L. Pennington, Dr G. B. Smithson, Drs. George and Phil McClellan, Dr. Cline, Dr. I.W. Chandler, Dr. Thomas Hackney.

Located just north of where the Jiffy store gas pumps are now, a wooden building was owned by Mildred Welden of Live Oak and rented to Cevera Pennington. He operated a pharmacy from the late 1920's to the mid 1950's. Prior

to that the store was a pharmacy run by Bill Birchfield and it also was used for casket storage by D. E. McDonald. During its drugstore years it had the twisted wire frame chairs and tables and a soda fountain counter. Out front were benches which were removed to discourage the town characters from ogling. Some called it the end of "buzzard roosting." (sexual harassment of days-gone by. ?) Dr. Ross Barnett lived and practiced medicine at White Springs, 10 miles away. When Wellborn was left without a doctor in 1929 he was asked to serve on a part-time basis. He set up an office next door to Pennington's drug store and made regular visits for 33 years. Money was scarce and patients often paid doctor bills with farm products for both the doctor and his horse. The first four years Dr Barnett made calls by horse and buggy and then he switched to the car. With a twinkle in his eye Dr. Barnett said "I did better with my horse than I did when I drove my car. I could get all the corn and hay for my horse that I wanted". He kept office hours until he was well into his 70's. He encouraged and assisted many young boys in their search for education and business opportunities.

Some turn of the century doctor "prescriptions" were: Octagon soap paste for poison ivy, Kerosene to kill redbugs or bed bugs, or combined with sugar for a sore throat, black draught (liquid) for a laxative, epsom salts for gall bladder, molasses thickened with epsom salts for burns, calomel followed by castor oil, castor oil to cure anything and turpentine for wounds and arthritis.

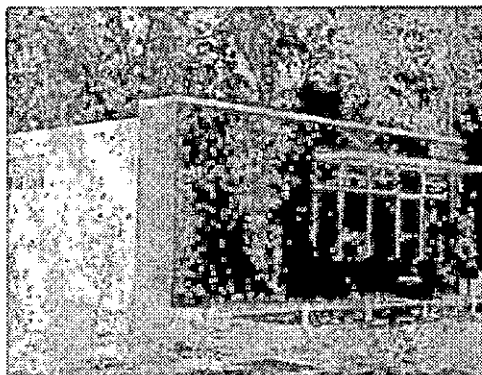
The first Post Office in our area was called "Little River" and was at the George E McClellan plantation. He was the first postmaster. After Wellborn was established in the early 1860's a post office was located in town. Mail came into town on the train instead of by stage coach to the Little River Post Office. At first the trains were wood burners with a water tank that got refilled in Houston. Wellborn's canvas sack of outgoing mail was suspended on a pole and the trainman hooked



1950's Wellborn Post Office, early 1920's bldg.

it aboard the mail car without the train stopping. Mail was sorted en route. The incoming sack was pitched from the moving train. Postmasters and their dates of appointment are: George E. McClellan, Jan 15, 1841. Hugh A. Corley, May 27, 1845. George E. McClellan, Jan 28, 1846. Daniel Blue, Oct. 5, 1848. George E. McClellan, Feb 17, 1849, Matthew L. McKinney, June 2, 1859, Jesse T. McLeran, Sept 12, 1860.

James T McMillen, Oct. 17, 1865, Thomas Goodson, June 29, 1866. Miler Scarborough, Dec. 1, 1868, A. Dupont Hemming, July 15, 1870, Michael A. Clouts, Dec. 26, 1872, Fameis Preston, Jan. 19, 1875. George R. Thralls, Feb. 9, 1875, the first woman, Mary J. McLeran, Feb. 19, 1878, Albert W. McLeran, Sept. 21, 1885, Traper Taylor, Sept. 21, 1889, Thomas A. Alexander, Oct. 22, 1889, Charles B. Olliff, May 8 1893, John W. Bell, August 14, 1903,



**Wellborn Post Office 1962.**

Harley E. Powers, Oct. 21 1914, William P. Moore Oct 24, 1918, Stephen R. Mallory, Feb. 22, 1927, Stephen R. Mallory, Jan. 15, 1930, Elmor F. Moseley, July 1, 1948, Mrs Lillian Skinner, Dec. 30, 1963, Leonard F. Stansel, Sept. 11, 1964, Iva Carlton, September 1987, with her inside assistant Teresa Sanders. After rural delivery came into being (estimated 1916) carriers were: Robert M. Silas (who delivered mail by horse and buggy), Foy Land, S.T. Bozeman, Enoch Garrison, George Perry, Earl Johnson, Lewis Chamberlin. Today the rural routes are driven by Dorothy Long, John Saunders and Sherril Ross to distribute mail to approximately 750 route customers in addition to another 350 Box holders.

Post Office locations have been these: In Mallory's store which was located on corner of 137 and 6th Avenue. In a Barbershop/ General Store located on 6th Ave three buildings further west than Mallory's. The current location is on the east side 137 at the corner of 8th Avenue. The building was built by Leonard Stansel and is now a government owned Post Office bulging with handling increasing numbers of postal customers mail.

Electric power came to Wellborn in the late twenties.

Blake Lowe built a second gas station/store. It was a brick service station and grocery store on the northeast corner of 137 and Old 90, across 137 from his first station. At age 19 (in 1932) Blake Lowe had accumulated four years of experience with groc and serv store work on the northwest corner of 137 and old 90 (C-10). That was when he moved across the street and into the building that L.J. Day built for the Gulf Oil Company in Wellborn. Blake said "When the Camp Blanding people asked me to stay open evenings for their personnel, I did it." He added lunch meats and sardines and cans of pork and beans and bread.



**Blake's Brick Station**

Earl McKeithen was involved in an addition to the front of the store that increased square footage from 16' by 20' to 20' by 40' and made space for appliances and other miscellany. Blake's store also served as the Greyhound Bus station for many years. This Blake Lowe store was there for forty

years. In 1972 Blake sold the store to C. Doug Bryan, who ran it for a couple of years and sold it to Lewis Chamberlin. He rented it to a Mr. Kite and then to Bobby Law as proprietors of Groc and Serv businesses. Glen Smith bought the store from Lewis Chamberlin in 1980 and its offerings of home baked goods, short order restaurant, miscellany and gas were welcome here. Suppliers and inspectors ended the story, though. In 1989 Ernie and Nan Cawby ran an archery store plus video rentals. Currently the property is non commercial and owned by James Koester.

George Walter and Della Walter each had a service station on either side of old 90 (C-10) in the 1930's. Allen's service station, groceries, bait, pecans etc. was on Old 90 at 9th Avenue. Lyn McDonald's service station was on Old 90 at 7th Ave, Albert Benton's service station and grocery store on Old 90, north side at 7th Avenue. Wellborn drivers had multiple choices of service stations. In 1959, Brady's bought a service station and grocery store on the south side of old 90 at 3rd Avenue that had been operational for 12 years. It was a business here for over 30 more years. Supplier problems and retirement age of the owners closed Brady's store.

Outdoor Movies were popular and were a recreational gathering center on Old 90 (C 10) and 5th Avenue.

Seamstress Dena Floyd had a business in her home on the



**Country Hair Station - 1995**

northeast corner of 2nd Avenue and 5th Avenue. Her son Sam Floyd, although crippled, sold papers and pencils in Wellborn and Lake City and his customers appreciated him.

Opal's Restaurant was on the north side of Old 90. A Motor Court (Half Way Inn) was located on Old 90 north side east of 3rd Avenue. It became the Belwood cafe and was a Wellborn restaurant until 1962. (1993-1995 saw another attempt at a Wellborn restaurant at Keene's Wellborn General Store N. E. corner of the railroad crossing).

The Northeast corner of 137 and 6th Avenue changed hands in this manner. A 1916 deed records G.B. Smithson sold land and building to C.A. Knight. A 1928 deed shows Charley Knight sold it to John Henry Tillis whose descendants still live next door to the store and can show bookkeeping receipts from the 1930's. Folks tell that the Suwannee Stores chain used the location. The American Legion owned the building and had recreational square dancing and a restaurant. In the 1960's Rev. V.T. Coleman used the building for Church of God meetings. Woodrow and Tom Bailey, and then Tom and Esther Bailey, were owners in the 1970's and 1980's. Some of its uses were: sorting and storing tobacco, tool storing,



**Wellborn General Store - 1995**



**Ralph Mallory in front of store when it was Moseley's-1940's.**



**1901 Brick Building corner of 8th Avenue & Railroad Street-1995.**

and providing shelter from freezing temperatures for calves. For two years, it was Keene's General Store. The Fishers own the store now and it is the home of Suwannee Valley Wood Works, where fine furniture is crafted.

