

Jerry McKelvy's

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MT. MORIAH

Mt. Moriah, located near the center of Nevada County on Hwy. 371, is one of the oldest settlements in the county. A Presbyterian church was organized there in 1857 and a Methodist church in 1872. There have been three different church buildings at Mt. Moriah, the present building being constructed in 1928. Throughout much of the history of Mt. Moriah, the Methodists and the Presbyterians have shared the same building for services—one group in charge one Sunday and the other group the next Sunday with members attending all services.

A post office was first established at Mt. Moriah in 1852 and lasted until 1918. James Munn was the first postmaster. He also operated a lumber mill and grist mill nearby.

Wilson Weaver gave land for the church and cemetery. He came to Arkansas from North Carolina. He was a veteran of the War of 1812 and fought with Gen. Andrew Jackson in the Battle of New Orleans. He married Mary Jane Munn. Duncan Munn, Wilson Weaver's father-in-law, was also a charter member of the church at Mt. Moriah.

According to a news article in the Prescott Daily News in 1933, the first person buried at Mt. Moriah was thought to be Jason Dillard, who was accidentally killed in a neighborhood feud. I did not find his grave when I did a survey of that cemetery, so I don't know what year that happened. The oldest marked grave is that of Jane Weaver who died April 10, 1866. Today, the cemetery contains the graves of almost 1,000 people.

Mt. Moriah served as the first county seat of Nevada County for a few months in 1871 until the county seat was moved to Rosston. A historical marker located near the church tells a little of the history of Mt. Moriah.

Some of the prominent early family names at Mt. Moriah were: Weaver, Munn, Kennedy, Dillard, Gentry, Alsobrook, Waddle, Loe, Edwards, Martindale, Hendrix, Stokes, Fincher, Fuller, Clark, East, and Nesbit.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE



Mt. Moriah church -- 1909

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

ABOUT MT. MORIAH—AN ARTICLE ON MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE CENTRAL PORTION OF THE COUNTY

The following article appeared in the Sept. 8, 1906 issue of The Nevada News

Who in Nevada County has not heard of Mt. Moriah? Located almost in the center of the county, it is surrounded by a class of public spirited and prosperous white farmers. There is nothing of a public nature that doesn't concern and interest these enterprising people.

Historically, there is much to be said about Mt. Moriah. In days gone by, the old church has been the scene of many conventions and gatherings that have made history and could furnish facts for an interesting write-up.

Within the sacred cemetery nearby lies buried the beloved dead of some of Nevada's best people. The imposing monuments and well kept grounds are strong evidence of the love and esteem in which the memory of the deceased relatives were held, and shows that these citizens expect to make this section their permanent home.

And what man that lives near isn't proud of Mt. Moriah? Who among them doesn't love its sacred hills, and hold a cherished affection for every shady nook? Even the spring at the foot of the hill could tell of the social, religious, and political struggles that would awaken in the breasts of these people the memory of a beloved long ago.

And the Mt. Moriah of today is still a factor in current events. And while many of its older inhabitants, who managed the affairs in days gone by have passed, and their bodies lie buried beneath its soil, there has sprung up a new citizenship, sons of the fathers, from whom may be expected even greater things.

Mt. Moriah is situated in Caney Township, not far distant from the corner of Albany and Georgia, and 14 miles from Prescott. Nearby are Serepta and Bluff Springs and any writer of Mt. Moriah that did not mention people of these places would be doing them an injustice. Serepta has been especially noted in the past for its hospitality in entertaining gatherings of all kinds and for its religious fervor. Bluff Springs is a beautiful place, and at stated intervals, the good people of that section gather at the little church to praise and worship God.

But it is to Mt. Moriah that most of this article will be directed. Rich land, populated by white people, not a Negro living within four miles of the place, it is

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

an ideal community for any man with moderate means to locate and affords every facility for any farmer to make a good living.

S. B. Orr is the popular postmaster and owns a neat home across the hollow from the church. Not only is his a beautiful place, but its doors always are open to the wayfarer, whoever he may be, and Mr. Orr and his estimable wife always make guests feel that it is good to be there.

