

HOOFBEATiNg Class of 1963

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Winter 2008-2009

Former Principal Celebrates His Ninetieth Birthday

Beth Cleland Harper's brother Bill writes "We recently had a chance to celebrate Dad's [Dr. Howard Cleland, former Murrah principal] 90th birthday with a large gathering that turned in to a family reunion. On July 4, [2008], we had about 40 relatives at my house for dinner and fireworks and a photo show of Dad's life. On July 5 (his birthday) we had an afternoon birthday party with relatives and family friends at my brother David's home. Jim Merritt and Johnny McDaniel and Charlie Rugg were among those who attended. I attached a photo of Dad taken on July 5 and another of Dad holding his first great grandson watching the photo show of his life."



Dr. Howard Cleland



In the left center of the photo is Mrs. Cleland and to the right are Dr. Cleland and his first great grandson. Family members are all enjoying a photo show of Dr. Cleland's life.

Dr. Howard Cleland Participates in Veterans' History Project



The Veterans History Project of the Library of Congress American Folklife Center collects, preserves, and makes accessible the personal accounts of American war veterans so that future generations may hear directly from veterans and better understand the realities of war. As part of the Veterans History Project, WLBT TV-3 News is airing interviews with Mississippi Veterans, as they reminisce and tell WLBT viewers about their time spent in the military. The Veterans' History Project officially launched on May 16, 2008, at the Trail of Honor in Jackson, Mississippi.

For thousands of U.S. combat veterans, their stories and their first-hand accounts of history go untold to the next generation of Americans. Many of those stories were forged on the battlefield and etched forever in veterans' hearts and minds. Those stories, our nation's stories, are being heard and seen thanks to a new partnership with Central Mississippi and WLBT. Three colleges were contacted by WLBT and asked to be a partner in this important project because of WLBT's ties to the community. Student Volunteers from Jackson State University, Belhaven College and Mississippi College arrange and conduct the interviews with veterans. WLBT's News department presents their stories on air each week. Though taping for the program began in May 2008, its benefit will last far longer than an evening newscast. All of the unedited interviews are sent to the Library of Congress as part of its efforts to document the war-time experiences of veterans. The interviews are also used in the colleges' American History classes as a way for students to experience our nation's past. Beginning in May 2008, local veterans have shared their stories on WLBT's nightly news. This project has featured two veterans each week and was scheduled to run through October 2008. However, because of its popularity the veterans' feature has been extended. Viewers have been treated to compelling accounts of wartime service from men and women, civilian and military, representing many ranks, jobs and branches of service. Their stories teach, amuse, inspire and sometimes sadden us, with tales of lost lives and lost time, all in service to our country. (Copy excerpted from WLBT.com)

The following transcript was written by Jennifer Martin, following an interview with Dr. Howard Cleland. The interview aired August 14, 2008, on WLBT TV-3 in Jackson, Mississippi. Click the link below to play the video of the interview:

[View the interview on the MHS Class of 1963 website](#)

Or at the WLBT website

http://www.wlbt.com/Global/story.asp?S=8841776&nav=menu119_2_2

Dr. Howard Cleland was the principal of Murrah High School from its opening through the Class of 1963's tenth grade year. He is also the father of *Beth Cleland Harper* and father-in-law of *Eddie Harper*, both members of the MHS Class of 1963.

Veterans History Project: Howard Cleland

Howard Cleland was an elementary school principal in Missouri when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. The attack prompted him to apply for officer training school and join the Navy. He was a lieutenant when he joined the crew of the U.S.S. Humbolt in the South Atlantic.

"We received emergency orders to report to a task group that had surrounded a German submarine. We sent a boarding party aboard the sub to secure it. The great thing about it: We captured their logs, all of their grid maps. And in the next 10 months, the Allies practically wiped out the German navy because of that."

They towed the U-505 sub for a couple of days. Eventually it was brought back to the U.S. where it's now on display at the *Museum of Industry and Science* in Chicago. Following his success in the Atlantic, Cleland was sent to the Pacific, aboard the U.S.S. Stokes.

"We were involved in the first wave in the landing of Iwo Jima. We arrived there before dawn. I was preparing to go on watch. The island was absolutely being bombarded. It would just seem impossible that anyone could be alive on the island. We'd send the marines that were aboard to the island in the landings. It was a bloody, bloody battle."

Despite heavy casualties, the marines captured Mt. Serabachi in a matter of days. He still remembers the moment the American flag went up.

"I was on watch on the bridge when they went. A roar went up. You could hear it from the ship and the island itself. I think that event turned the tide, because it was so exciting to see."

From Iwo Jima, the Stokes went on to Okinawa and the crew was preparing for the Battle of



Japan, when the atomic bomb dropped.

After the war ended, Cleland used the GI Bill to get his masters and doctorate. He became principal at two Jackson schools before settling in as president of Belhaven College, where he stayed 17 years until he retired. He is humble about his time in the service.

"I don't feel like a hero. I just was glad I had an opportunity to serve."

Officers and Crew of U.S.S. Humbolt - May 1943

In Memoriam

William J. Pleasant, Jr.



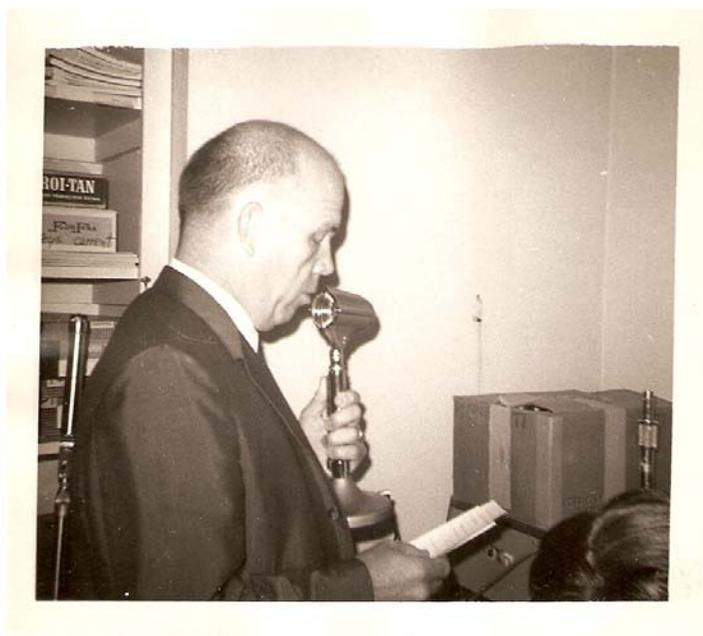
William J. Pleasant, Jr., 86, died Sunday, October 26, 2008. Services were held October 31, 2008, at Providence Presbyterian Church in Clinton, Mississippi with burial at Lakewood Memorial Park in Jackson. Wright and Ferguson Funeral Home handled the arrangements.