One Stop Shop was a Thrift Store in the 1980's on Lake Jeffrey Road (250) north of the railroad run by Hazel Ford.

### **1997 WELLBORN BUSINESSES**

The most attractive business in Wellborn is the 1909 McLeran House owned and operated by Robert and Mary Ryals, 12408 County Road 137.

The 1901 brick building and lot on the southwest corner of 8th avenue and railroad street tells its story with a stack of deeds shared by present owner Linda Dye of the KORNUCOPIA. L.W. DuBois sold land to Jesse T. McLeran in 1860. The land passed through ownership by Session, Hart and Harrison during which time it is safe to assume a building was put there. William S. Harrison sold it to the Masonic Lodge #13 in 1881 with Walter R Moore, Worshipful Master, and Jacob Ellis, Senior Warden, and James L Hodges, Junior Warden, signing the papers. Mason's ownership lasted 20 years and (in 1901) they sold it to C.B. Olliff when Sterling W. Gary was Worshipful Master, John W, McIntosh was Senior Warden and Gelon B. Smithson was Junior Warden. Hembree, Williams, Spencer, Hackney, Moore and Carver names all appear on ownership papers. In 1917 H. W. Moseley became owner. In 1960 Oliver and Irene McCall (who had acquired it in 1946) sold it to McLean, who sold it to Gus Cabre. The owner preceding Linda Dye and the KORNUCOPIA was David McDuffee, who sold the store to Linda after owning it since 1979.

Linda Dye has been in business in Wellborn since 1988. Her KORNUCOPIA is a first class antiques and collectibles business that attracts experts as well as discerning people who buy for their own homes. Treasures can be discovered at the Kornucopia. Linda developed estate sale expertise and she has a text book library to help ascertain the value of antiques of all kinds. This year she was asked to teach an adult education course, "Trash or Treasure", at the Vo Tech evening school.

The JIFFY store is the heart of Wellborn for many. It has a gas pump and carries milk, bread and staples plus a good assortment of things you run out of. Lottery tickets are purchased here. The chain has maintained a Wellborn store since 1975.

Karl Wolff has KARL'S SALVAGE on 8th Avenue between 7th and 9th avenues. It is a yard full of bargain buys in many categories for Wellborn's Do-It-Yourselfers. Karl's wife, Izzy, has an offshoot business called "IZZY'S DISH COTTAGE". Izzy also paints eggs and sells Wellborn's version of faberge eggs. Karl's Salvage has been a Wellborn business for 17 years.

Lynwood FISHER turns out custom CABINETS in a woodworking shop on 8th Avenue (which he would rather call south railroad street.) His shop is west of the Kornucopia. In 1997, Dale Thompson bought a half interest, so now it is Lynwood FISHER & Dale THOMPSON who make CUSTOM CABINETS. Brothers Brad and Doug Fisher have a store on 6th Ave east of 137, which displays cabinets and furniture made by Fishers. It is SUWANNEE VALLEY WOODWORKS in a building which has had many uses. (see buildings blocks 25 and 11)

Hank Whisnant brought the CYPRESS FURNITURE making business with him when he chose Wellborn as a place he would like to live. He had passed this way in 1975 and came back to stay and to establish a manufacturing business in 1980. It is located in the metal building and in the side yard on CR137 between the Country Hair Station and the Jiffy. Hank has a deep interest in the Whisnant family genealogy who have traced and published, have a family newsletter, reunions, the works. Besides Hank Whisnant in Wellborn, Florida, there are Whisnants all over the world.

The COUNTRY HAIR STATION & THRIFT STORE is on the northwest corner of CR137 and C-10 at the blinkerlight. Owner Charlotte Arnold opened up for business 1988. She is one of a long line of barbers, some were: (Palmer Ellis, 1930's, Cleve Hunt, David Hill, 1980's,) on this prime location. Other businesses on the site have been these; Blake's station, bait shop twice, and grocery

and mini hardware. Charlotte and Bob Arnold vacationed in the area and decided to acquire a Wellborn home and business location.

THOMPSON'S CABINETS are created in a woodworking shop on C-10: "David's Custom Cabinets, kitchen cabinets, vanities and furniture". David Thompson has been in business at this location for 25 years. He has taught school. He was reared by the Douberlys and worked with wood all his life; commercially since he was seventeen. Dave's wife is interested in acupuncture and has brought a licensed acupuncturists, from Georgia, to be available in Wellborn by appointment.

AL ESTEVEZ does UPHOLSTERY and canvas work in a shop by his home on 8th Ave. Al specializes in fabric repairs for cars and boats. He relocated to Wellborn from Miami fourteen years ago because his wife, Carolyn Sapp Esteves, spent happy times here visiting her grandparents and in fact went to school at Wellborn school for a brief period. Carolyn's mother is buried in Wellborn cemetery.

About four miles North of Wellborn's downtown BETTY BARNES has an UPHOLSTERY shop where she fills orders. She also teaches adult ed evening courses in upholstery. Betty's avocational interest is the Wellborn Community Association.

ALLEN'S TRAILERS opened business in 1995. It is located on the south side of US 90 at C-10. Allen offers expert welding and custom made trailers. Allen Kunze is one of Wellborn's volunteer fire fighters. Allen Kunze takes every opportunity to credit his parents and his Lord for anything resembling success in his own life.

HOFFMAN TIRE AND SERVICE is owned and operated by Art Hoffman. He and his family came to Wellborn, 1986, from West Palm Beach. His new office and business location is 4356 US 90, (opposite Suwannee Log Homes), Wellborn from which he offers repairs and 24 hour service.

SUWANNEE LOG HOMES has been in business since 1987. A model log home/sales office is at the north side of US 90 and C-10. Logs are shaped, sized and packaged at this Wellborn site and trucked to your property to be assembled on site. Ron Moss and Ben Miller are the owners; vice president and president, of this company which is located near Ron Moss's own home on Peacock Lake. Wellborn is central to the supply of cypress and cedar timbers from which Suwannee Log Homes are made.

HENKELS & MCCOY has an office and garage type metal building in the center of a chain link fenced off area large enough to store many huge spools of cable, several trucks and heavy equipment. It is a nationally known company.

CHARLES SIMPSON'S AUTO MART is a used car dealership located on US 90, northside, about a mile west of where C-10 enters US 90. Charley has been in business on this site for 16 years. Besides good used cars Charles Simpson's Auto Mart offers utility trailers and carports and in house financing.

In 1996 Penny Watkins and her business partner Jim Runion opened DREAM CHASER NURSERY with hanging baskets and landscaping plants, annuals, and small trees, displayed south of Watkins home, on CR 137.

NANA'S NURSERY is a licensed child care business owned and operated in their home by Carol and Bill Knight at 921 12th avenue.

SARGE'S ELECTRIC is owned by Benny Sargent who has been with Davis Electrical Constructors from 1969-1985. He is a licensed Master Electrician and has experience in residential, commercial and industrial projects.

TIM BOYETTE is a local building contractor, licensed and certified. Tim has been a resident and in business for sixteen years. Five of Wellborn's homes that were empty were purchased and renovated by Tim Boyette. In 1997, Tim developed a specialty of pumping cement.

TIM TAYLOR, Taylorville, is a HEAT & AIR conditioning contractor. Timmy has lived here all his life and is from one of the old original families. He became licensed to do air conditioning/heating in 1996.

A COTTAGEHAUS CLOCKWORKS SERVICE AND REPAIRS home business offers clock repairs of all kinds in your own home or in a room turned workshop at Jan & Buck Pearce's home in the Valhalla Farms area south of US 90 and east of CR137. This was Jan's hobby that has turned into a cottage business.

Dr. Brinkman at VALHALLA FARMS is a veterinarian and a qualified expert at animal judging. Equine events (dressage and trail competitions) are held regularly at Valhalla Farms.

SAFETY SYSTEMS is a business owned and operated from the Wellborn home office by Ron Gore and his employees. The main customers are fire departments around the country. Besides actual equipment procurement, Safety Systems runs


fire fighter training schools with prescribed courses. William F. Walters is vice president and senior instructor.