Mail service at Mt. Moriah is splendid. Daily star routes from Prescott pass this place, besides rural free delivery which covers portions of Caney, Georgia, and Albany Townships and is in charge of Lee Gentry, who has built up a considerable patronage for the line.

One has only to give the names of only a few of the citizens living in this community to prove to anyone that it is a splendid neighborhood. Such families as those of J. H. Waddle, T. J. Mason, D. J. Morris, T. J. Purtle, T. L. Overton, F. M. Cross, Dan Fuller, Arch Calhoun, G. M. Franks, S. B. Orr, J. K. Waddle, M. T. Taylor, L. N. Cook, R. I. Purtle, and W. E. Kennedy have no superiors in the community. They are thrifty and give to Mt. Moriah social standing of which it is justly proud.

In educational matters, this community excels. A full tax is voted and none but the best teachers are employed.

Considerable game abounds in this section and there are many lovers of the gun and rod. Perhaps the Dillard brothers are the most prominent sportsmen in the county, and no fox chase, hunting party, or fishing trip from this section is complete without them. They keep good dogs and give distinction to the sport.

A most noticeable feature of the advancement of the people of Mt. Moriah this year is the diversification of crops. They raise some cotton which, by the way, has turned out to be a very short crop this year, but they raise more corn, more hogs, more potatoes, more sorghum, more peas, more turnips, more fruit, and the prices of the foreign markets on these products no longer terrorize them.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE



These are some of the early citizens of Mt. Moriah. Only one person is identified. Let me know if you recognize any of these men. Surely someone has this same photo with men identified.

Some local news items concerning Mt. Moriah

4-7-1886 -- Pea Ridge Ramblings—We regret to learn of the death of Mr. Henry Hers (*Hirst*). He died March 30th at his residence near old Mt. Moriah. He was a true Christian and devoted husband, and was liked by all who knew him. He leaves beside his grief-stricken wife, nine children to mourn his loss.(Nevada County Picayune)

6-18-1890--Mr. J. R. Olive, of Rosston, brought us the fore foot of a large black bear Wednesday last killed near Mt. Moriah the Tuesday before. It was supposed the animal was driven from the bottoms by high water. It was very large, weighing 160 pounds gross and was shot eighteen times by a party of hunters before killed.

6-11-1890--Saturday a new post office was established at Mt. Moriah midway between Rosston and Laneburg.

April, 1907—Berkman Lumber Co. has a mill north of Mt. Moriah on the Prescott road. (*Nevada News*)

5-21-1908

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Mt. Moriah--Will Tomlin happened to a bad accident last Sunday. We suppose he was running his horse and it fell on him. It was thought he was dead, but he is better now.

12-30-1910 (from The Nevada County Picayune)

The newspaper called it the most deplorable tragedy in Prescott's history. A quarrel between two brothers (Will Hendrix and Henry Hendrix) resulted in Henry Hendrix being shot and killed by his brother, Will. The young man who was shot was to be married the next day. Upon hearing the news, the prospective bride went into hysterics. Henry had just carried home his wedding suit to wear to his wedding the next day, but instead he was buried in it at Mt. Moriah Cemetery.

April, 1917—A Sunday school has been organized with J. H. Edwards, Supt.

April, 1917—The M. W. A. local of Mt. Moriah met and welcomed five new members.

Oct. 1918—The post office at Mt. Moriah has been closed. All mail will be sent to Cale.

May, 1927—Over 1000 people attended the annual homecoming. They heard a sermon by Rev. Will Fincher followed by the noon meal and another sermon at 3:00. Then there was an inspection of the graveyard. A total of \$65.55 was raised for working the graves. (*Prescott Daily News*)

HOW I GOT THE JOB

I didn't have a real job until I got out of high school. That doesn't mean I didn't work earlier. It just means that I didn't get paid for my work on a regular basis. I grew up on a farm so there was always work to be done. When I got old enough to drive I made a little spending money by breaking up gardens for some of the neighbors with our little Farmall Cub tractor. I also made a little money during the summers helping to haul hay. Anyone who has ever done that knows that hard work is involved. I also helped my dad haul pulpwood—another hard job.