Mr. Pleasant, a veteran of World War II served twenty-two years in the United States Air Force before retiring at the rank of Captain in 1961. At that time he began a second career as an educator. He began as a teacher at Murrah High School in the Fall of 1961, teaching Plane Geometry and Mechanical Drawing. In addition, he served as supervisor of the school's student supply store and as sponsor of the Audio-Visual Club. He was later named Assistant Principal at Murrah. In 1966 he became principal of Central High School in Jackson and remained there until the school closed in 1977.

Mr. Pleasant's education included a B.Ed. from the University of Omaha, a Master's degree from Mississippi College, and a Doctorate from the University of Southern Mississippi.

An active member in the Presbyterian church, he was a Ruling Elder as well as Clerk of the Session at Westminster Presbyterian Church and then Providence Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Pleasant is survived by his wife Mary Nell Pleasant of Clinton; his brother E.H. Pleasant and wife Janie of Florence, Mississippi; his sister-in-law, Rachel Upton of Clinton; four sons (Bill and his wife Diane of Raymond, Steve and his wife Susan of Spring Hill, Florida, John and his wife Amy of Las Cruces, New Mexico, and his primary caregiver Tom of Clinton). In addition, he is survived by eight grandchildren, eight great grandchildren, and four nephews.





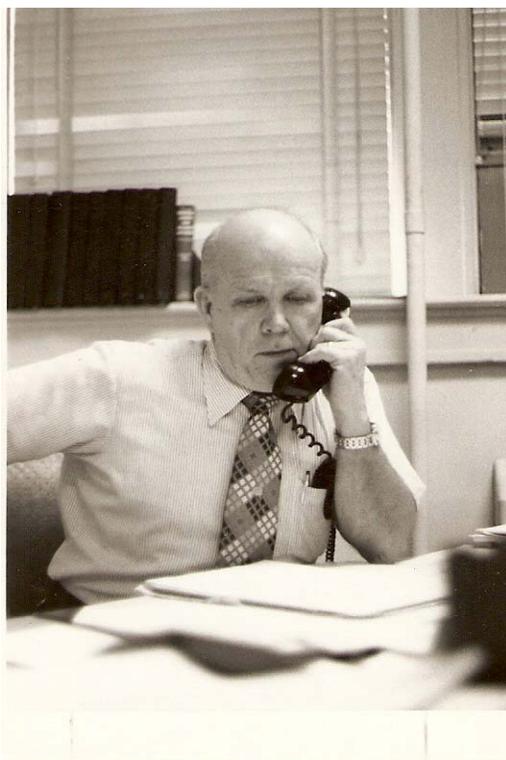
The family especially wanted to thank the staffs of the Mississippi State Veterans' Home and the Simpson County Hospital for their care and thoughtfulness during Mr. Pleasant's illness.

Contact information for Mrs. Pleasant:

Mrs. William J. (Mary Nell) Pleasant, Jr.
41 Cascades Circle
West Clinton MS 39056
601-924-1872

Son Bill's email address:

pleasantsurprize@bellsouth.net



Mr. Pleasant's Eightieth Birthday

In Memoriam

Bailey Ninth Grade Algebra I Teacher Dies

Mrs. Harriet Carter Fincher, formerly of Jackson, Mississippi, died Tuesday, September 9, 2008, in Kalamazoo, Michigan. She was born on June 26, 1914, in Munice, Indiana, to George and Edna Carter.

Mrs. Fincher graduated from Ball State University and, after teaching in Alabama, moved to Jackson in 1940. She taught mathematics in the Jackson Public Schools for 30 years at Bailey Junior High School (specifically, in 1959-60, she taught Algebra I to the ninth graders who for the most part became the Murrah High School Class of 1963), Central High School, and Calloway High Schools. She was state president of Alpha Delta Kappa educational sorority. In addition, Mrs. Fincher was one three sponsors who organized the Mississippi Chapter of Mu Alpha Theta, an honors math organization for high school students.

Mrs. Fincher was active in Lakeside Presbyterian Church in Brandon, Mississippi, near the Barnett Reservoir. She and her husband enjoyed traveling abroad and throughout the United States. She was an avid bridge player.

Her husband, Albert Andrew Fincher, preceded Mrs. Fincher in death. Surviving her are two daughters, Betty Fincher Sinkula of Kalamazoo, Michigan, and Dr. Shirley Fincher Shiff of Fort Wayne, Indiana; three grandchildren; and four great grandchildren.

Private services were held in Kalamazoo, MI.

Classmates' or Teachers' Family-Deaths

F. M. (**Mike**) **Bush** III's mother Katie Ruth Field Bush, 92, died at her home in Tupelo, Mississippi, on Sunday, February 15, 2009. Born August 24, 1916, in Centerville to Jennings Pemble and Catherine Byrne Field, she grew up in the towns of Centerville, Merigold, and Magee, graduating from Magee High School shortly before her seventeenth birthday. She earned a B.A. from the University of Southern Mississippi and an M.A. degree summa cum laude from the University of Tennessee. In 1940 she married Lt. JG Fred Marshall Bush, Jr., a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy. During World War II Mrs. Bush taught nursery school in Harlem, as her husband's ship was operating out of New York. After the war and during the 1950s, she was an associate professor at the University of Mississippi, where she created and taught the course "Marriage and the Family" as well as courses in childhood development. In the 1960s Mrs. Bush taught elementary students in Tupelo area's Lee County School system. At this time she proposed and obtained funding for a pilot program for teachers' assistants in the Tupelo Public School system. She continued as a grant writer, consultant, and active participant on numerous

boards and associations. An active member of Tupelo's All Saints' Episcopal Church, Mrs. Bush is survived by her husband as well as three sons: Mike Bush, Carl Jennings Bush, and Richard Stewart Bush (wife Arla). Six grandchildren and two great grandchildren also survive her.

Jean Anne Doughty Fairly's mother, Mary Lou Lawson Doughty, 90, died January 5, 2009, at St. Dominic Hospital as the result of a stroke. Born Mary Lucy Lawson on October 16, 1918, to John Clinton and Julia Bryant Lawson and raised in Summerland and Raleigh, Mississippi, she decided at a young age to change her name to Mary Lou. She married a young red-haired, self-professed country boy from Ackerman, whom she met on a blind date, Eugene L. (Bud) Doughty, and remained happily married to him until his death fifty-seven years later. Mary Lou worked in cost and revenue accounting from 1939 until her retirement in 1981 for South Central Bell (formerly Southern Bell). She was a member of the Telephone Pioneers and Ridgecrest Baptist Church. In addition to her daughter Jean Anne of Madison, Mary Lou's survivors include her daughter Vicki Doughty McCann and husband Charles also of Madison; four grandchildren, John Fairly and Allison of Madison, Jim Fairly and Jackie also of Madison, Jim McCann and Alice of Norfolk, Virginia, and Julia Forman and Josh from Virginia Beach; and six great-grandchildren. In addition to her parents and her husband, Mrs. Doughty was preceded in death by her son-in-law, Jack Fairly, Jr.