AGRICULTURE is a business here for some full time farmers. Crops are pine trees, nurseries, corn, soy beans, peanuts, field peas, tobacco, watermelons, blueberries, and greenhouses for tomatoes and for salad greens. Livestock are raised for profit; cattle, goats, pigs and chickens. Some of the farmers in the Wellborn area are: Wilbur Hogan, Wash Hardy Wood, Dwight Stansel, John Merritt, J.R. Broome, William Crawford, Bill Johnson, Lewis Chamberlin, Daniel Diaz de Arce.

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**WELLBORN SCHOOL'S HISTORY:** Gleanings from School Board minutes  
Researched by Irene McCall and Elizabeth McMullen

The first record of county sponsored public school is January 30, 1869. Before that, students were gathered informally and taught in the old original version of home schooling.

In 1869, Suwannee County hired six teachers at \$40 per month with the total budgeted amount for all the teachers in the county \$720! In 1869, \$200 was budgeted for books and superintendent's salary lumped together as one. The budget for the whole year of 1869 was \$920 to run two schools, one in Live Oak and the other in Wellborn. Tax assessment was 1/4 of one percent. The Board recommended review of Mrs Betty Mallory's application to teach at Wellborn in 1869. March of 1869 application was made for two schools in Wellborn, one white and one "colored."

In 1875, A. W. Mizell is allotted \$75 to teach at Wellborn for three months. The average daily attendance was 22. The school board minutes recognized Wellborn school as the best managed in the county and credited A. W. Mizell.

By Dec. 31, 1875 there were 28 organized schools in the county with total attendance of 802 students but that was less than half of the estimated school age children. School was a second priority to farm work and sometimes four weeks out of the 52, was the total time in a classroom. In 1875, text book procurement was established by the school board in order to standardize education. The school board bought the books to sell to parents at cost.

In 1887 B.W. Helvenston became a teacher at \$40 a month.

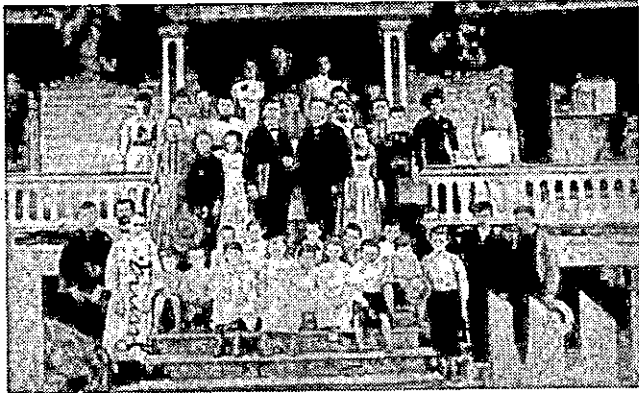
In 1889 there were 75 schools in Suwannee County and the budget was \$9827.77.

....for unknown reasons there is a 25 year gap in school board minutes .....



**Wellborn School in the 1880's.**

*Schools of Wellborn*



**Spring Term School  
1902**



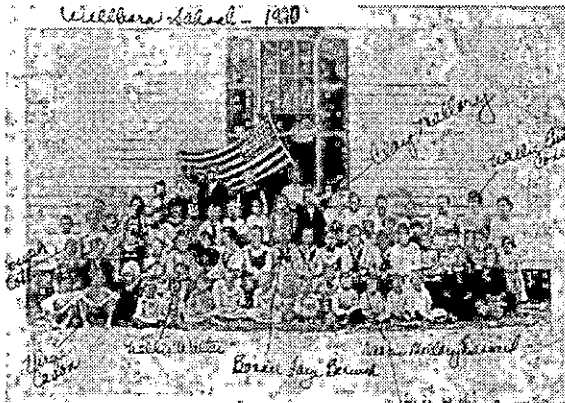
**Wellborn School 1912.  
May have been one building before it.**



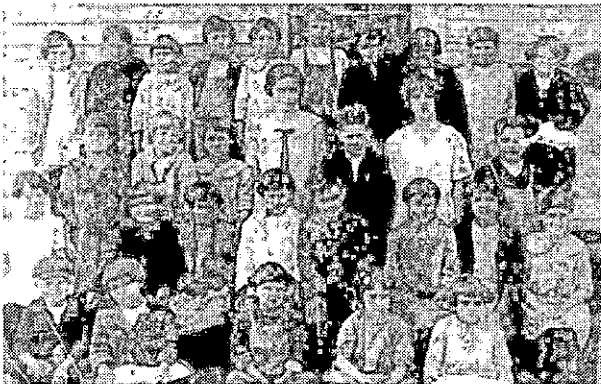
**1912 - 1914 Class  
Thelma McDonald is in the center with Ms. Jernigan beside her.**



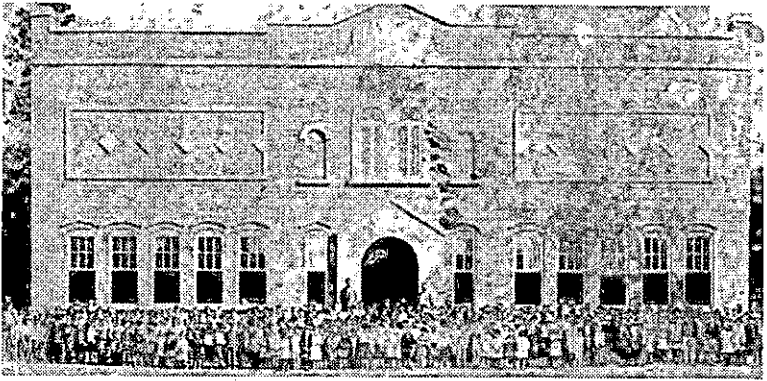
1918 - Blake Lowe, Wayles Cobb, Gladys Mallory, Rufus Jernigan, Louise Dennard, E.B. McLeran, Elizabeth Chandler, Louise Powers, Odessa Owens, Virginia Chandler, Selma Waldron, Gem Selph, Alma Kennedy, Owens, Every McKeithen, Oris Norris, Eula Noegel.



Wellborn School - 1920



1923 Class - The only ones named are H.B. Bond, Jr. and Elbert Godbold. Teacher: Gladys Mallory.



Wellborn School 1920's (about 1925). Upstairs contained a gymnasium/auditorium; was torn down and replaced with a brick school that burned in early 1940's. The next school was single story brick, torn down in the 1960's. Students: Clara Mae Hemming, Louise Dennard, Elise Carver, Walter Wynn Wilson, Ruby, Walter Williams, Joseph Cobb, Mr. Newsome-Principal, Neils-Bronson-Builder (built LO library), Peggy Norris, Mary McLeran, Leila Rogers, Rufus Jernigan, Lamont Jernigan, W.C. Jernigan, H.B. Bond. Teachers: Effie Jernigan, Naomi Mallory, Chloe Blanton, Mrs. S.C. Goff, Ina Mae Thompson, Evelyn Alford, Vida Howell.



**1923 - Wellborn School Group  
Eighth Grade**

Front row (l-r): Lynwood McDonald, Bernice Umstead, Eva Mae Cushman, Freddie Owens, Thelma Howes, Robert Edwards. Back row: Jessie Mae Howes, Bernice Dennard, Mary McLeran, Drew Blanton, Joseph Cobb, Ena McKeithen.

**1925 - Wellborn School  
Group - Eighth Grade**

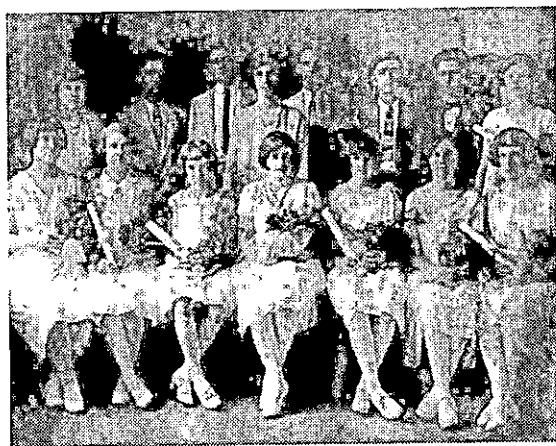
Front row (l-r): Lamont Jernigan, Lillian Sistrunk, Virgie McKeithen, Eulie Smith, Thelma Law, Paul Stansel, Dola Howell, ClaraMae Hemming. Back row: Ruby Stansel, Katie Howell, Marion Leonard McLeran (Teacher), Mildred Zipperer, Della Kent, Grace Ellis, Lillian Stansel.





