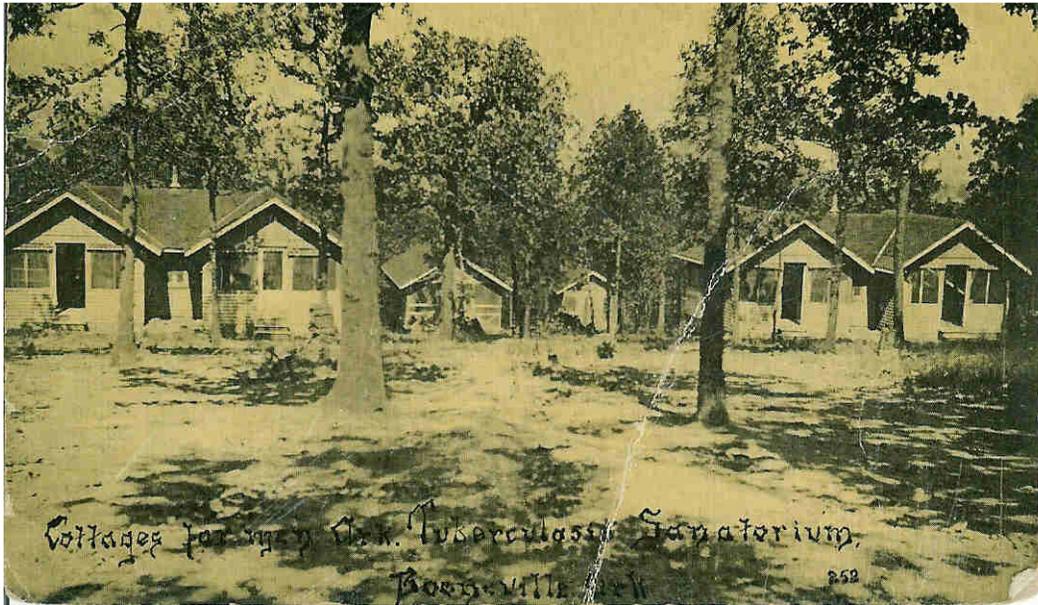


Jerry McKeiv's
SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

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COTTAGES FOR THE ARKANSAS TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM BOONEVILLE, ARKANSAS

Source for some information in this article: Encyclopedia of Arkansas and the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program web sites

Tuberculosis was widespread throughout the country in the late 1800s and early 1900s and caused many deaths. The Arkansas state legislature chose a group of men to find a suitable place for the construction of a sanatorium so those affected could be isolated from the general population and treated. The requirements were: ***the Sanatorium should be located south of the mountains and will need a large tract of land, at least 1000 acres. The site should be a section free of malaria, where the drainage is good and the streams fresh and wholesome; the soil should be sandy or rocky in order for there to be as little dampness as possible. Pine lands where the timber has been cut off is preferable, and it must be where the transportation facilities are adequate for patients to come from all parts of the state.***

The city of Booneville won out over other cities because they donated a large amount of land for the project. The Arkansas Tuberculosis Sanatorium was established in 1909 and closed in 1973. During that time, about 70,000 patients were treated. The facility was known world-wide as one of the best for treatment of tuberculosis and was one of the most modern in the country. The usual treatment time was from ten months to two years. The mortality rate from the disease when the facility opened was 80 percent, but with proper treatment, the rate was greatly reduced.

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The hospital at the facility was 528 feet long, five stories tall, and housed 511 patients. It contained doctor's offices, x-ray facilities, kitchen, and a morgue. Other buildings included dormitories, a chapel, laundry, water treatment plant, and a fire department. There were about 300 staff members. At one time the population of the Booneville Sanatorium exceeded the population of the town of Booneville in the valley below.

The old name for tuberculosis was consumption so named because it caused the body to waste away or be consumed. Since it was highly contagious, all who were diagnosed with the disease were sent to the TB sanatorium. In the early days, it was considered a death sentence for a family member to be sent to the TB sanatorium. White patients were sent to Booneville and black patients to a sanatorium at Alexander in Saline County constructed in the 1920s.