Ben Duckworth's mother, Josephine Murphree Duckworth, 93, died Monday, December 22, 2008, in Starkville at Oktibbeha County Hospital. Born April 3, 1915, in Troy, Alabama, she was the daughter of Thomas and Bertie Murphree. Mrs. Duckworth was a long-time resident of Biloxi, Mississippi, where she was an active member of the First Baptist Church, serving as the church organist as well as teaching Sunday school and serving as president of the WMU. She was active in such civic activities as being president of the Biloxi High School PTA and assisting with the Boy Scouts of America. After moving to Jackson in 1962, she became active at Calvary Baptist Church, teaching Sunday school and participating in the WMU. Mrs. Duckworth was a trustee of Mynelle Gardens and served in several official capacities as a member of the Mamie Gray Garden Club. Preceded in death by her parents and her husband Hubert B. Duckworth, she is survived by her daughter and son-in-law Marion and Dr. Bill Duncan of Starkville and by her son H. Benjamin Duckworth, Jr. of Jackson. She is also survived by six grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.



Ben with his mother, Josephine Duckworth

Mary Agnes Keeton Hall's son, Brian Keeton Hall, born November 18, 1973, in Fort Walton Beach, Florida, passed away unexpectedly October 3, 2008. A master craftsman, his passion

Classmates' or Teachers' Family-Deaths



Brian Keeton Hall

and talent was working in the building industry. Brian grew up in Fort Walton Beach and Niceville and was educated in the Okaloosa County school system. He was an active member of the First United Methodist Church in Niceville. He played Little League baseball, enjoyed water sports and was an instructor in Taekwondo. His grandparents Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Keeton and Mr. and Mrs. Randolph Hall predeceased Brian. He is survived by his parents, Mary Agnes and Ted Hall, sisters Shannon (husband Colonel Guy) Parker and Christy (husband James) Brown. Memorials may be made in memory of Brian to Coppage Memorial Scholarship Fund, DeKalb Medical Center, 2701 North Decatur Road, Decatur, Georgia 30030.

Melinda Stennett Lewis' mother, Donnie Dale Stennett Varcoe, 93, died Sunday, September 28, 2008, at St Catherine's Village in Ridgeland, Mississippi. Mrs. Varcoe was a native of Columbia, Mississippi. She was married to Judge Joseph Cullen Stennett who died in 1987 and later to Turner Varcoe who passed away in 2001. For 75 years she was an active member of First Baptist Church in Jackson and was a teacher in the children's department for more than thirty-three years. In her later years she attended the Chapel Sunday school class. In addition to her two husbands, her sister Nola Dale Granberry preceded Mrs. Varcoe in death. She is survived by her son Joseph Cullen Stennett, Jr. and his wife Jeanne of Oxford, Mississippi; her daughter Melinda Lewis and her husband Larry of Marks, Mississippi; two sisters, Hallie Patton and Helen Howie; four grandchildren; nine great grandchildren; one great-great grandchild; and one step-son.

Major General Gray Williamson Harrison, Jr. died Thursday, November 13, 2008. He was the husband of **Rosemary Thompson** Hester Harrison, who as **Miss Thompson** was a tenth grade English teacher for the Murrah Class of 1963. General Harrison was born in Scobey, Mississippi, in 1926. He left high school prior to graduation to attend Mississippi State to obtain a year of college before being drafted for service in WWII at age 18. He returned to Mississippi State following his Army discharge and earned his B.S. degree as well as his R.O.T.C. Commission as a Second Lieutenant in 1949. He served overseas in the Korean Conflict and at the Pentagon during the Vietnam War. Most of his military service though was with the Mississippi National Guard. In the 1980s he was confirmed as a Major General and served as the Adjutant General of the Mississippi National Guard during William Winter's tenure as Governor. He retired from the Army Reserves in 1986. At this time he continued, along with his sons, in the ownership and management of the family farm in Yalobusha County. In addition he continued his work with the American Red Cross on both local and national levels, served on the Executive Board of Mississippi Blood Services, and remained active with the Kiwanis Club, serving as its state Lieutenant Governor. Major General Harrison was an active member of Northminster Baptist Church in Jackson. He was predeceased by his parents, his first wife Sue Vandiver Harrison, and son Frederic Pate Harrison. He is survived by his wife Rosemary, sons Gray W. Harrison III and Robert Dailey Harrison as well as other family members.

In Memoriam



Natalie Butler Thames, 63, died Thursday, November 13, 2008, in Hampton, Virginia, due to complications from the radiation and chemotherapy she had been undergoing for lung cancer. Family visitation was held at R. Hayden Smith Funeral Home on Sunday, November 16 with a graveside service the following day at the Parklawn Memorial Park in Hampton, Virginia.

A Jackson native, she was born to Carl Hawley and Ruth Owen Butler, Jr. and raised in the Belhaven neighborhood. Educated in the Jackson Public School system, Natalie attended Power Elementary and Bailey Junior High, graduating from Murrah High School in 1963. While at Murrah she was a squad leader for two years, a member of the Props Club for two years, and a participant in the Theatre Guild all three years. In addition, Natalie was a valued member of Riverside's swimming team and the Flying Js, coached by her

Brother Carl. She was an active member of First Baptist Church.

Following three years of classes at Mississippi State College for Women, Natalie graduated from Mississippi State and married Frank Thames (MHS Class of 1962). She worked as a dental assistant, while Frank was a doctoral student in Aerospace Engineering at the university in Starkville. They moved first to Dallas and then to Hampton, Virginia, in 1976, where Frank is currently head of the Communications and Computer Systems Branch at NASA Langley Research Center. The mother of four children, Natalie was happy in her self-proclaimed role of "household management executive". In addition, she was an animal lover and supporter of the Peninsula S.P.C.A, headquartered in Newport News, Virginia.

Natalie was preceded in death by her parents Carl, Jr. who was a personnel director of the Mississippi Employment Security Commission and Ruth who taught Latin at St. Andrew's Episcopal School, as well as her brother, Carl Hawley Butler III, a history teacher at the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science, of Columbus, Mississippi. She is survived by her husband of 42 years Frank C. Thames, as well as her four children: Lisa Thames Berg and husband Daris of Leesville, Virginia; Frank C. Thames, Jr. and wife Kim of Lubbock, Texas; Janie Thames of McGaheysville, Virginia; and Carl Thames of Quincy, Massachusetts. In addition, Natalie is survived by two granddaughters.