When I graduated from high school in 1961, I needed a job for the summer to make money to help pay for my college education. There were no industries in our area and it was twenty miles to the nearest big town. My dad thought I might be able to get a job with the Arkansas Forestry Commission since the state owned a lot of land in our area. We knew they sometimes hired workers for the summer to work on the Poison Spring State Forest.

The main office for the state forest was at Camden. The land that made up the state forest was in both Ouachita and Nevada counties and consisted of about 19,000 acres. It was not all connected in one block, but was in scattered tracts of land over quite a large area. The land previously belonged to the United States Department of Agriculture and was originally farm land where some of our ancestors once lived. The Arkansas Forestry Commission purchased the land from the USDA and the old farm fields were converted into forest land. The land was also to be used for recreation such

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

as camping and hunting. In 1958, the name Poison Spring State Forest was chosen for the land the state managed, so named because the Civil War battle at Poison Spring was pretty much in the center of the state forest land. They also had a work center located near the battle site.

My dad knew that since the state government was involved with the state forest, it wouldn't hurt to have a little help in getting a job with them. Our state senator at that time was Olen Hendrix of Prescott who was also president of the Bank of Prescott. My dad knew him well from his dealings with him at the bank. My dad thought that Mr. Hendrix might put in a good word for me with the folks in charge of the state forest to help me get a job with them for the summer.

We met Senator Hendrix one day at the bank. He ushered us into his private office. I had never seen such expensive looking furniture—a nice desk and leather-covered chairs. This was a new experience for me and I was a little nervous. He closed the door and asked me some questions including my plans for college. I was on my best behavior and answered his questions with “Yes, sir” and “No, sir” as I had been taught to do when speaking with people who were older than me. After a few minutes of general discussion we began to discuss the job situation. Senator Hendrix was surprised to learn that part of the Poison Spring State Forest was in Nevada County which was included in his district. He was also surprised to learn that only boys from Ouachita County were hired for summer work. Ouachita County was in another senator's district and he felt that at least one or two Nevada county boys ought to be hired since the land was partly in Nevada County.

Then he did something that really made me nervous. He picked up the phone and placed a call to Governor Orval Faubus in Little Rock. The governor wasn't available, but he talked to someone in authority. He explained to them that he had a young man from his district that he wanted hired by the Arkansas Forestry Commission for summer work. My dad and I were just sitting there listening to the conversation. I think my dad was as surprised as I was that he would call the governor.

When the phone call ended, Senator Hendrix said that everything was taken care of and that I could report to work the next day. A word from the right person can go a long way in getting results, especially when politics is involved.

At that time, “Buster” Green worked for the Forestry Commission and lived near our farm. He drove a big truck that pulled a small dozer that he used in his work. He kept the truck at his home and drove by our house every day. I guess the word got passed down from Little Rock to the local forestry folks at Camden. They called and told me that Buster would pick me up the next morning at our house and that I would be working with him, at least for a while.

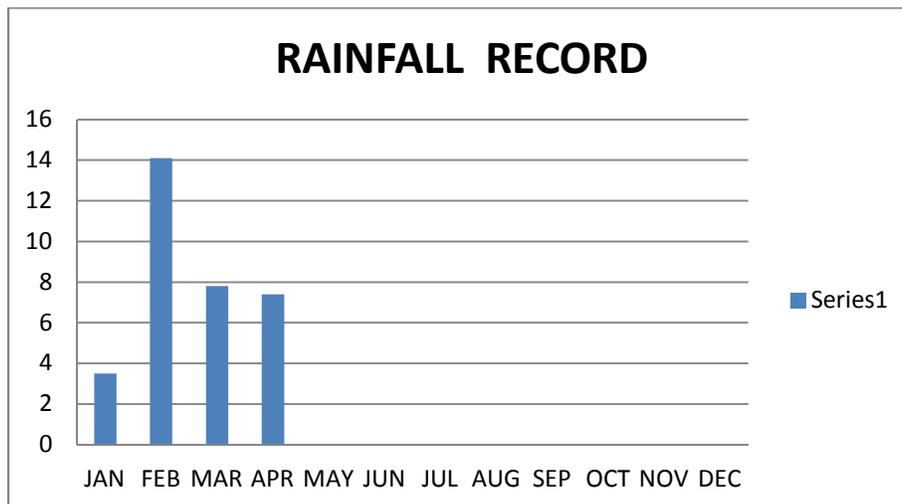
So, that's how I got the job—all because of politics. My work was just general labor type work such as painting boundary lines, maintaining forest roads, or whatever needed to be done. One of the jobs we had was to clear the brush off the site that was to become Poison Spring State Park. Who could ask for a better situation than to be picked up at home each day for work?. That was good because I didn't have a vehicle