I recently came across an article in *The Nevada News* which stated that the treatment for tuberculosis at the sanatorium consisted of plenty of fresh air, rest, and drinking lots of milk containing raw eggs. Eggs were always in great demand since the sanatorium used 1200 dozen eggs per month. At one time it was thought the aromatic scent of pine trees was of benefit to the patients.

Here is what a typical day for a patient at the Booneville sanatorium was like (taken from a 1925 brochure):

7 to 7:30 – Awake; a glass of hot water and a cold sponge above the waist.

7:30 to 8:00 – Breakfast.

8:30 – Out of doors, sitting or reclining.

10:30 – Lunch, milk and eggs.

11:00 – Exercise if permissible.

11:30 – Rest until dinner.

12:00 – Dinner.

1:00 – Out of doors, sitting or reclining.

3:30 – Lunch, milk and eggs.

4:00 – Exercise if permissible.

5:00 – Rest out of doors, lying down.

6:00 – Supper.

7:00 – Out of doors, sitting or reclining.

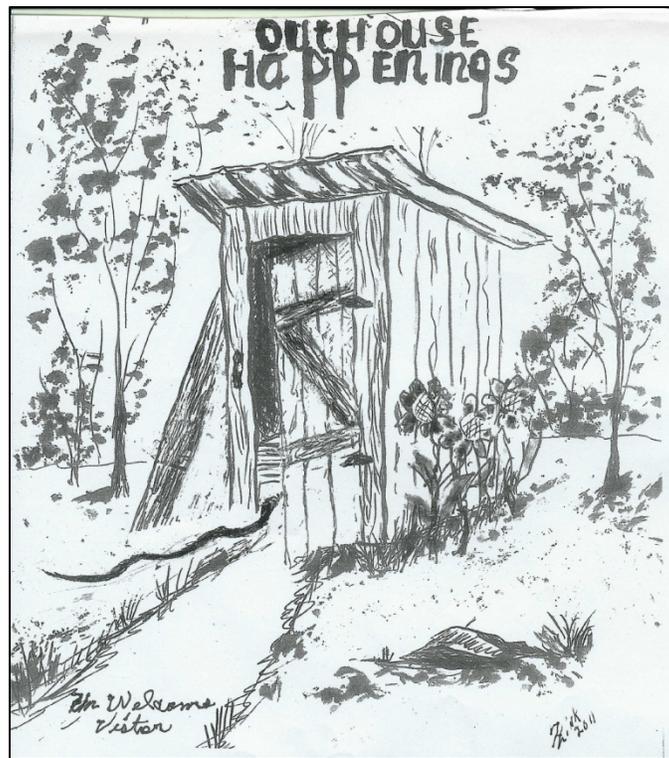
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9:00 – Lunch and bed."

The use of milk and eggs for the diet was a treatment that many doctors used in order to combat the emaciation that often accompanied tuberculosis. The treatment was an old one, having been used at least since the eleventh century at the medical school in Salerno, Italy.

Additional buildings were constructed at the facility by the WPA in the 1930s. There were separate cottages for men and women and a separate dormitory for children. Advanced cases were housed in separate dormitories. The cost to the patient for medical treatment, food, and lodging was \$10.00 per week in 1925 with provisions made for those who couldn't afford to pay. Methods of treatment were changed as new drugs and treatments became available. Occupational therapy was also used in which patients were encouraged to make things while in bed or do embroidery or crocheting to help pass the time. There were special meals and programs for the patients on holidays such as Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Modern drugs have helped considerably in the treatment of tuberculosis and the disease was thought to be a thing of the past, but new drug-resistant strains of the disease have been reported in recent years. I know that when I was teaching school back in the 1960s, all teachers, lunchroom workers, etc. were required to have a skin test for TB each year. I don't know if that is still required or not in Arkansas.