**1927 - Wellborn Class (those identified)**

**Front row: Ovie Johns, Grace Stansel, Willard Busby, Winton Hogan, Junior Cook, Freddie Gaylard, Irene Hunt, Marvin Foster. Second row: Hezzie Howard, Smith, Roy Fralick, Bobby Stansel, Vernice Blanton, W.J. Allen. Third row: Irene Jernigan, Woodrow Bailey, Fourth row: Teacher Naomi Mallory.**



**Estimated date: Late 1920's  
Graduation Wellborn School**

**Back row: Mattie Hutchinson, Lester Howell, Ernest Owens, Mrs. S.E. Goff (teacher), Murrell Moseley, Carl Fralick, Leslie Newsome, Doris Wright. Front row: Sina Hutchinson, Mittie Gaylard, Tina Noegel, Iris Knight, Alma Cushman, Sue Newsome, Agnes Stansel.**



**1927 - Wellborn  
Junior High  
Tenth Grade**

**Front row (l-r): Virgie McKeithen, Clara Mae Hemming. Second row: Lillian Sistrunk, Sara Elliott, Ina Mae Johns. Back row: Mrs. Chloe Blanton (teacher), Dola Howell, W.T. Newsome (principal).**

## *Schools of Wellborn*

In 1914, Wellborn was granted three teachers because the enrollment and average attendance was too great for two.

In 1919, records show a deed to Wellborn "colored" school property and in 1923 the property was sold but the agreement allowed for school to continue in the same building on Lake Jeffrey Rd. (CR250)

In 1919, E.B. McLeran was attendance officer at \$2 /month salary.



**Bob Miller Hawkins School**

**Students: Deese, Howell, Bailey, Stansel, Tillis, Bishop.**

**Teachers: Effie Jernigan, Bob Miller.**

In 1920, school board agreed to extend school grades available in Wellborn by adding a Wellborn Junior High School.

In 1924, the patrons of County Line School voted to be transported to Wellborn.

In June, 1925, Wellborn, Hawkins, Beulah and Rock Hill Schools voted consolidation and the school board contracted to build a new school building on the old site west of 137 and north of 4th Avenue. Altogether there were three consecutive masonry buildings and two wooden buildings during Wellborn's one hundred years of having its own school.

In May, 1928, the board contracted to have the old White schoolhouse moved to Wellborn at a cost of \$150. A month later the two wood frame school buildings were contracted for painting and a well and pump was put down.

In 1929, the minutes contain the first reference to the bus routes and to the junior high in operation. The board approved the following teachers for an 8 month term. M.L. Bozeman (\$150), Mrs S.E. Goff (\$85) and Effie Jernigan (\$65).

In 1930, school board contracted with J.S. Goodbread to build the Wellborn "colored" school.

In 1932, board agreed to advertise to install a water system in Wellborn school if

*A History of Wellborn, Florida*

the P.T.A. would absorb one third of the cost. A month later the bid of \$710 was accepted from E.B. McLeran Jr.

Dec. 1932, the board instructed the superintendent to replace the library that was destroyed by fire.

In Oct. 1933, elementary school has enrollment of 195 students and 5 teachers.

In 1933-34, the reopening of school after the Christmas holidays was postponed so that the Wellborn school could get a basketball court and other improvements as part of governmental works improvement program. That was a clay court and Wellborn basketball players got pretty good on it but when the basket ball team played in Live Oak on a wood floor, it took half the game to learn how to dribble the ball because it kept flying off into space. (From reminiscing overheard at a recent Wellborn school reunion)

July, 1934, J.H. Tillis appealed to the board for a building at Grooms "colored" school.

In 1934-35, school year W.E. Owens and Mrs. Ina Mae Johns were approved \$16 to transport students as supplementary bus transportation.

In 1934-35, term Eula Smith was paid \$64/month, Mary McLeran \$55, Thelma MacDonald \$65 and Mrs. Vida Howell \$60.

In August of 1935, M.A. O'Hara was appointed principal when Senator Clayton Bass was absent to be at the legislature.

In 1936 school board purchased 2 more acres at \$25 /acre.

In 1937 minutes show construction of new school building details.

In 1938, board approves \$125 (labor and materials) to put a belfry on top of the new school. In 1938, November, it was agreed to dismiss the students in all county schools to go to the the Suwannee County Fair.

1939 school board petitioned by patrons of Wellborn school that, either the high school be equipped at the same level as Live Oak, or they transport the children to Live Oak. That was followed by a second petition to adequately equip the Wellborn high school as the only option. It was agreed to have 11th grade in Wellborn in 1939-40, with the 12th grade added in 1940-41. After that no transportation will be offered from Wellborn to Live Oak.

In July, 1940, two additional acres were to be purchased for the school. The

## *Schools of Wellborn*

conditions were that \$150 of the total \$450 price be paid by local donations. Bus routes were reviewed and changed to accommodate bringing children to Wellborn from Dunellen community.

In 1940, the school board decided to add a home economics teacher and to have 12 grades in Wellborn.

In 1940, Wellborn "colored" school teachers were Porticus Blackshear, Beulah Blackshear, Mary Mae Williams (see picture and interview obtained 1995)

Mary Mae Williams, born Jan. 18, 1911, currently lives in White Springs but taught school from 1934-1943. She was teacher, nurse and cook at Rocky Sink and at Groom's school, Wellborn. Her salary was \$45/month and increased to \$60/month before she retired. At first the children brought lunches from home. When the state supplied oatmeal and raisins, she cooked lunches. Textbooks were supplied to her and Mary taught reading, writing and arithmetic to varied ages all in one large room with a wood stove to heat and to cook on. Mary and her students remember big cracks in the floor. School lasted 4 months. Supervisor D.E. Williams (Tallahassee) came to inspect and complimented her on the well being of her classroom and her students. Mary can remember pupils: Mary, Ralph and Alfred Bush, and Groom's children, Cliphis, R.A., Mary and Elizabeth and the Fletcher children, Oretha and Sam. Mary describes professor Coleman as a teacher of first through eighth grades. Her students put on Christmas plays, sang, and had prayer each day. They learned multiplication tables. She remembers a Luther Holland who taught in Wellborn. (Mary Mae Williams was interviewed by Elizabeth McMullen and Irene Jernigan McCall)



**Mary Williams  
taught 1st at  
Rocky Sink, 2nd  
at Grooms School.  
from 1934-1943.**

February 11, 1941,  
W E L L B O R N  
SCHOOL BURNS See  
picture:

The school had been built as a W.P.A. project with approximate cost of \$50,000. This was the first year Wellborn school had twelve



**Wellborn School**

grades. The fire was believed to have started around a flue six hours before it was discovered. Two teachers and a group of girls practicing basketball on the court east of the school noticed signs of fire and alerted others. Eleven rooms and an auditorium became a heap of fallen brick, pieces of wall and flame-eaten timbers. The fire destruction could not be stopped. Cleve Pennington, trustee, older children and principal, Clayton Bass, were able to rescue some of the home economics room equipment, school records and books before the danger in the burning building was too great to risk.

Trustees Cleve Pennington, T.O. Craft and W.L. Howell, and Principal Clayton Bass met with Supt. Perry A. Homes and Wellborn leaders to establish classrooms in two churches, the Masonic lodge, above Mc Leran's store and in some homes so that the school year could be completed.

In 1941 H.C. Pennington, trustee of the Wellborn school, gave the Board \$29. from sale of scrap iron but requested \$4 be allotted to the purchase of clothes for children unable to attend school for lack of clothing.

In 1941 school bus drivers used their own truck chassis and stored the bus bodies in a common shed when their trucks were not used as school buses.

1941 minutes show payments to various property owners for rent of classroom space.

New Boundary lines for Wellborn school district #2 are recorded as: N E. corner of Suwannee County where Suwannee River intersects the boundary between Suwannee and Columbia (or at NE corner section 3-2-15) running south 16-1/2 miles to SE corner of section 24-4-14 thence west 6 miles thence N 19 3/4 to point where section 22 and 23 T1 R 14 intersect Suwannee River, thence E along Suwannee River to point of beginning.