Shortly before Natalie died, she and Frank had sent an update on their children, but Frank sent a more extensive update in March 2009. "Lisa Ann: Born in March, 1967 while I was in graduate school the first time. Lisa attended Hampton city schools and went on to college at James Madison University located in Harrisonburg, VA (Harrisonburg is west of Hampton in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley – one of the world's prettiest places.). She married in 1995 to Daris Berg who is originally from Rhode Island. She and Daris have two little girls – Caroline (7)

and Annie (4). Lisa and Daris live in Leesburg, VA (about 20 miles north of Dulles Airport, west of Washington, DC.). Lisa is a third grade school teacher (a 20-year veteran), and Daris is comptroller of George Washington University's satellite campus in Ashburn, VA.

“Frank C., Jr.: Born in March 1969 in Dallas. After graduating from high school in Hampton, Frank went to undergraduate school at the College of William and Mary which is in Williamsburg, VA – about 20 miles northwest of Hampton. Frank later went to graduate school at the University of Texas. He got his PhD in political science in 2001. He now teaches political science at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, TX. In 1997 he married Kim Jackson who hails from Pittsburg, PA. Frank and Kim met in graduate school at UT. So far, they have no children. Incidentally, Frank and Kim got married in Williamsburg on the campus of William and Mary. It seems that if you are an alumnus of William and Mary, you are eligible to marry in the Wren Chapel of the Wren Building [When William and Mary was founded in 1693 (next to Harvard, the country's oldest college), the Wren Building was the College: it housed the classrooms and dorm space and, of course, the Chapel, being a proper Church of England school.].

“ Janie Butler: Born in February 1978. After graduating from high school in Hampton, Janie followed her older sister to James Madison University. She graduated in 2000. She teaches English in a county high school just south of Harrisonburg. Janie is still single; she lives in McGaheysville, VA which is about 10 miles east of Harrisonburg. As you might expect, McGaheysville is a very small town (maybe 200 people or so). What it lacks in size, it makes up for in beauty. If you walk out onto Janie's back deck, about all you can see is Massanutten Mountain. All in all, Massanutten is a very spectacular view.



***Natalie Butler* Thames holds her first-born grandchild, *Caroline*, at her Baby Dedication in 2002.**

“Carl Stanley: Born in October 1982. Carl was in his high school band (He was the leader of the band: drum major.). After his senior year in high school, he was invited to go on a whirlwind European band tour. While participating in this activity, he met this beautiful young lady -- Liz Mitchell -- from Waco, TX. After graduating from high school in Hampton, Carl went to undergraduate school at George Mason University which is in Fairfax, VA



Natalie Butler Thames with her family in 2008: back row (left to right) Carl, Frank, Sr., Frank, Jr. and front row (left to right) Janie, Lisa, and Natalie.

(Fairfax is southwest of Washington, DC, a little outside of the Capitol Beltway.). Carl graduated from Mason in 2004. After spending a year at home working and saving money (With 4 kids to put through college, Natalie and I had a rule that we would not be involved with funding graduate school.), Carl moved on to Boston College to work on his MS degree (Boston College had been suggested to Carl by brother Frank and his colleagues at Texas Tech.). His fiancée, Liz, eventually joined him there. I had asked my brother Howard (MHS, Class of 1959) to look for a position for Liz using his contacts in the medical business (Howard is retired from M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.). He had tried to land her a position at Massachusetts General Hospital, but it fell through. Liz, of course, found a job at Harvard. The rest, as they say, is history.”

The Class of 1963 sent a lovely arrangement of flowers in a crystal vase to be used at the visitation on Sunday. A woman named Julie took the order for the arrangement at Becky’s Buckrow Florist. On Saturday the owner of the florist shop (Becky herself) called, as she was preparing to arrange the flowers. She realized that these flowers were to be sent from Natalie’s high school classmates and wanted to know what Murrah’s colors were, so that she could include a ribbon on the vase, which would symbolize the school. She went on to say that Natalie was one of her dearest and closest friends there in Hampton and that even after she left her prior work as a beautician, she continued to cut Natalie’s hair just because close friends share that way.

Frank’s contact information:

Frank Thames
 403 E. Pembroke Avenue
 Hampton, VA 23669
 Phone (Home): 757-722-2191
 Phone (my office): 757-864-5596
 frank.c.thames@nasa.gov

In Memoriam

Mary Lela Williams Cogburn, 62, died September 6, 2008, at Methodist Le Bonheur Germantown Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. Mary and her family moved to Jackson in early 1952. She entered Duling Elementary as a first grader and continued from there to Bailey Junior High School. Mary graduated in 1963 from Murrah High School, having participated in the Theater Guild's Makeup Club (She particularly enjoyed working behind the scenes on *Bye, Bye Birdie*.) and having served as a representative on the teen Fashion Board for McRae's Department Stores.



An alumna of The University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg and a member of Kappa Delta Sorority, Mary went on to become a flight attendant for Delta Airlines from 1965 until 1970. She was based with Delta in Memphis, Tennessee, where she met her husband, Travis Cogburn, Jr. Mary had grown up as a member of St. James Episcopal Church, and she and Travis were married there in July 1967. The couple recently celebrated their forty-first wedding anniversary. When Delta closed its Memphis base in 1970, Mary became a fulltime homemaker and mother, giving birth to their daughter, Kelly, in 1971.



Mary Williams is dressed and waiting for her date in March of 1962 (our junior year at Murrah). We are guessing this was for the Junior Senior Prom that year.

In subsequent years, Mary returned to the business world, working with several companies, including a screen-printing business, co-owned with her husband. For the past twenty years, she served as transportation coordinator for Ezon, Inc., an automotive parts distributor. The center of her life, however, was always her family: husband Travis, daughter Kelly, and beloved grandchildren, Courtney and Colby Goode.

Mary and Travis loved boating on Pickwick Lake with their family and friends and spent many vacations and every available weekend there. Pickwick is located on the Tennessee River where the Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi state lines meet the Tombigbee Waterway,

Seven years ago, Mary was diagnosed with stage IV breast cancer. In addition to remaining active as well as positive and working until two weeks prior to her death, she pro-actively fought the disease both personally and as a volunteer participant in cancer drug trials and various charitable cancer

organizations, including the Susan G. Komen runs and other survivor groups. Her courage and determination earned the admiration of friends, colleagues, physicians, and nurses. In fact, several participants in the October 18, 2008, Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure in Memphis ran in Mary’s memory, and her name was on their shirts.

Mary’s parents, Bob and Sarah Williams of Jackson, Mississippi, predeceased her. Her husband, Travis, and her daughter, Kelly Cogburn Goode (husband Mike), as well as her granddaughter, Courtney Goode and grandson, Colby Goode all of Memphis survive her. She is also survived by her sister, Lisa Williams Davis; nephews, Bob Hall (wife Dianne) and Chris Hall (wife Kathy); grandnephew, Christian Hall and grandniece, Shelby Hall, all of Jackson, Mississippi.