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

at the time. One week when Buster was on vacation, they let me paint boundary lines on land close to our farm. I spent a week working by myself doing that, and surprisingly, didn't get lost. At that time the pay for general labor was \$1.00 per hour. To be eligible to vote in Arkansas in those days, a person must pay a poll tax and the state required all their employees to pay the poll tax. I couldn't vote because I was not yet 21 years old, but I had to pay a \$1.00 poll tax because I worked for the state.

I enjoyed my work with the state forest. I worked for them for one or two summers while going to college. After I finished college, I taught school for eight years and decided there must be a better way to make a living. I got a job with International Paper Co. in forest management work. Politics was not involved in getting that job, but the experiences I had working during the summers for the state gave me some experience I could include on my resume that possibly helped me get that job. I ended up working for that company in forest management for 31 and a half years making a lot more money than I could have made teaching school.

If it had not been for Senator Hendrix's help, I doubt I would have been hired for that summer job with the Forestry Commission. Several years later when I was teaching school, I took a group of students to Little Rock to tour the state capitol. While we were there we happened to run into Senator Hendrix. Of course, he didn't recognize me or remember helping me get a job several years back. When he found out our school group was from a little town in his district, he asked if we would like to meet the governor. He took us to a large conference room where we waited. In a few minutes, Senator Hendrix and Governor Dale Bumpers came into the room. He introduced us to the governor and at some point a photographer came in and took a group picture of our group with Governor Bumpers and Senator Hendrix. We had not expected to receive this special recognition on our visit to the state capitol. The picture that was taken has never surfaced. I sometimes wonder if they even had film in the camera.



SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Daddy Acrostic Dictums

An Acrostic Father's Day Tribute – Don Mathis

An acrostic is generally a poem or phrase in which the first letters spell out a word. It is Father's Day. How many of these old sayings apply to you? How many apply to your dad? Acrostics below were created by Don Mathis; axioms were written by children and fathers across history.

Deft And Difficult

To become a father is not hard; to be a father is, however. – Wilhelm Busch

Doesn't And Does

A child does not need to be parented. He needs to be mothered and fathered. – Zan Thompson

Double A Delight

To show a child what has once delighted you, to find the child's delight added to your own so that there is now a double delight seen in the glow of trust and affection, this is happiness. – J. B. Priestley

Deific And Delectated

No man can possibly know what life means, what the world means, what anything means, until he has a child and loves it. Then the whole universe changes and nothing will ever again seem exactly as it seemed before. – Lafcadio Hearn

Duel All Day

Raising kids is part joy and part guerrilla warfare. – Ed Asner

Delight At Dancing

A little child, a limber elf,
Singing, dancing to itself,
Makes such a vision to the sight,
As fills a father's eyes with light.
– Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Declare A Disagreement

My father taught me to be independent and cocky and freethinking, but he could not stand it if I disagreed with him. – Sara Maitland

Delight At Dimples

A child is a curly dimpled lunatic. – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Differences Are Dandy

My father used to play with my brother and me in the yard. Mother would come out and say, "You're tearing up the grass." "We're not raising grass," Dad would reply. "We're raising boys."
– Harmon Killebrew