Sept., 1941, plans accepted of T. Angus Mc Ewan architect for new Wellborn school.

In October, 1941, a petition presented for school bond elections to finance the new school. These were the freeholders qualified to vote: T.C. Fouraker, A.W. Law, W.B. Brannon, Ragan, Gaylard, Maggie McKeithen, A.B. Benton, S.R. Mallory, Elizabeth Knight, Albert E Cobb, H.C. Dennard, Sam Godbold, S.G. Adams, R.H. Edwards, Mrs. W.J. Moseley, Allie Belle Adams, James W Ivey, T.J. Ellis, S.A. Richardson, W.B. Thompson, Mrs. M. T. Smith, Mrs. Rosa Johnson, Woodrow Fouraker, P.H. Reid, W.L. Howell, B.E. Brime, H.C. Pennington, W.P. Owens, John C Knight, Mrs. M. Ruth Bailey, T.J. Geiger, E.C. Cook, J.L. Owens, B.R. Dennard, Clyde Moseley, Louise McKeithen, B.W. Lowe, W.M. Cason, Paul H Smith, J.H. Tillis, H.L. Johns, C.C. Nichols, T.O. Craft, J.

*Schools of Wellborn*

Drew Blanton, R.D. Brannon, Clifford Stephens, T.B. McLeran, A.W. McLeran, J.L. Baker, Marion L. McLeran, Mrs. Viola Keen, O.N. Powell, C.A. Knight, D.E. McDonald, E.B. McLeran sr., Mrs. Vida Howell, L.A. McKeithen, Nita McLeran, Elma Z Ivey, W.M. Hogan, T.A. Knight, C.L. Bryan, J.S. Smith, V.W.A. Hutchingson.

In Jan., 1942, The Board agreed to add an auditorium for Wellborn School and also put in a deep well water system.

Feb 3, 1942, The Board voted to adjust school times opening and closing to go along with national change from Eastern Standard Time to Eastern War Time which was a daylight saving time.

Friday, April 23, 1942, the graduating class was the first to graduate in the new Wellborn High auditorium. Valedictorian was Elizabeth Bond and the Salutatorian was Virginia Pennington.

August, 1945, The Board agreed to have Mr Cook at Wellborn cut timber for a school building at Groom's school.

In 1946, July consolidation election for Wellborn and Dunellen school district was approved with T.B. McLeran, clerk. Inspectors were F.S. Walter, H.R. Dennard, T.A. Knight, H.L. Johns, clerk, and inspectors C.D. Greene, Harley Poucher, Dan Adams.

At that same board meeting the vocational agricultural program was discontinued until proper equipment is available at request of principal T.J. Geiger.

Bids were authorized for a septic system for Wellborn schools and Arthur Land's bid to supply coal at Wellborn school was accepted.

In March, 1948, The Board approved the request to drain the Wellborn school yard of water. (one of the wettest years on record)

On August 2, 1949, Central School students were divided amongst Branford, McAlpin and Wellborn.

In 1950, The Board authorized survey of cost to put in electrical heating in Wellborn School.

On July 20, 1963, these people attended the board meeting to discuss school and assorted problems. Mr. V.A. Downing, Mr. Robert A. Edwards, Mrs. Pennington, Mrs. Roger Gaylard, Mr. Elmer Gaylard, Mr Roberts, Mr. H. G. Fisher, Mrs. V A Downing, Mrs. Isom Yancey. Mr. Walter Gaylard, Mrs. L. M. Clayton, Mr.

*A History of Wellborn, Florida*

Otis Dickman, It was decided to put it to a vote of those who had students to #1 close the school, #2 reorganize 1 through 6 or #3 continue grades 1-8. The final decision was to be a School Board decision.

April 6, '65, The School Board decision was to consolidate McAlpin with other schools and to transport 7th and 8th grade from Clayland and Wellborn to other schools. The explanation was that the small number of students could get broader curriculum at less cost per pupil.

On March 18, 1967, The Board voted to close Wellborn and Clayland school and to close grades 9-12 at O'Brien.

In April '67, delegation from Wellborn presented a petition to keep the school open. The Board said that there needed to be 30 students per grade to reverse their decision to close.

July 1968, the School Board decreed the school unfit due to location and the condition of the building and recommended it be offered for sale. A suggestion was heard that the community be allowed to use the building. Since vandalism had already occurred, the School Board denied the community use suggestion.

1973 (?) SCHOOL BUILDING DISMANTLED.

This was brought to the The Wellborn Book committee by Colleen Brannon Borklund. The original copy letterhead was this PENNINGTON DRUG COMPANY

J.E. Pennington, M.D. Proprietor  
Physicians and Druggists

Wellborn, Florida, May 6, 1925

"The year of 1917 was very important in history. It was the year that seventeen healthy boys and girls began their career at "Ole Wellborn". Seventeen youngsters wended their way schoolward with books and slates and proceeded to master their A,B,C's. It was some job but Miss Mary Jackson was equal to the occasion and future doctors, lawyers, ministers, and merchants were successfully launched on the sea of learning. Among those notable infants were Lillian Sistrunk with blue eyes and black hair, Lamont Jernigan with his funny little face and brown eyes, Ruby Stansel with cute dimples in her cheeks, Mildred Zipperer all full of giggles, Kate Howell so bashful, and Paul Stansel with a funny stub nose that was made so by a fall down the steps one day. Not until Miss Jackson cuddled him were his hurt feelings or his hurt nose relieved. The school year went by and then came second grade. That September the same students were a little older, a little wiser and just as active. Virgie McKeithen and Clara Mae Hemming brought their dolls to school. Grace Ellis was caught playing hooky. Third grade found a few new faces, one or two left behind. This was the year to delve deeper into

books and strive for higher honors and yet, with all their mischief, the class caused their teacher some annoyance. The fourth grade was the year Yulee Smith had to stay after school to learn spelling 'most every day. Fifth grade was the year that Lillian Stansel and Dola Howell got a good start in arithmetic. Sixth grade was the year that Della Kent and Thelma Law were caught eating fruit and chewing gum in school. Seventh grade all the children worked hard to master the school work well so as to be promoted to eighth grade which would be the final chapter of "Ole Wellborn" school. It was in eighth grade that the class became conscious of our own great importance in the community and in the world. The class members began to show superiority over members of the lower grades. They took an interest in athletics - and to organize their class in the same way that High School and college classes do. By far the most note worthy event of the year was a basketball game between Wellborn and Central. Another happy occasion was the class party by mesdames S.E. Goff and T.B. McLeran to honor this remarkable graduating class. Graduation permits me to say that so far as talents and beauty are concerned most of us have improved in these eight years. For the rest, the less said, the better. Perhaps four years from now a second volume will relate the High School History of this remarkable graduating class.

Newspaper clipping

**GRADUATION JUNIOR HIGH AT WELLBORN, FRIDAY**

Former Governor Hardee makes address at Commencement.

**LILLIAN STANSEL IS GIVEN HONOR PRIZE**

Fourteen students eighth grade end year of hard study.

Wellborn -- Former Governor Cary A. Hardee delivered the commencement address at the Wellborn junior high school exercises Friday night, May 8th, in the First Baptist Church at which fourteen students were graduated from the eighth grade.

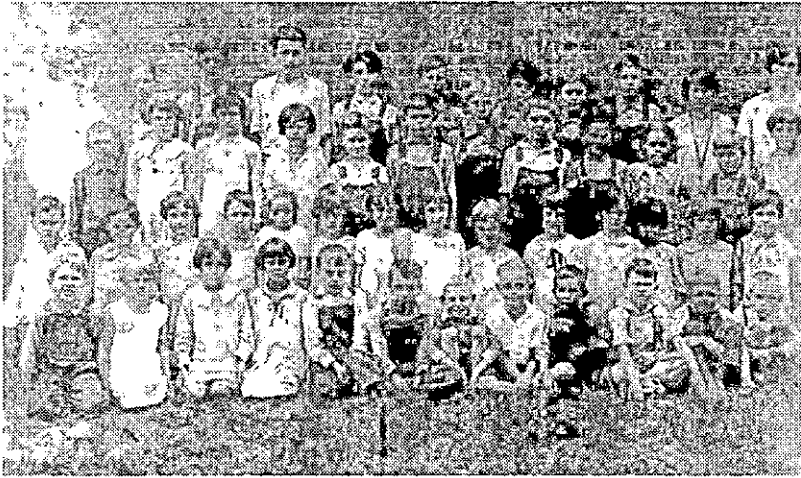
Arriving shortly before the opening of the exercises, from West Florida, where he has been on a several day business trip with Governor William W. Brandon; of Alabama, the ex-governor was escorted to the church by a large delegation of Wellborn citizens.