Mary Williams models her Delta uniform early in her career as a stewardess (January 1966).



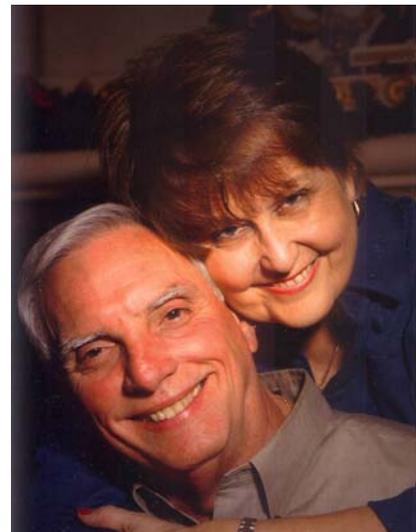
Mary Williams Cogburn and groom Travis enjoy a toast at their wedding reception in her family’s home on Hawthorne Drive (July 8, 1967).

loved her family and her job. She had an abundance of people that thought the world of her. Lots of friends. She was a good person and never spoke ill of anyone. She spoke well of her times at Murrah and the people she went to school with. All were good memories for her. She will be missed greatly. Thanks for your prayers and consideration. Travis”

A Memorial Service was held on Thursday, September 11, 2008, at Forest Hill Funeral Home East, 2440 Whitten Road in Memphis with inurnment in Cairo Cemetery in Alamo, Tennessee, (near Brownsville, Tennessee).

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial donations be made to the West Clinic's Wings Cancer Foundation, 100 N. Humphreys Boulevard, Memphis, TN 38120.

Mary’s husband, Travis, added these words about Mary, “She



Mary Williams Cogburn and husband Travis.

In Memoriam



Geneva Mae Davis Ross, 63, of Gautier, Mississippi, died on Monday, August 4, 2008, in Ocean Springs. She fell in her driveway while carrying a large package; and because of her advanced osteoporosis, the fall was a devastating one. While she was in the hospital, she developed viral pneumonia which was the immediate cause of death.

Geneva, who was born to Neil and Leone Booth on January 22, 1945, was raised in Jackson, Mississippi. She was an active member of Broadmoor Baptist Church and attended public schools, graduating from Murrah High School in 1963. Geneva was always active in school team sports. She played the clarinet in the Mustang band all three years and served as a supply store assistant (a coveted position) during both her junior and senior years.

Geneva earned her B.S. degree from the “W” and went on to teach in Lee County, Alabama. She followed that with work in a veterinary clinic in Newton, Mississippi, and on the Gulf Coast. She held offices in the Mississippi Veterinary Medical Association Auxiliary and served on the publications committee and book panel for AVMA.

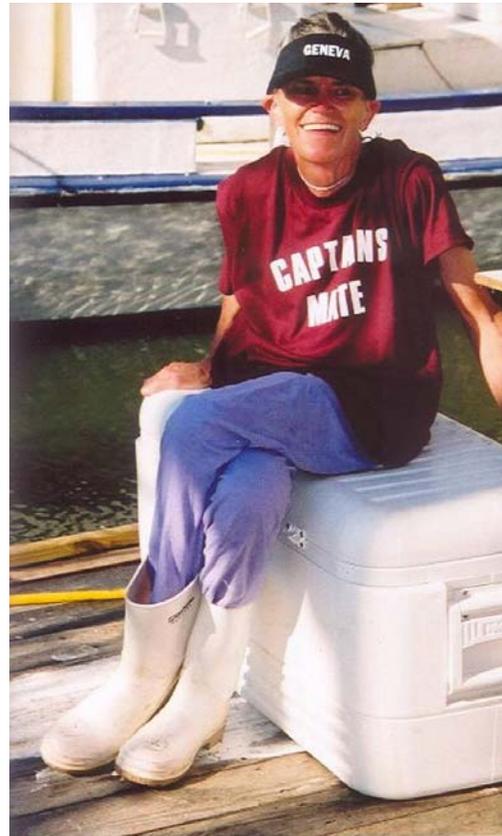
Geneva moved to Gautier in July 1975; and, as she said in her 2003 Reunion biography, she has had the same address and phone number since 1977. Geneva returned to her beloved teaching and was named chairman of the social studies department at Pascagoula Junior High School where she twice received the eighth grade “Teacher of the Year” award. She also had the honor of the school yearbook being dedicated to her. She earned her master’s degree from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1995 and in 1999 received national board certification in adolescent and young adult social studies. In 2003 Geneva was named STAR teacher. She retired from the Pascagoula School district after 32 years of employment. At the time of her retirement she was teaching social studies at Gautier High School. In addition, she was a member of the Methodist church.

She is survived by her husband, Joseph Wayne Ross, Sr.; son, William McDevitt, Jr.; sister, Neil (named for her father but always called Nickie) Crosby and her husband Hugh C. (Buck) Crosby, Sr.; five stepchildren, four grandchildren; and fifteen step-grandchildren. One of Geneva’s surviving first cousins is also a member of the Murrah Class of ’63: **Patti Bruner** Kelly whose mother was the sister of Geneva’s father.

A memorial service was held, and, according to her husband Joseph, was overflowing with her friends, former students, and fellow teachers. Geneva was buried at sea on August 30, 2008. Bradford-O’Keefe Funeral Home, Howard Avenue, in Biloxi was



in charge of arrangements. The Murrah Class of '63 sent a floating wreath of fresh spring varieties of flowers to be used at the burial. The young lady who took the floral order at Pugh's Florist in Pascagoula mentioned that Geneva had taught her. She went on to say "Ms. Ross was my history teacher in the eighth grade at Pascagoula Junior High. She was my favorite teacher, and had excellent ways of helping us retain information. She acted like one of us, instead of acting as if she was above us. She touched my life in a very positive way, and I will never forget her sense of humor and her way of always making you feel smart. Even if you answered the question wrong, she would find some way of making you feel like you had learned something, and did not make you feel stupid for making a mistake! I am sure she changed the lives of many of the students who were lucky enough to learn from such a great person and teacher. If I feel such a loss and I only knew her for a year, I can only imagine how her family must feel. I hope you are able to remember all the good times to help you get through this extremely sad time!"



Geneva's husband, Joseph Ross, may be reached at 228-324-7684 or by mail at P.O. Box 369, Gautier MS 39553.

Geneva's sister, Nickie (Mrs. Hugh C. Crosby, Sr.), may be contacted at 601-939-8788 or 581 Hanging Moss Road, Richland MS 39218 or neilcrosby@aol.com.



These two bulletin boards, which included photos and memorabilia from Geneva's life, were displayed at her visitation.