**“Unwelcome Visitor”
Another Outhouse Cartoon from Mrs. Zettie Link**

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE

AUNT "IDER'S" KITCHEN

When I was a girl of 13, an elderly couple named Ida ("Ider") and Charlie Fite lived a few miles down the road from us. Aunt "Ider" got mostly bed fast and the community pitched in to keep her household going, so to speak. It fell my lot one summer to keep Aunt "Ider's" kitchen clean. The hardest part was cleaning the kitchen floor. She had a certain way that she wanted it done. (She was about eighty). That ole' planked, wooden floor had cracks in it as wide as a pencil. I could see the chickens under the house searching for bugs, crickets, etc. She wanted buckets of soapy water all mixed up and the bare, wooden floors SCRUBBED WITH A BROOM. No sir-eee, no mopping. The brooms got right down in those cracks for a cleaner scrub. I guessed mop strings would have dragged and caught on the splinters of that ole' floor. (I was glad I didn't grow up in that house, I thought: there would have been NO PLACE to play "jacks" without splinters up the finger nails.) Mr. Clean had nothing on me. No problem with the scrub-a-dub-dub, but how did Aunt "Ider" want me to rinse that floor? It had begun to foam at the cracks by now. "Why, child, with buckets and buckets of clear, rinse water. The well is right outside the back door." (She must have thought me an idiot, for sure.) Whew, I was grateful for that well digger and his consideration for the backs of future generations. I hauled my fanny to that old wooden bucket and rope and commenced the rinsing vigil, thinking all along why Aunt "Ider" could have possibly been bed fast after many years of this. She wanted me to just "pitch the buckets of clear water on the wooden planks, and "it'll run down to the ground, sudz and all!!" I didn't have to worry about flooding the rest of the house: water takes the path of least resistance, and there definitely was no resistance straight through those cracks.

"Ider" watched every move I made propped up in her feather bed, peering from her bedroom doorway. I wanted so much to please her, but I had NEVER scrubbed a wooden floor with a broom and drawn well water and thrown it through the cracks for a clear rinse job. I knew with good reason that my mom wasn't going to believe ANY of this, and the chickens under the house would be in full mutiny by lunch time. But I continued my vigil until the entire room was soused and had begun to dry. I moved all the kitchen furniture back in place and Aunt "Ider" was peacefully napping.

Guess my inexperience had worn her out, and I tip-toed out to the ole' back porch, all crestfallen, because I had not received a proverbial nod or at least the twinkle of approval from her eyes. I sat on the back porch steps for just a spell, quenching myself from the water dipper that I had found hanging near the side of the wooden bucket. I was so grateful that I didn't have to walk a mile for that drink: my back hurt, my feet were wet, and I had worked up quite a sweat. That cool thirst quencher and a few moments of repose would have to suffice for my reward. (Pepsi NEVER entered my mind: I wouldn't have had the DIME to buy it anyway!) I will always hold dear the memory of helping an elderly country lady who was, quite frankly, flat of her back and depending on those around her to support her in her time of need. Isn't that what neighbors are for? Well, they used to be...

Dr. A. B. Lemons (Cornelius)

P.S. I am so glad I grew up in Dixie.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

When I was growing up, we had a well just a few feet from the house. Our house was on the top of a big hill and the well was only about 25 feet deep. The water was clear and tasted good. The only problem was there just wasn't enough of it. In the hot, dry summer-time, we had to conserve our water to get by. Our laundry was done outside in those days. We had graduated from the wash pot to having a wringer-type electric washer out in the "wash-house" which was connected to the smoke house. Since washing clothes was only done about one day per week, it didn't put too much strain on our water supply except for that one day.

Taking baths was a different story. We did take baths more often than once per week. Dirty farm work and kids playing outside in the dirt called for frequent baths. Our well was so weak that we could only draw enough water to barely cover the bottom of the tub. The next person would need to wait a while before taking a bath to allow the well to replenish itself.