"It is with much pleasure that I address this successful little group of scholars," Mr. Hardee said.

"You have reached the first step in preparation for the future, and may you continue to learn in our great halls of knowledge so as to be better fitted to grasp the opportunities that present themselves later in your lives."

Lillian Stansel was awarded the honor prize for the best school grades.

T.W. Sweat, Suwannee county school superintendent, W.T. Newsome, principal of the Wellborn junior high school, and other school officials were present for the exercises. The graduating class consisted of the following: Paul Stansel, Lillian Sistrunk, Yulee Smith, Mildred Zipperer, Ruby Stansel, Thelma Law, Grace Ellis, Dola Howell, Katie Howell, Virgie Mae McKeithen, Lamont Jernigan, Lillian Stansel, Clara Mae Hemming, and Della Kent.



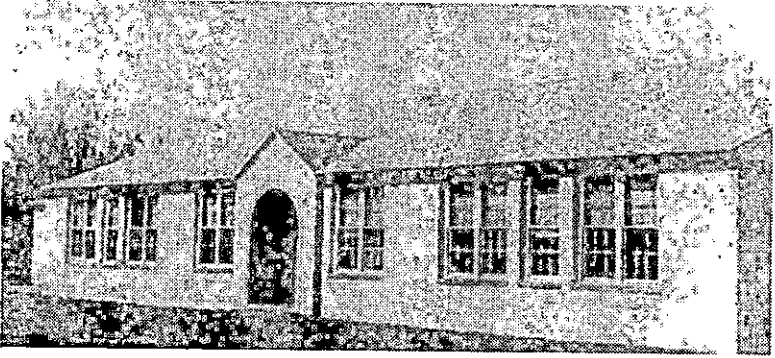
**1932-33 - Wellborn Classes (not all identified)**

Left to right from top row: Mrs. S.C. Goff, J.W. Foster, Lynn Foster, Wesley Deese, Olen Boone, Arthur Hillhouse, Harry Deese, Dupont Deese, Boone, Miss Thelma McDonald, Cody Law, Fannie Godbold, Aleen Byrd, Murle Stevens, Carson Miller, Raymond Stansel, Johns, Edward Powell, Thelma Hunt, K.D. Eatmon, T.W. Allen, Lina or Nina Powell, Eunice Ogden, Lavonia Ogden, Lina or Nina Powell (twins), Bonnie Law, Florence Taylor, Woodrow Fouraker, Lucile Bishop, Fouraker, Aileen Copeland, S.C. Goff, James Goff, James McKeithen, Walter Wynn Wilson, R.A. Hillhouse, Venis Blanton, Traverse McKeithen.



**WELLBORN - 1939-40**

Front row: Ila Copeland, Lois Jones, Verna Fussell, Martha McLeran, Imogene McKinney, Aileen Howell, Minnie Lee Foster, Bertie Hunt, Opal Knight, Lillian Stevens. Back row: Robert Lee Allen, Robert Jones, Marvin Foster, Maudell Jones, Walter Silas, Annell Eatmon, Wallace Lampp, Louise Bond, Eulie Howell, Dorothy Wynn, Revis Fleming, Billy Pennington, Pete Hogan. (Absent: Odell Tillis, Frank Cotton, Ernest Williams, Dorothy White.)



**WELLBORN SCHOOL**

Wellborn, Florida

1944-45

Built, 1941 - Closed, 1967 - Building demolished 1973



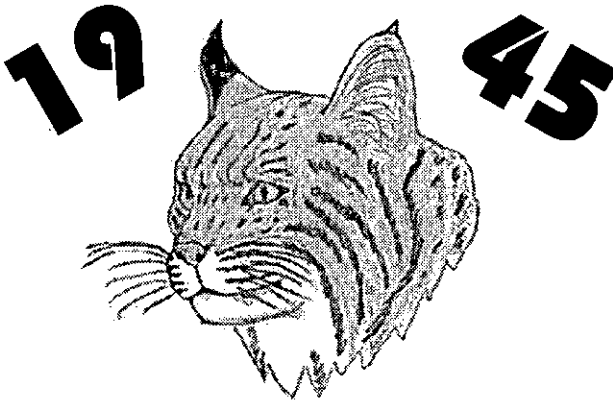
**GROUP PICTURE, SENIORS**

1945

Front row l-r: Irma Hillhouse,  
Frances Johns, Annie Jones, Eudine  
Knight, Kathryn Morrell. 2nd row:  
Helen McMullen, Dorothy Thomas,  
Bernice Williamson, Evelyn  
Williams, Marian Richardson. 3rd  
row: Gene Knight, James Law.  
Miss Tindell, Teacher

**1945 Seniors,  
Sixth Grade Year  
(1939)**





# Fighting Wildcats



## 1945 GIRLS BASKETBALL

Kathleen Reid-Forward,  
Dorothy Thomas-Guard-  
Captain

Frances Johns-Forward-  
Co-Captain

Geraldine Blanton-Forward,

Louise Nichols-Forward,

Jacqueline Thomas-Forward,

Erma Hillhouse-Guard,

Eudine Knight-Forward,

Doyce Walker-Guard, Mr.

R.T. Miller-Coach.

## 1945 BOYS BASKETBALL

James Law, Gene Knight,  
Homer Williams, Hubert  
Owens, Earl Bullock,  
Thurston McLeran, L.W.  
Green, Jack Knight, Fred  
Godbolt, Jr.





**CHEERLEADERS**

Marian  
Richardson,  
Charlotte Moseley,  
Eddie Price,  
Barbara Knight,  
John Myer, Emma  
Lou Cason, Louise  
Ross, Marjorie  
Blanton.

**SOPHOMORE CLASS**

Homeroom Teacher:  
Miss Effie Jernigan

Hazel Foss, R.V. Williams,  
Lois Smith, Dorothy Byrd,  
Geraldine Blanton, Kathleen  
Reid, Mary Smith, Betty  
McKeithen, Jenice Bales,  
Fred Godbolt, Jr., Jack  
Knight, Louise Nichols,  
Hubert Owens, Janet Law,  
Ralph Copeland, Fred  
Williams.



**JUNIOR CLASS**

Homeroom Teacher:  
Miss Effie Jernigan

Class Roll:

Doyce Walker, Naomi  
Richardson, Annie Maude  
Johnson, Ella Mae Smith,  
Homer Williams, Iris  
Morgan.

**FRESHMEN CLASS**

**Homeroom Teacher:**

**Mrs. Chloe Blanton**

**Class Roll**

**Charlotte Mosely, Joyce Johns, Pearlle May Bardon, Jacqueline Thomas, Mary Etta Gaylard, Doris Foss, Ella Mae Morgan, Emma Lou Cason, Ronald Land, L.W. Green, John Smith, Jack Stansel, Earl Bullock, Eddie Price, Thurston McLeran, Helen Morrell, Patty Linkhart, Carolyn Deese, Minnie Laura Taylor, Lounita McLeran, Minnie Ola Knight, Martha Walker.**



**EIGHTH GRADE**

**Homeroom Teacher:**

**Mr. H.L. Johns**

**Class Roll**

**Nettie Lou Boyette, Marjorie Blanton, Barbara Knight, Martha Jean Pennington, Betty Law, Lucille Nichols, Mary Ann Owens, Kathleen Bailey, Ethel Smith, Kathleen Carter, Cecil Hunt, Lewyn Geiger, Clyde Owens, Charles Fouraker, Jack Gaylard, Jerry Harris.**



**SEVENTH GRADE**

**Homeroom Teacher:**

**Mr. H.L. Johns**

**Class Roll**

**Sarah Bales, Louise Woods, Louise Ross, Margaret Woods, Betty Jean Coarsey, Mary Alice Williams, Jeanette Smith, Virginia Nell Wheeler, Frances Tannehill, Marilyn Johns, Joe Craft, Dock Durden, William Deese, John Myer, Arvin Woods, D.A. Windsor, Oscar Windsor.**