In Memoriam

Martha Hunter St. Amant, 61, of Biloxi, Mississippi, died of COPD and heart problems on Thursday, May 4, 2006, in Biloxi. Martha who was born on February 1, 1945, was a native of Cotton Plant, a small town in north Mississippi. Her father was career military, so the family had lived in several locations before moving to Jackson from Tennessee, following his service in North Africa. The family lived initially in southwest Jackson before moving to north Jackson, so Martha was an eleventh grade transfer student from Provine to Murrah. In 2003 when Doris Blackwell Smith finally located Martha after an extensive search (we had not been able to locate her for any prior reunions) and was talking with her father, he mentioned how much Martha had enjoyed her time at Murrah. She was an active participant in the Girls' Handicrafts and Future Homemakers Club. In addition, she was a homeroom officer her junior year. She was a graduate of Hinds Junior College and of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, Jefferson Davis Campus, where she graduated with honors from the nursing program.



Martha who married Bernard St. Armant and was a longtime resident of the coast, had three children. She was a member of Trinity Baptist Church. Martha was a nurse for over 35 years, working at Biloxi V. A. Medical Center, Biloxi Regional Medical Center, and the former Howard Memorial Hospital. She enjoyed writing poetry, caring for people, and being around her family and friends.

Martha's son, Noah Lee St. Amant and her mother, Betty Hardy Hunter, preceded her in death. Survivors include her husband, Bernard St. Amant of Biloxi; daughter, Michelle Cherie Godsey and her husband, Todd, of St. Martin near Pascagoula; son, Joseph Elliott St. Amant and his wife, Allison, of Biloxi; her father, Robert N. Hunter of Gulfport; and sisters: Mary Hunter Stallings and her husband, Thomas, of Canton and Biloxi; Margaret Hunter Miller and her husband, Jerry, of Brandon; and Marilyn E. Hunter of Ridgeland. In addition, two grandchildren, Zachary Godsey and Hannah Godsey; niece, Jennifer L. Miller; nephews, Tommy Stallings, Hunter Stallings and Dale Stallings; great nieces, Mallory and Sidney Stallings; great nephew, Seth Stallings; and beloved friend, Emmy Christian, all survive Martha.



Funeral services were held Sunday, May 7, 2006, at the Pass Road Chapel of Bradford-O'Keefe Funeral Homes in Biloxi. Graveside services were held Tuesday, May 9, 2006, at Biloxi National Cemetery.

Note: Because Martha's obituary was not printed in a Jackson area newspaper, we did not realize that she had died until August 2008 when we began working on the forty-fifth reunion. The class sent a donation in her name to the *Louise McNeill Memorial Scholarship*. This scholarship is awarded to a nursing student who maintains a 2.5 GPA while attending the Jefferson Davis Campus of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, Martha's alma mater.

Contact information

Martha Hunter St. Armant's husband:
Mr. Bernard St. Armant
188 Saint Paul Street
Biloxi MS 39530

Martha Hunter St. Armant's father:
Mr. Robert N. Hunter
417 Singwood Drive
Gulfport MS 39607-3254



Dear Murrah High School Class of 1963,
The family of Martha Elizabeth Hunter St. Armant is grateful and appreciative of the contribution made to the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Foundation in memory of our beloved Martha. She would have been very pleased to help someone else continue their education.

Sincerely,
Bernard St. Armant



The 1962-63 Future Homemakers Club members put finishing touches on their needlework. *Martha Hunter* is the middle person.

In Memoriam

Robert Elliott Gregory, 54, died April 8, 1999, at his home in Harrisville, Simpson County, Mississippi, from lung cancer. Services were held at Baldwin-Lee Funeral Home in Jackson with burial in Palestine Baptist Church Cemetery.

A Jackson native, he was born on January 27, 1945, to Elizabeth and John Anderson Gregory. Robert was educated in the Jackson public school system, attending Duling Elementary, Bailey Junior High and Murrah High schools. A member of the Hi-Y Club at Murrah, he also worked after school and summers at the City Services gasoline station owned by his father and located at the corner of Bailey Avenue and Monument Street. Growing up, he was a member of Calvary Baptist Church.



Robert attended Hinds Junior College. He was a U.S. Army veteran who served in the Vietnam War. In 1965 he accepted employment with Sperry-Vickers in their Aerospace and Marine Division and worked as an inspector for there for 35 years until his retirement. Robert married Audrey Crain in 1980. They lived in Richland, Mississippi, before moving to



Robert Gregory (undated photo submitted by his wife Audrey)



Robert Gregory (age 2 years) and Sister Joann

Harrisville where he shared his home with his wife for 16 years. He was an avid gardener and enjoyed racing (In fact, in his “salad days” he raced Grand National on the NASCAR circuit - 1966 and 1967.). In addition, he was an active member of Mount Zion Baptist Church in Clear Branch. Audrey wrote that Robert “was the best husband and father in the world – also my best friend in the world. He gave cancer a real battle. I only hope I can be as strong as he was since I was diagnosed 2 years ago with bone cancer. He really made our life complete. Thanks so much for remembering him.”



Robert Gregory and Audrey’s Wedding (1980)

*Estelle Yackbee and Murray
class of 1963.*

*Thank you so much for
the memorial gift given
to the American Cancer Society
in my brother's name (Robert Gregory)
This is such a nice thing you
class class. Thanks again,
JoAnn Gregory Flynt*

*We give thanks to God always for you all,
making mention of you in our prayers. 1 Thes. 1:2*

In addition to his wife Audrey, Robert is survived by his sons Joey Crain an architect who lives in Biloxi and who is working on the Ohr-O’Keefe Museum of Art and Bradley Scott Crain who is serving with the U.S. Army in Romania and who is engaged to be married, four grandchildren, and sister Jo Ann Gregory Flynt (MHS Class of 1958) of Clinton and her husband Albert Flynt. Both Audrey and Jo Ann graciously shared photos of Robert for us to use.

A donation to the American Cancer Society, Mid-South Division on Livingston Lane in Jackson, was made by the MHS Class of 1963 in Robert Gregory’s memory.

Contact information for Robert’s wife:
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531 Old Pearl Road
Harrisville MS 39082
601-845-6104

Contact information for Robert’s sister:
JoAnn Gregory Flynt
170 Skyline Drive
Clinton MS 39056
601-924-8815

Chuck Pendergast (Murrah High Class of '63)

A story you might enjoy, as told by Chuck's son:

This May marks the tenth anniversary of a magic moment in the life of your classmate Chuck Pendergast. It was on May 29, 1999, that he remarried his ex-wife (and only wife) Linda Rakestraw Pendergast. Serving as Chuck and Linda's bridesmaids and best man, respectively, that day were their three daughters (then aged 24, 21 and 12) and their 30-year-old son. What made this particular remarriage a bit unusual is that Chuck and Linda had only known the Best Man (their son) for less than 2 years!

