

THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

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Vol. 4 - No. 2

February, 2004

THE LITTLE VERSE BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD

Many who read this paper will remember the Burma Shave signs placed along the major highways of America. I can remember seeing the signs on a straight stretch of Hwy. 67 between Hope and Emmet.

Here is a little history regarding the famous Burma Shave signs. It all started back about 1925 when Clinton Odell developed a brushless shaving cream. This cream could be rubbed on the face and eliminated the need for a shaving mug and brush. His son, Allan Odell came up with the idea of using the roadside signs as a way of advertising the new product. At first his father refused to go along with the idea, but he finally gave in and authorized \$200 to be spent on signs. Allan bought some used lumber and cut it into 36 inch strips and thus began one of the most successful advertising gimmicks of all time.

The signs consisted of five or six signs about 200 feet apart along major traveled highways. The first four or five signs contained a rhyming verse and the last sign just said "Burma Shave". The company paid farmers a small fee for allowing them to place the signs on their land. Soon the advertising began to work and sales of the shaving cream increased rapidly. More signs were built and the company even started a contest where people could send in jingles and be paid \$100 if their jingle was chosen.

The signs were a part of American advertising from 1925 until 1963. During that time over 7000 verses were painted on signs and covered 45 states. No signs were placed in Arizona, New Mexico, or Nevada because of low traffic volumes and none were placed in Massachusetts because it was hard to find good locations for the signs on the winding roads. The signs became a diversion for families traveling America's highways as they read each line of the verse. Some had funny messages and others had serious safety messages for the driver.

The company had a crew of eight trucks which maintained the signs and changed the verses at least once each year and replaced any broken signs. These men called themselves PHD's (Post Hole Diggers). One of the causes of broken signs was that horses liked to rub against them to scratch themselves so the signs were raised higher to eliminate that problem. Some people also used them for target practice and when they were placed near college towns, many were stolen and placed in dormitory rooms for decoration.

By the mid-1960s travel had become faster and the interstate highways were being built. The Burma Shave company was sold to Gillette, then to American Safety Razor Co., and finally to Phillip Morris. The big companies decided the signs were a silly advertising gimmick and ordered them all removed. The Burma Shave signs had worked well for about forty years and are fondly remember by many older Americans.

Clinton Odell died in 1958 and his son Allan who thought up the idea of the Burma Shave signs died in 1994. Here are few examples from the approximately 7000 verses the company used during that 40 year period of advertising:

THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Henry the Eighth
Prince of Friskers
Lost Five Wives
But Kept His Whiskers
Burma Shave

The Whale Put Jonah
Down The Hatch
But Coughed Him Up
Because He Scratched
Burma Shave

Around The Curve
Lickety-Split
Beautiful Car
Wasn't It
Burma Shave

Car In Ditch
Driver In Tree
Moon Was Full
And So Was He
Burma Shave

Don't Lose Your Head
To Gain A Minute
You Need Your Head
Your Brains Are In It.
Burma Shave

If you dislike
Big traffic fines
Slow down
'Till you
Can read these signs
Burma-Shave

Don't pass cars
On curve or hill
If the cops
Don't get you
Morticians will
Burma-Shave

They missed
The turn
Car was whizz'n
Fault was her'n
Funeral his'n
Burma-Shave

Don't stick
Your elbow
Out so far
It might go home
In another car
Burma-Shave

From
Bar
To Car
To
Gates ajar
Burma-Shave

If every sip
Fills you
With zip
Then your sipper
Needs a zipper
Burma-Shave

Approached
A crossing
Without looking
Who will eat
His widow's cooking?
Burma-Shave

A girl
Should hold on
To her youth
But not
When he's driving
Burma-Shave

Big mistake
Many make
Rely on horn
Instead of
Brake
Burma-Shave

You can beat
A mile a minute
But there ain't
No future
In it
Burma-Shave

Sleep in a chair
Nothing to lose
But a nap
At the wheel
Is a permanent snooze
Burma-Shave

This will never
Come to pass--
A backseat driver
Out of gas.
Burma-Shave

Road
Was slippery
Curve was sharp
White robe, halo
Wings and harp
Burma-Shave

Speed
Was high
Weather was not
Tires were thin
X marks the spot
Burma-Shave

Highways are
No place
To sleep
Stop your car
To count your sheep
Burma-Shave

The minutes
Some folks
Save through speed
They never even
Live to need
Burma-Shave

At school zones
Heed instructions!
Protect
our little
Tax deductions
Burma-Shave

THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Little Bo-Peep
Has lost her Jeep
It struck
A truck
When she went to sleep
Burma-Shave

He tried
To cross
As fast train neared
Death didn't draft him
He volunteered
Burma-Shave

No matter
The price
No matter how new
The best safety device
In your car is you
Burma-Shave

A man
A miss
A car--a curve
He kissed the miss
And missed the curve
Burma-Shave

Her chariot
Raced 80 per
They hauled away
What had
Ben Her
Burma-Shave

The safest rule
No ifs or buts
Just drive
Like every one else
Is nuts!
Burma-Shave

He saw
The train
And tried to duck it
Kicked first the gas
And then the bucket
Burma-Shave

Train approaching
Whistle squealing
Pause!
Avoid that
Rundown feeling!
Burma-Shave

Cattle crossing
Means go slow
That old bull
Is some
Cow's beau
Burma-Shave

When frisky
With whiskey
Don't drive
'Cause it's
Risky
Burma-Shave

Proper
Distance
To him was bunk
They pulled him out
Of some guy's trunk
Burma-Shave

Don't
Try passing
On a slope
Unless you have
A periscope
Burma-Shave

Twinkle, twinkle
One-eyed car
We all wonder
WHERE
You are
Burma-Shave

Is he
Lonesome
Or just blind--
This guy who drives
So close behind?
Burma-Shave

He lit a match
To check gas tank
That's why
They call him
Skinless frank
Burma-Shave