### **SIXTH GRADE**

**Homeroom Teacher:**

**Mr. Robert T. Miller**

#### **Class Roll**

**Garner Walker, Herbert Hatch,  
John Albritton, Leon Wester,  
Betty Ruth Godbolt, L.B. Boyette,  
R.A. Fouraker, Winton Blanton,  
Paul Prince, Betty Waters,  
Gilbert Markham, Ethel Whaley,  
Josephine Law, Charlie Woods,  
Joanne Land, Howard Brannon,  
Dale Myers, Loretta Flowers,  
Elva Gaylard, Hazel Lee Hatch,  
Vann Roy Wester, Annie Mae  
Owens, Randall Smith, Robert  
Taylor, Barbara Douberly.**

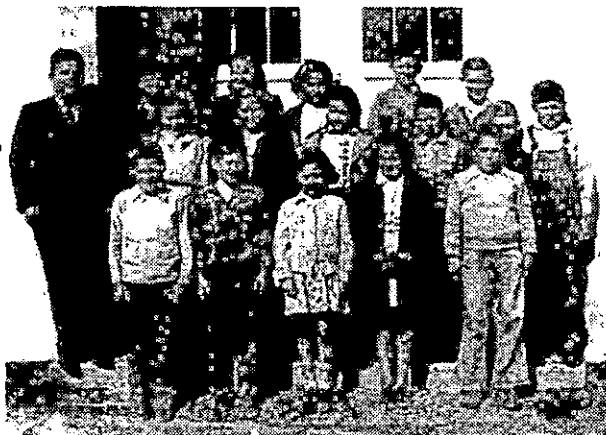
### **FIFTH GRADE**

**Homeroom Teacher:**

**Mr. Paul Smith**

#### **Class Roll**

**Hollis Elmer Owens,  
Lizzie Walker, Betty  
McKeithen, Virgil Rhoden,  
Clyde Mosely, Dorothy  
Tripp, Norma Jean Smith,  
Lois Alderman, Delma  
Boyette, John Taylor,  
Stafford Brannon, Warren  
Morrell, Muriel Wester,  
Betty Joe Bailey, Erean  
Law, Arnold Coats,  
Joanna Smith, Seber  
Cone, Levereign Connell.**



### **FOURTH GRADE**

**Homeroom Teacher:**

**Mrs. T.J. Geiger**

#### **Class Roll**

**James Coarsey, Leonard  
McLearn, Walter Ryals,  
Thomas Andrews, James  
Ryals, Franklin  
Markham, Wilbur Hogan,  
Harold Godbolt, Dean  
Law, Louis Woods, H.C.  
Pennington, Jr., Tommie.  
Smith, Kenneth Fouraker,  
Johnnie Woods, Virginia  
Andrews, Nan Tripp,  
Doris Linkhart, Marilyn  
Keen, Geraldine  
Simpkins, Gerald Dees,  
Lamont Connell.**





### THIRD GRADE

Homeroom Teacher:

Miss Effie Jernigan

#### Class Roll

Evangeline Holder, Shirley Simpkins, Mary Lou Taylor, Marylin Bailey, Annie Lee Cason, Betty Ann Linkhart, Joe Ann Linkhart, Wandel Blanton, Harry Moseley, Melba Law, Pat Keene, Delores Charles, Bobby Gene Taylor, Willard Brannon, Kenneth Wheeler, Maxie Boyette, Eugene Copeland, Roger McMullen, Donald Geiger, Billy Whitmer, Wayne Edwards.

### SECOND GRADE

Homeroom Teacher:

Mrs. Vida Hawthorne

#### Class Roll

Virgie Johnson, Eva Marie Andrews, Mary Gem McLeran, Raye Nelson, Shirley Bailey, Frances Woods, Louise Howell, Pauline Tripp, Lamar Brannon, June Long, Mayoma Walker, Lois Mae Jones, Ruthie Mae Durden, Gene Simpkins, Ronald Blanton, Wilton Skinner, Alton Markham, Henry Carter, Oscar Tucker, Virgil Johnson, Frank Coarsey, J.W. Brown, Donald Upton, Shirley Jean Knight, Virginia Myer.



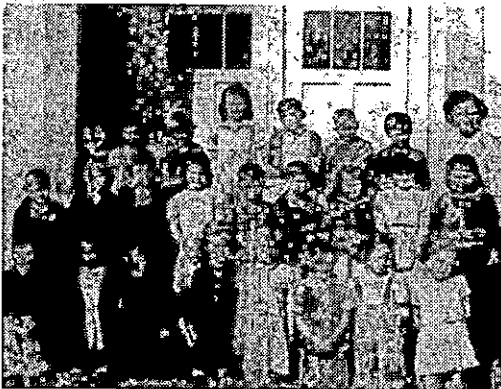
### FIRST GRADE

Homeroom Teacher:

Mrs. Naomi Dennard

#### Class Roll

Donald Stansel, Frank Taylor, Witt Taylor, Eugene Carter, Rufus Walker, Jack Tripp, Emma Miley, Jack Adams, Maxine Waters, Shirley Godbold, Jimmy Adkins, Collene Brannon, Barbara Howell, Maurice Geiger, Buford Charles, Lawton Oliver, Molly Jean Walker, Eugene Bailey, Marvin Thomas, Bernice Holtzclaw, Maxine Morgan, Patricia Price, Donald Boyette, Charles Brown, Lamar Markham, Grace Walker, Bobby Alderman, Albert Woods, Richard Whitman, Yolanda Lou Walker, Elizabeth Whaley.



CLASS OF 1949-50



ELEMENTARY FACULTY

- |                      |              |                           |              |
|----------------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| Mr. Paul Smith ..... | Sixth Grade  | Mrs. Hawthorne ....       | Second Grade |
| Mrs. Geiger .....    | Fourth Grade | Mrs. Bullock .....        | Fifth Grade  |
| Miss Tindell .....   | First Grade  | Mrs. Owens (not pictured) | Third Grade  |



HIGH SCHOOL FACULTY

- |                          |               |                        |                       |
|--------------------------|---------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Mr. O.H. Mixon .....     | Principal     | Mr. E.P. Landrum ..... | Ninth and Tenth Grade |
| Miss Zula Ratcliff ..... | Seventh Grade | Mr. H.L. Johns .....   | Seventh Grade         |
| Mrs. Betty Garland ..... | Twelfth Grade |                        |                       |

— SENIORS —



Joe L. Croft  
"Jody"



Mary Alice Williams  
"Mary"



Virginia Nell Wheeler

— SENIORS — (Continued)



Clyde Owens



Frances Tannehill



Marilyn Carver  
"Merry"



Kenneth Bether  
"Bonnie"



Marilyn Johns



Gladys Baker  
"Teet"



Caroline Bryant  
"Carol"



Wayne Law



Audrey Nell Wood



John Myer



Patty Neighbor

— JUNIORS —



**R.A. Fouraker**



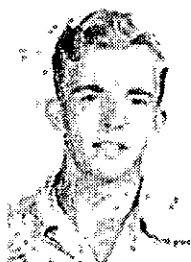
**Dolores Andrews**



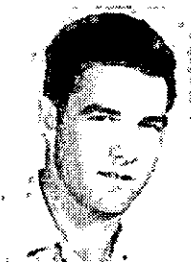
**L.B. Boyette**



**Betty Godbold**



**Winton Blanton**



**Tommy Andrews**



**Pat Poucher**



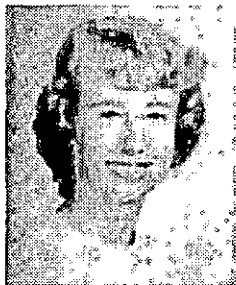
**Dale Myer**



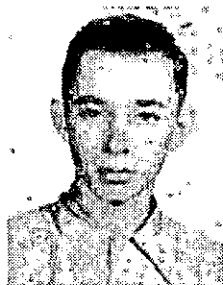
**Annie Owens**



**Howard Brannon**



**Loretta Flowers**



**Elva Gaylard**



**Joanne Land**

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**TENTH GRADE**

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**NINTH GRADE**

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**EIGHTH GRADE**

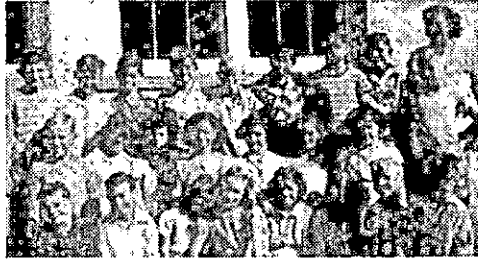


**SEVENTH GRADE**

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**HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL**  
Wellborn School - 1964  
Wellborn, Florida