You see, back in 1968, Chuck and Linda found themselves "in the family way" and unmarried. Considering the fragile state of their romance and Chuck's impending draft to serve in the nation's military, marriage was not in the cards for Chuck and Linda at the time. Like many other unmarried "girls who went away" at the time, Linda left college to go to a New Orleans maternity home and gave birth to Charles David in November 1968, relinquishing him to adoption by a more established family.

While in the military, Chuck and Linda rekindled their romance through letters. While on leave in December 1969, Chuck married Linda. By 1972, both had earned their college degrees from USM and moved to Baton Rouge in 1973, where they began to build a family from a founda-



The *Pendergast* family celebrates the May 29, 1999, remarriage of *Chuck* and *Linda* (left to right: *Alison*, *Amy*, *Chuck*, *Linda*, *Anna*, and *Kenny*).

tion much stronger than the one they had five years earlier. In 1974, their daughter Amy was born, followed by Alison in 1977, and Anna in 1986. Throughout these years, they rarely mentioned "the baby" they had created and lost to adoption in the sixties, as the subject was too painful. By 1993, Chuck and Linda's marriage had become strained beyond repair, and the couple divorced in 1994 after nearly 25 years of marriage.

Chuck, however, always remained nearby as they jointly co-parented young Anna. In July 1997, Linda received a phone call that would change their lives forever. An adoption professional was on the line, stating that there was reason to believe that one of her group's now-adult adoptees may be Linda's son, now named Kenny. Linda quickly confirmed the birth date, birth weight, and maternity home and enjoyed the experience of speaking with her long-lost son (and confirming the son's suspicions that Linda's ex-husband was also his biological father). They promised to talk again the next day, and Linda quickly called Chuck to let him know that their son had contacted her and would like to meet both of them. Chuck called the young man the next day and sounded, according to his son, "as giddy as a 10-year-old at Christmas". Chuck and Linda met their son three days after that initial phone call; and by the next month, their three daughters had also met their long-lost brother.



With more time shared together as they got to know their adult son, Chuck and Linda decided to try to repair their own relationship and entered counseling (probably the only known couple to enter counseling AFTER the divorce, but hey, counseling anytime can be a good thing!). By 1999, they decided to remarry, and all 4 children were happy for them and happy to participate in the ceremony. The actual ceremony was quite moving and emotional for all participants and attendees alike. The songs "My One True Friend" by Bette Midler and "After All" by Peter Cetera & Cher were sung by a family friend (If you Google the lyrics, you will note that the words still ring true in describing the bond between Chuck and Linda.).

A very satisfying remarriage ensued, but fate would cut short their shared happiness. Quite suddenly in June 2003, an undiagnosed brain tumor ended Chuck's life at the age of 58. Though his son only got to know Chuck for six years, he proudly delivered Chuck's funeral eulogy. Linda moved recently to Illinois to finish out her professional career as an Academic Dean at a nursing college looking to expand. Chuck's daughter Amy, now 34, lives on Long Island, NY with her husband Douglas and is a MSW counselor. Alison, 31, is a paralegal in Baton Rouge. Anna, 22, works as a personal fitness trainer in Shreveport. Chuck and Linda's long-lost-but-then-reunited son works as a paralegal and adoption rights activist in New Orleans and is happy to share this important slice of Chuck Pendergast's life with his Murrah High classmates,

Sincerely,

Kenny Tucker, 40
New Orleans LA
ktucker@dkslaw.com

Bio Updates

John Artz, who went to Bailey Junior High with the Class of '63, but not Murrah, emailed the following: "Thanks for keeping me on the mailing list. I do enjoy reading about our class. I sometimes remember some of you! I will not be attending the reunion, though. Say "hey" to anyone who remembers me. I'm still working, and have no plans to stop any time soon. All three of our children are out of college, although two are in graduate school. All three are married, but none live in or near Pittsburgh (Boston, New York City, Nashville). Our first grandchild was born two weeks ago, so that's very exciting - we're glad to be joining that club! And, after not flying since 1973, the last two years I have really been enjoying a return to it, this time in light sport airplanes (far different from the really big jets I flew before for the Air Force). I'm working on a tail wheel qualification in a 1946 airplane, so let's just say I enjoy flying with "someone" my own age!"

Doris Blackwell Smith's husband Ron went to Turkmenistan in the late summer or early fall as a team leader with a mission organization. The team worked with schools and took supplies to people in need in the area. He returned home in December. He and Doris sold their home at Lake Cavalier and are enjoying the convenience of living in Clinton which is near her work as a faculty member at Mississippi College.

Robert "**Bobby**" **Bond** sent us an email update: "If you are keeping notes on such things, I remarried in 2003 to a wonderful woman named Claudia Ward Bond. She and I retired in June 2007 and moved from Winchester, Massachusetts, to Cary, North Carolina (I have been told that Cary is actually an acronym for 'Containment Area for Retired Yankees'.) I laugh - and am a bit appalled at the idea of being called a Yankee. But after almost 30 years living in New Hampshire and Massachusetts and after marrying a woman who was born, raised, and lived her whole life in the Boston area, I suppose I might be just a tad Yankee - still with a touch of Mississippi accent!"

Mike Crowell's, niece Katherine Crowell is marrying Matthew Sean Gunby, a freelance photographer for the Associated Press as well as three Maryland newspapers for nine years, who recently moved to Jackson, Mississippi. Katherine is the daughter of Robert (MHS 1962) and Mona Crowell. She is a media and public relations specialist for MEMA (Mississippi Emergency Management Association).

Anita Dossett Jones has retired from SAIC after twenty-six years and says that she is enjoying staying at home for a change. She also says. "I hope to make one of the luncheons when I'm in Jackson."

Gayle Douglas Paull reports that she cannot make the reunion, as "this is the year for us to go to five family weddings and/or vacations. Hello to everyone. Maybe I can make the Fiftieth." Now this is the important part, "By the way, we finally have two precious grandchildren. "

Pat Hatch Monk's daughter-in-law, Beau Palmer (married to Pat's son William) has an impressive business based on her art. Check out her website at www.beaumontdesigns.net

Hallie Kennington Hull and her husband C.G. together have five children and ten grandchildren. She promises to get some family photos together and send them. She has to miss the reunion because of scheduling conflicts on both sides of and including our Saturday date. She has to work Thursday, Friday, and Saturday and then leave Sunday morning with her sister-in-law Fredda Shelton Kennington, widow of Hallie's brother, Bob. They will be headed to Annapolis, Maryland, to visit Hallie's oldest brother, Bill, and his wife. Then Hallie and Fredda will go to Ocean City, Maryland, to celebrate her brother Bruce Kennington's sixty-fifth birthday. You will remember that Bruce is married to class member **Carolyn Little** Kennington.