On curves ahead
Remember, sonny
That rabbit's foot
Didn't save
The bunny
Burma-Shave

Heaven's
Latest
Neophyte
Signaled left
Then turned right
Burma-Shave

Dim your lights
Behind a car
Let folks see
How bright
YOU are
Burma-Shave

Violets are blue
Roses are pink
On graves
Of those
Who drive and drink
Burma-Shave

Why is it
When you
Try to pass
The guy in front
Goes twice as fast?
Burma-Shave

Statistics prove
Near and far
That folks who
Drive like crazy
Are!!!
Burma Shave

THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

THE MAN WITHOUT A COAT (from the Prescott Daily News - April 29, 1910)

Mr. V. Osborne of this city, "the man without a coat" is celebrating his 73rd birthday anniversary.

About 46 years ago he bought a coat, a navy blue garment cut in what was then the latest style. He got to wear it at his wedding. He has worn it only three times since then, two of the occasions being subsequent weddings, and the third being "the coldest night he ever saw" eleven years ago. In his entire life he has not worn out more than two coats. "The next time I wear a coat, I will wear it a long time" is the grim determination expressed by Osborne.

The following are some reasons why Osborne is entitled to be called "the most eccentric man in Arkansas".

He never removes his hat except when going to bed and when eating with strangers. His hat is the first thing he puts on in the morning.

He hasn't worn an overshirt but a dozen times in the last twenty years.

He drinks no intoxicants.

He has chewed tobacco for 65 years.

He never smokes.

He drinks black coffee and eats "hog and cornbread".

Osborne is a carpenter born in Jasper County, Tennessee and has lived in Arkansas since before the war. He talks freely about his customs. His sole reason for going coatless, he says, is that he considers the garment unnecessary. He says he is healthier than he would be if he wore a coat. He has never had a headache and no fever since 1862. He says he never feels "tough" after arising in the morning. He eats three meals a day and isn't faddish concerning his food except it must be simple fare. Osborne's fourth wife died last July 4th. He is the father of a boy baby two and a half years old.

From The Nevada News (March 4, 1915)

A meeting of the South Nevada County Medical Association was held . Physicians attending were: from Prescott- Drs. Reeder, Hesterly, Chastain, Rice, Buchanan (Al), Buchanan (Gill), and Cox; from Bodcaw- Dr. Garner; from Sutton- Dr. Sutton; from Bluff City- Dr. Pool; from Emmet- Dr. Sandlin; from Cale- Dr. Tompkins; from Laneburg- Dr. Nelms

Other physicians who were absent because of being too busy to attend were: Dr. Mendenhall from Rosston, Dr. Brandon from Rosston, Dr. Shell from Caney, and Dr. Horton from Willisville.

THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE



BLUFF CITY GIRL'S TEAM OF 1929

Left to right: (1) Cora Starnes (Bolls); (2) Inita Henry (Gillespie); (3) Sula Nichols (Robinson); (4) Marie Hildebrand (Pruitt); (5) Gladys Hildebrand (Harvey); (6) _____; (7) Azell McGee; (8) _____; (9) Gladys Morgan (Nelson); (10) Ethel Gillespie Moore; (11) Carlene Robinson; (12) _____; (13) Helen Harvey (Robinson); (14) Brodie Kirk (Knight); (15) Dorothy Latimer, Teacher (Notice all the wrist watches and stylish tennis shoes)

(from the Prescott Daily News - March 13, 1909)

In 1906, William A. Gilcher of Ohio, purchased land near Delight at a nominal price and started raising peanuts. A year later the great diamond discoveries began to attract the attention of the whole world to Pike County after George Kunz, the noted diamond expert, disclosed that the diamonds rivaled South African gems. A boom started and the price of Gilcher's land soared.

No diamonds have been found upon the land as yet, but the diamond boom was on all around him. Gilcher went on calmly and raised a crop of peanuts. After picking them, he started in to look for diamonds. He gave the land a thorough plowing, searching every piece of earth. As a result, he found several diamonds. The price of his land went up more and he is thinking of giving up peanut farming and becoming a diamond farmer.

THE SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

THE WORDS UNSAID

by Florence Jones Hadley

Published in The Camden Evening News June 21, 1927

How often, how often, O heart of mine,
Have we sat at the close of day
And looking backward been glad, so glad,
Of the words we did not say.

For words are easy to say, you know,
And they crowd the door of the lips
Unless the warden, Love, is close by
To see that no wrong word slips.

Like a crafty foe, through the open door,
For when he once gains the day
He will never, no never, go back again,
But a victor, he becomes to stay.

The words that we use so easily
Of our lives are a very part;
They can bring glad smiles to a tear-wet face
Or add grief to a burdened heart.

Then let us take heed, O heart of mine,
That the end of each coming day
May find us glad, when we backward look,
For the words that we did not said.

BANANA SPLIT CAKE

INGREDIENTS

1 16 oz. pkg. vanilla wafers (crushed)
1 cup margarine (melted)
1 20 oz. can crushed pineapple (drained)
6 bananas
1 8 oz. package cream cheese
2 cups confectioners sugar (softened)
1 12 oz. container of Cool Whip (thawed)
1/4 cup chopped nuts
8 maraschino cherries

Combine the crushed vanilla wafers and melted margarine. Pat into the bottom of one 9 X 13 inch pan.

Beat the cream cheese and confectioners sugar together until light and fluffy. Spread over the top of the vanilla wafer crust. Spoon crushed pineapple over the cream cheese layer. Then layer sliced bananas over the pineapple. Cover with the whipped topping and sprinkle top with chopped nuts and maraschino cherries.