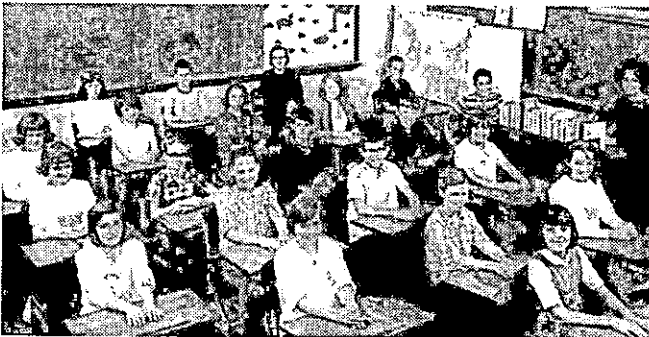
King - Dickie Fulton  
Queen - Linda Stansel

L-R: Bill Curl, Brett Fulton,  
Lonnie Dancy, Kirbee,  
Burnham, Louise Fulton,  
Sheila Bailey, Elisha Roberts.



**WELLBORN SCHOOL - 8TH GRADE GRADUATION - 1965**

Johnny Copeland - Valedictorian — Lonnie Dancy - Salutatorian (1 pt. difference).  
Front: Annette Whaley, Linda Stansel, Barbara Land, Robert Molton, Emmett Gaylord. Second row: Dale Carver, Johnny Copeland, Curtis Bryant, Lonnie Dancy, Charles Gaylard, Joey Brooker, Douglas Riegel. Back row: Lynwood Fisher, George Burnham, Donald Whaley.



**WELLBORN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - 5TH & 6TH GRADES - 1966-67**

First row: Cathy Rissell, Frankie Blanton, Diane Howell. 2nd row: Catherine Kirby, Darlene Kirby, Kenny Olive, Connie Thomas, Carol Stansel. 3rd row: Wanda Stansel, Eddie Tomlinson, Doug Fisher, Douglas Brannon, Annie Saunders, Richard Perry. 4th row: Yvonne Berry, Arlene Kirby, Freddie Gibbs, Mary Thomas, Delores Saunders. 5th row: Steve Dancy, Ralph Robertson. Absent: 5th grade Bill Curl.

**Teachers & Principals:**

Mrs. Betty Mallory 1869  
A.W. Mizell 1875-1877  
Mrs. Ruth Mizell 1876  
B.W. Helvenston 1887  
H.B. Hamilton 1889  
Mrs. Missouri Jones  
Mrs. J.W. Hembree  
Gladys Mallory  
Mrs. Wellie Everett/ Mrs Wellie Cone  
Horace Bond  
Mrs. M.W. Hogan  
Mrs. Williams, principal & teacher  
M.L. Bozeman  
Mrs. S.E. Goff  
Effie Jernigan  
Elizabeth Adams  
Ruby Brown  
Mrs. C.F. Cumbee  
Mr. C.F. Cumbee, principal & teacher  
W.T. Newsome, principal & teacher  
Clayton Bass, principal & teacher  
M.A. O'Hara, assistant principal & teacher  
Alma Matthew Bass  
Miss Naomi Mallory  
Mrs. Vida Howell/Hawthorne  
Mrs W.S. Mobley  
Ina Mae Johns  
Miss Verna Brinson  
Miss Mary Winderweedle  
Eula Smith  
Mary McLeran  
Phoebe Dexter  
Mr. T.A. Delegal  
Mr. Griffin  
Thelma McDonald/Geiger  
H.L. Johns, assistant principal & teacher  
Chloe Blanton  
Florence Dickens  
Victor Blume  
Mr. T.J. Geiger, principal & teacher



**Thelma Geiger, Mary McLeran & Effie Jernigan in Madison, FL at a teacher's meeting**



**Thelma Geiger**



**Snow at Wellborn School. Thelma Geiger's 4th grade class  
February 13, 1958**

Mr. Paul Smith  
Miss Pearl Tindell  
John W. Pittman  
Miss Vera Hillhouse  
Miss Mary Belle Barnett  
Allyne McInnis  
R.T. Miller  
Lillian Hillhouse  
Doyce Walker  
Miss Lois Fitch  
C.A. Griffin  
Miss Josephine Jones  
Beecher W. Payne, principal & teacher  
Mrs. Margaret Owens  
O.H. Hixson, principal  
Mr E.P. Landrum  
Geraldine Nelson, principal & teacher  
Mrs. Lillian Keen  
Mrs Oleta McMillan  
Mr. H. F. Lockett  
Mr. William E. Kent, principal & teacher  
Mrs. Evelyn Innis Williams  
Mr. John B Tokheim  
Mrs. Gladys M. Phillips  
Mrs. Mary Hudson Medlock  
Donald Paul Anderson

*Schools of Wellborn*

John R. Cameron, principal & teacher  
Mrs. Caroline Roberts (music)  
H. Morris Williams, principal & teacher  
Charlotte Sorrell, acting principal & teacher  
Evelyn Williams  
Stella Hodge  
T.L. Dobbins, principal  
Joseph H. McCall  
Irene McCall  
Bernice Williams  
Joe Craft  
William Patterson, principal & teacher  
Thomas S. Warren, principal Clayland & Wellborn  
Elbert McCall  
Mrs. Patricia McCall  
Myrtle Smith  
school closed at the end of 1966-67 term

**Colored Teachers:**

Porticus Blackshear  
Beulah Blackshear  
Mary Mae Williams  
Luther Holland  
Frances Gibson  
Mary W Graham  
Cary B Simmons  
Thelma Ghent  
Titus Carter  
Johnny Blackwell, principal & teacher  
Dorothy Bellows

**Trustees/ Inspectors/ School Supervisors**

1877 P.E. Lowe  
1889 R.T. O'Neal, W.B. Mickler, S.W. Gary, A.W McLeran, Sr.  
Armstead Bailey, Samuel Kellen, Homer Tison, W.H. McClellan  
1914 W.C. Jernigan, S.R. Mallory, D.E. McDonald,  
1921 A.E. Cobb, C.A. Knight, C.B. Godbold, S.R. Mallory,  
1925 J.E. Pennington, A.W. McLeran, Sr., C.A. Knight, D.V McKeithen, W.L. Howell,  
1931-32 T.B. McLeran, W.A. Hogan,  
1941 H.C. Pennington,  
1946 Blake Lowe, Joe Law, R.H. Edwards,

1948-49 Oliver McCall, T.A. Knight

1953 Geraldine Nelson,

**Janitors:**

1934 J.W. Foster

1937 W.I. Hines

1941 George Stansel

1946 Fred Godbold

1953 Mr. Ross

1957 George Skinner

**Bus Drivers:**

Drew Blanton (1920's), Blake Lowe (late 1920's)

1934 D.G. Eatman, R.D. Brannon, Troy Howell, Barney Bailey

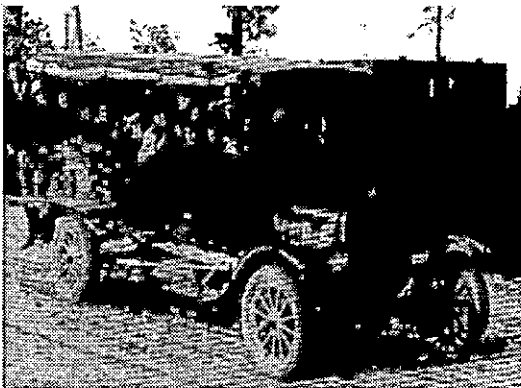
W.P. Owens, George Stansel (1938), Leonard Stansel (1939)

W.E. Owens and Ina Mae Johns (temporary)

1940 Eulee Howell



**Bob and Stafford Brannon  
about 1933**



The ink drawing was done by Danny Owens. It was given to his grandparents, Thurston and Marion McLeran, on their 50th wedding anniversary, May 25, 1972.

The inside of the store is as Danny remembers it. It was out of business at the time the drawing was made.

The person on the left, behind the counter, is Joseph Cobb who is leaving for lunch. Marion is waiting on a customer. Thurston, himself, sits on a keg and talks with the others. Renny, the dog is at his feet.