Just a little over a year ago on August 31, 2007, **Roy Lawrence's** lovely wife Cathy died of cancer. As you can imagine, much has changed in Roy's life. He sent us an update at the end of August 2008. "I closed on this home [in Sugar Land, Texas] in February and fully moved out of Wichita, Kansas, at the end of April. I'm still full time for HawkerBeech till February 2009, but I domicile here [in Texas] and commute to where the company needs me, which has been mostly Brazil and Europe since moving. I'm two miles from my daughter, granddaughter, and the hubby, with a new granddaughter due in January! It is hard to fathom that a year has passed since Cathy's passing, but I really immersed myself in the relocation to be a grandparent. And I try not to dwell in past too much. Enough babble, hope to see you all in October. Roy."

Lou Lyon, wife of Murrah Biology teacher **Delton Lyon** wrote in reponse to the class' reunion invitation that they would not be able to attend. She said, "Delton is recovering from a heat stroke and open heart surgery and is doing great."

The **Pig Stand** was what we had instead of McDonald's (et al.), and weren't we the lucky ones! For those class members who have been listening to the Forty-fifth reunion CDs, you will have heard the vintage commercial for the Pig Stand with particular praise heaped on the "Majors' famous hot apple pie". In one of those oft occurring coincidences ("you haven't heard of someone or something in ages, then all of a sudden you hear multiple references"), we noticed the Majors name recently, though sadly, in an obituary in the November 19 *Clarion-Ledger*: Pauline Edith Majors Smith, "the only daughter of the Majors family who owned the well-known 'Pig Stands' in Jackson died on November 17, 2008.

Carla Sorrells Wall has welcomed her first grandchild, Lilly Grace Wall, born October 5, 2008, to Marshall and Tiffany Wall.

Nancy Speetjens Weems and her husband John moved back to Memphis in 2008. They have a small efficiency in a quiet cove in the old neighborhood where they used to live. Many of their old friends from that prior time still live there. They say that they feel safe 24/7. John has a job teaching math in an inner city school. They write that's hard sometimes, but getting a paycheck is nice. Nancy's health is a lot better, and they are enjoying the fact that they live near their grandchildren. Their daughter Peggy, her husband Stephen Read, and their children David and Abby live in Collierville, Tennessee.

On January 29, 2009, **Jimmy Squires** emailed "Sloan Squires is here! I am a granddad! Jamie and Mackenzie had an 8.5 pound baby yesterday. Everyone is fine."

This is actually more of an update on **Margaret Stockwell** McGuire's siblings rather than Margaret. She wrote that she would not be able to attend the October reunion because of all the family weddings that have brought and are bringing her from North Carolina to Mississippi since September 1. It seems that her brother Paul Stockwell married over Labor Day and her sister Anne Stockwell Snell who was widowed several years ago is marrying in Starkville the weekend of October 11. Margaret says "Makes me feel like a young bridesmaid all over again!"

Betsy Tumlinson Rall emailed us that her stepson Beau Houck and his wife Martha had a baby girl, Martha Lois Houck. She was born November 2, 2008 and weighed in at a tiny 3 pounds 8 ounces. She said mother and baby are doing well... pictures soon to follow when she gets out of PICU. We feel sure she is home now, but we are still awaiting the pictures!

Carol Williams Parvin had worked as an insurance adjuster since 1988, most recently with Nationwide. She took early retirement and went to work for the Mississippi Department of Insurance in the Commissioner's office. She loves her career change.

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**Current contact information
for classmates is always available
at the class website:**

www.ongulf.com/mhs

Jackson Legend Dies

It has come to our attention that certain classmates were well-acquainted with the Dutch Bar. Therefore, the following obituary may be of interest to those certain members of the MHS Class of 1963:



Charles **Emry Oxford III**, 79, bookmaker and Man's Man passed away peacefully Friday, August 1, 2008, at the Baptist Hospital under the care of the Bridge program of Hospice Ministries, the hospital staff and Prime Care Nursing.

Born on Columbus Day in 1928 in Forman, Arkansas, he made Jackson his permanent home in 1937. Emry graduated from Central High School in 1946 and attended the University of Mississippi and Millsaps College. He opened the Dutch Bar in March of 1952.

At the age of 26 he was the youngest to earn the honor of Life Master Bridge player. In 1979 he played on the four men United States Bridge team in the finals of the Grand National Championship's in Mexico City.

He became an avid scuba diver and underwater photographer in the 70's and was known to his closest friends as the only person they knew who traveled "South for the summer". After diving all the Caribbean Islands, he proceeded to travel the world, logging over 3000 total recreational dives in all corners of the world, a feat rarely matched by anyone not working in the industry. He was proud of his honor as Master Knight in the Mississippi Chapter of the Brotherhood of the Knights of the Vine.

He is survived by his son, Emry; niece, Kacy McKay (Joe Keith) and their daughters, Jody and Emry; nephew, Billy Coats (Patty Edwards); ex-wife and friend, Betty Oxford; stepson, Dwane Newman (Rebecca); and step grandsons, Dr. Brian Newman and Crawford Newman.

He was preceded in death by his two sisters, Boyne and Georgina; and ex-wife, Bonnie Traugott.

Celebration of Life services were held at Tico's Steak House, Tuesday, August 5, 2008, at 2 p.m. In lieu of flowers donations are requested to be given to the non-profit worldwide diver's rescue group Diver's Alert Network, Peter B. Bennett Center, 6 West Colony Place, Durham, NC 27705 or, alternatively, French Camp Academy, One Fine Place, French Camp, MS 39745. (edited version)

Published in the Clarion Ledger on 8/3/2008



45 Year Reunion Pictures

Gale Johnson and Pat Hatch Monk took numerous pictures of the gathering at the Lake Cavalier Club House and Convention Center. Gale has put all of these pictures plus the ones he took at the 40 Year reunion on a CD. There are more than two hundred of each event.

If you would like a copy of the CD, send \$5.00 to Gale to cover duplication and mailing cost.

HOME: (903) 473-2545
CELL: (972) 824-9537

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Bob and Jeannie Johnson Chunn's bed and breakfast in Raymond, Mississippi

www.galejohnson.com
Gale Johnson's photography, etc.

www.mississippideltabluesinfo.com
Ron and Carol Marble

www.refluxgoneforever.com
Charles Richey

www.westmesawoods.com
James "Jimmy" Squires handcrafted furniture

www.poorjuliaart.com
Julia Walter Allen's scrap metal art

Hoofbeating is published quarterly on-line by the Murrah High School Class of 1963.

The following contributed to this issue:

Bill Cleland	Nicki Davis Crosby
Beth Cleland Harper	Joseph Ross
Bill Pleasant	Mary Hunter Stallings
Ben Duckworth	Audrey Gregory
Frank Thames	Jo Ann Gregory Flynt
Frank Thames, Jr.	Kenny Tucker
Lisa Williams Davis	

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