Finally, when I was grown and working, I contracted with a well driller to drill us another well. We didn't use any special procedure to find the right spot. We just told him to drill where we wanted it which was about thirty feet from the old well. Both wells were the 36" diameter wells lined with concrete well tiles. He drilled the new well 38 feet deep and found a good stream of water. I'm sure it is the same water source as the old well, but the extra depth allowed for more storage capacity. This new well usually had about 15 feet of water most of the time which was plenty for our use.

The two wells are no longer used since the new water system came in. I suppose we could rig up an irrigation system and use them for watering the gardens if we could get the old Ruth-Berry water pump to work. One thing about a well—when it's no longer needed, there's no way to move it. I guess you could fill it up with something, but there might come a time when we would need that water again.

Jerry McKelvy

Samuel Clyde Cummins b 20 April 1887 Prescott d 28 Jan 1897 Prescott. My cousin Ruth Piercy said he drowned in a rain barrel. Research has proven that some stories told to me were not true, but I tend to believe this story as my grandmother never stopped grieving about his unfortunate death.

David Cummins

We did not have a Cistern (Well) but our neighbor down the road, by the name of John Lowe did and we carried our drinking and cooking water from their well. It was not a half mile, but seemed farther to us when we started carrying those buckets. We would carry our wash water from the creek and our bath water came from the creek and we would set it out in the hot sun to get it warm for us to take a bath at night. I was nine years old at the time and times were very hard for our family at that time. Later we moved to a house with a well and we praised the Lord every day for that good old well water.

Wanda Carter

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Both my grandparents had good wells on their farms. When I was a small child my McBrayers loved to go fish on the river. This was near McCaskill, Pike Co. There was the frame of an old house, no windows or doors and an over-flowing spring with strong flow and good clear water, better tasting than our city water for sure. The family quit fishing there and the spring dried up years ago. My grandfather, Johnny Avery's farm was in the Midway community. The road in front of his house was the Hempstead/Nevada Co. line. He could find water and was called on by friends in the early days when they had a well go dry. I thought he called it dowsing. I have seen him cut a branched limb from a peach tree, which was his choice of wood. As a child it was amazing to watch that limb turn down. They also made good switches as they were so limber. Just the threat of getting a peach switch was all you needed to think twice about your deeds.

Linda Kucera

We lived with my grandmother in Boughton 1943-'45. She had a dug well in the back yard and a big barrel that functioned as a cistern. I remember all the "wobble-tails" in the cistern water. I seem to remember cistern water being used for washing clothes, house cleaning, flushing toilets (early indoor types), and at hog killing, they would boil a wash pot of water to scald the hog before scraping the hair off; also for boiling chittlings.

You recently did an article on Dr. McDaniel at Boughton; during the same period, Dr. and Lizzie McDaniel had an indoor hand pump at the end of the kitchen sink. I recently visited the old McDaniel house place and there is still water oozing from old rusty well plumbing. The house was falling in and was burned a few years ago.

Ed Bryson

The well was already on our place when my folks built the first part of the house in 1943. It was a "board well" meaning that it had boards used for the casing for the well. There was a large pulley with a rope to get the good cool fresh water. Until the electric service came to our part of the country the well frequently served as the refrigerator when the ice melted away in the ice box. One of my worst memories is of the time I was sent to get a bucket of water and didn't want to do it. In a fit of temper, I threw the bucket into the well forgetting about the jug of milk that had been let down into the water to keep it cool. Of course, the bucket hit the jug, breaking it, and letting the milk ruin the water. When my dad came home from working a long hot dusty day, I had to tell him what I did. He didn't say a word. He just got two five gallon buckets and put one on each end of the rope and started "drawing the well dry". When he got all the water out that he could, he descended into the well to get the broken glass out. He never scolded me or fussed at me--seeing him work so hard and the fear I had when he went down into that well was worse than any punishment that could have been doled out.

We were blessed with plentiful good water and really appreciated it for we had neighbors who were never able to get good water no matter how deeply they dug. There were at least three other wells that I know about on our property and my dad filled them in when they were no longer used. The well on top of the hill where my great grandparent's house was had "hard" water and the women folks went to springs to do their laundry. When I think about that, I really appreciate that washing machine and dryer sitting in my utility room.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Before the electric service came, my dad obtained a pitcher pump and built a summer shower. He built a platform at the well and installed a fifty-gallon barrel. He ran pipe from it to a small building that looked much like an out-house except he put a slat floor in it and didn't put a roof on it. He topped off the "shower" with an evaporated milk can that he had hammered many tiny holes in the bottom. He cut the top off and hung it on the open end of the pipe. There was a valve to turn the water on and off flowing down from the barrel. My job was to pump the barrel half full of water in the morning so that it would have all day to get warm and we could all treat ourselves to a "hot" shower each evening.

Betty Thomas

Regarding your question, we lived on Moore St. near the high school, so I have never seen a cistern that I know of, but I would like to. I did know they existed, and enjoyed your piece about the one you showed.

June Hines Moore

It was reported last month that an underground cistern from pre-Civil War days has been discovered at Old Washington. This was found during an excavation done by Dr. Jamie Brandon of Southern Arkansas University along with a group of volunteers. They have found many other artifacts including a Spanish coin dated 1736 and a half dollar dated 1827. For the full story and pictures, go to <http://www.hopeprescott.com/>. Just type "cistern" in the search box in the upper right part of the page and it should take you there.

Jerry McKelvy

Growing up in the 30s and 40s was nothing like today. My father was a sharecropper, so we moved very often. We never knew where we would have a well of water or a spring close by. Most of the time, we used a spring.

My sister, Helen, and I had the chore of washing the clothes on Saturdays because of school. We got up early and put all the soiled clothing on two sheets. Then we walked about 1/4 mile to the spring. There was a wash pot already set up and a bench for the wash tubs. We filled the tubs with water from the spring. Then we filled the iron pot with water and built a fire under it to boil the clothes. We had to boil the clothes to get them clean. We used a rub-board to scrub the clothes and then rinsed them in water to remove the soap. Then we had to hang them on a long wire line to dry. We made our own soap.

We went back to the spring in the evening to get the clothes when they were dry. We cleaned up everything so it would be ready for the next Saturday.

We also carried water from the spring to use in our home every morning and evening. We had a great life and didn't know it.

Vernell (Green) Loe

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

The main water supply for Bluff City in the early days was a good spring located in the hollow below “the bluff”. Early residents brought their laundry to the spring. I can remember when water was pumped from the spring to the stores and some of the houses.

The spring was also used for baptisms. Here is an old photo of a baptism taking place at the old spring which was just down the hill from the old Bluff City Church of Christ. I’m not sure of the date of the photo. The preacher is Warren E. Starnes and the person being baptized is Della Ledbetter Tatum. This picture was included in the genealogy book on the Meador and related families by Elloene Moore McBride. A lady I knew who is now deceased was also baptized in this spring and she told me that “the water in that spring was really cold”.

Jerry McKelvy



QUESTIONS FOR NEXT ISSUE

Many people like to collect things for a hobby. I like to collect old bottles, arrowheads, old hymn books, newspaper clippings (obituaries, historical events, unusual stories, etc.), old coins, or anything old. I like to watch “American Pickers” on TV. I like to go to garage sales, but try to avoid buying worthless junk. What kind of things do you collect? What is the most unusual thing you ever bought at a garage sale or auction? Let me know by August 15th for the next issue.

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Paulette Weaver saw Mrs. Zettie Link's outhouse cartoon in the last issue and sent me several outhouse drawings by Woodrow "Woody" Black. She also sent some information about him. Did you know that Bluff City had produced so many talented people?

Woodrow Wilson "Woody" Black



Woody Black was the son of Verdith and Brighten Black, born in 1918, and raised at Bluff City. He lived in Little Rock most of his life where he was a plumber for many years. He grew up in Bluff City as did my Dad, (Paul Dayton Weaver), and they remained close friends for all their lives. He was an honorary uncle to my brothers and me.

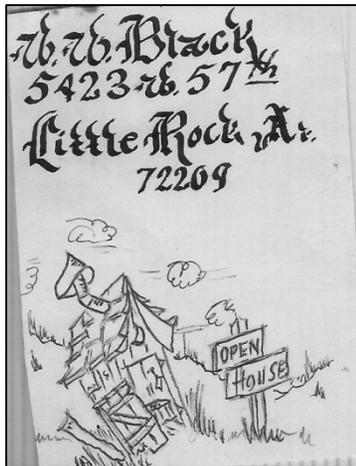
He was always drawing cartoons of outhouses and old trucks. When we received mail from him, I am sure the mailman enjoyed the envelopes as much as we did. A small outhouse usually was drawn in the return address. Often other things were drawn on the envelopes as well. When we visited or they visited us, Dad and Uncle Woody always stayed up late and got up early so they could talk. Mother says that there was nearly always a cartoon of some kind by the breakfast plate that he had drawn. Mother has saved many of these and we all enjoy looking at them.

Uncle Woody also loved to work with wood and carved lots of character figurines, some of political figures, which won many state fair awards. Some of my favorite things that he carved were worn, run-down shoes and boots.

The *Arkansas Democrat* wrote an article about Woody Black a number of years ago and this is a quote from that article:

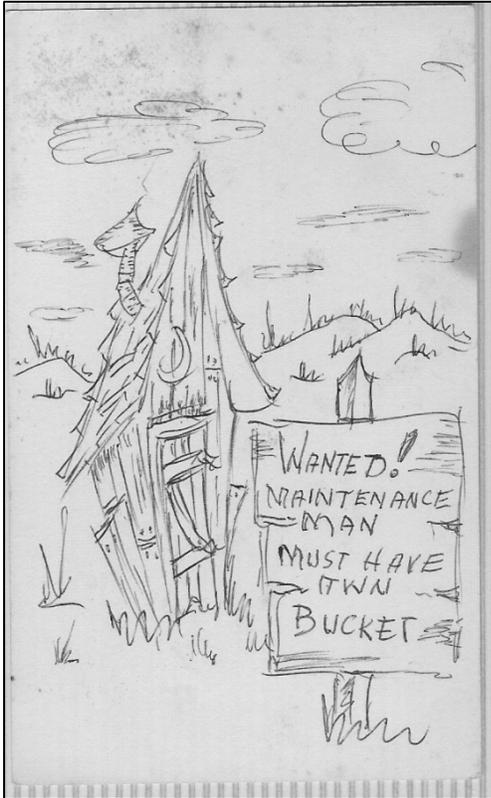
"Black also sketches outhouses as a hobby and they have become his trademark. Looking at some of his sketches, Black said, "I guess I could have been a cartoonist."

"He doesn't even sign his name on birthday cards," Mrs. Black said. "All of our friends and relatives see that outhouse and know it's from Woodrow."



A Woody Black drawing as part of the return address on an envelope

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A Woody Black Outhouse Cartoon

Check back next month for more!

PRESCOTT 100 YEARS AGO

Items from *The Nevada News* in August, 1911

- Prescott Hardware was giving away a Banner buggy which had an easy ride with 36 inch springs.
- Boll weevils were expected to destroy about half of the cotton crop.
- Dr. J. E. Cox advertised his medical office located at Hesterly Drug Store.
- Robinson and Renfro advertised hot and cold baths on Front Street.
- Hesterly Drug Store advertised a Cyclone repeating alarm clock for \$2.50.
- Five or six doses of "666" was said to cure any case of chills and fever. Cost 25 cents.
- Prescott was to have an exhibit on a special advertising train called "Arkansas on Wheels". The train trip was to last 12 days and visit Tennessee, Ohio, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri.
- An unidentified man was found dead in the city park. His body was taken to the funeral parlor and embalmed with hopes that relatives might identify him. *Note: His identity was never determined and he was kept at the funeral home. He was finally given the name "Old Mike" and became a local "celebrity". Many Nevada County residents can remember visiting "Mike" at the funeral home. He was finally buried 64 years later in 1975. (For more on this story, see the March, 2003 issue)*