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ABSTRACT

As part of the North Carolina 1990 Heritage Week Celebration, all North Carolina schools were invited to participate in a unique project known as "Tales and Technology." For this project, students were invited to gather folk tales about traditions, family stories, names of places, or tales that had been passed from one person to another, and then to submit the tales to the Department of Public Instruction through telecommunications or as text files on a computer diskette. The project is presented as an example of integrated learning where the students involved combined the arts, history, writing projects, and technology using computers to produce their work. The collection includes horror stories, tall tales, legends, personal experiences, and stories about place names. (NL)

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**A Collection of Folklore  
 by North Carolina Students**

**NORTH CAROLINA HERITAGE WEEK • APRIL 1990**

*The Arts: From the Past Into the Future*

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Produced by the N. C. Department of Public Instruction  
 Bob Etheridge, Superintendent  
 Division of Curriculum and Instruction Services/Arts Education Section  
 with special assistance from  
 Communication Skills Section  
 Division of Media and Technology Services/Computer Services Section



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## FOREWORD

As a part of the 1990 Heritage Week Celebration, all North Carolina schools were invited to participate in an innovative project known as "Tales and Technology." Students were asked to talk with relatives and friends and to gather folk tales about traditions, family stories, names of places or tall tales that had been passed from one person to another.

One unique aspect of this project involved submission of the tales to the Department of Public Instruction through telecommunications or as text files on a computer diskette. This process gave students an opportunity to inform others about the PAST through the technology of the FUTURE. The invitation drew a response from 600 students, representing 77 schools and 43 school systems.

The project was a splendid example of integrated learning. Students gathered folk tales (arts) on their past (history), wrote out the stories (communication skills), and relayed the information through technology (computer skills).

Many teachers and administrators worked very hard to make the project a success. They went beyond the "call of duty" and deserve commendation.



Bob Etheridge  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

## The Vanishing Bride of 1965 As told by Cedric Wilkins

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It was a stormy night in May 1965. A beautiful woman named Katheren Johnson was worried about her fiance Samuel Hancock. He had said that he would be there for dinner at seven o'clock. Now as the clock struck nine, he quietly entered the room. He said he was late because of a business appointment. Katheren didn't fuss about it. She gave him a hot dinner and went to bed. Twenty minutes later he came in and said he was sorry to be so late. Then he went home. It was only three weeks before they were to be married. Three weeks went by quickly. The arrangements had been made, Katheren and Samuel were finally getting married. The wedding took place on a beautiful summer day in June. Everything was perfect. Katheren was in her bedroom dressing for the wedding. She asked for a glass of water. She took a sip from the glass and continued to prepare for her marriage to Samuel.

As she happily walked down the aisle everyone looked on smiling as she walked by. Suddenly Katheren stopped and ran away. Everybody looked for Katheren, but she could not be found. Finally Samuel found her. He knew she was dead. Samuel was very sad.

She was buried in her wedding dress. The doctor had said she died of a heart attack. On that date in June people say they have seen a woman dress in a beautiful wedding dress at the old house.

She stays there for about thirty seconds and then vanishes. Some people say the woman is Katheren Johnson waiting to get married.

Crystal Wilkins, Grade 5  
New Hope Elementary School  
Wilson  
Wilson County Schools

## The Ghost of White Eyes

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Once upon a time, there was this old hotel that only had one guest room. One day an armed man came into the hotel and demanded, "Hey, old man, I want a room!" This man had a gun in his right hand. The old man at the desk replied, "The only room we have is for the Ghost of White Eyes." The man with the gun said, "Give it to me anyway." So the desk clerk said, "Okay. . . "That night, when the man had crawled into bed and had closed his eyes, the door creaked open. A ghost came in. The ghost said, "O-Oh, I'm the Ghost of White Eyes!" The man looked up at the ghost, then ran and jumped out of the window. The next day, another

armed man, holding a knife, came to the hotel. He said, "Hey, Grandpa, I want a room, and I want it now!" "The only room I have is for the Ghost of White Eyes," replied the old desk clerk. Brandishing the knife, the man said, "I don't care!" So, the man went to the room. When he got into bed and closed his eyes, the door creaked open, and for the second night in a row, the ghost came in. "O-Oh," he said, "I'm the Ghost of White Eyes!" The man looked up at the ghost and jumped up and ran out of the window. The next day, another man came with only his fists. He shouted, "Yo! I want a room and I want it now!" "The only room I have is for Ghost of White Eyes," the old desk clerk replied softly. "So what!" hollered the man. So, that night when the man went to bed, the door creaked open, and as usual, the ghost came in. The ghost said, "O-Oh! I'm the Ghost of White Eyes!" The man didn't budge. The ghost repeated himself. The man still didn't move. So, the ghost said, "Did you hear me? I'm the Ghost of White Eyes!" The man said, "Yeah! and if you don't leave me alone, you are going to be the Ghost of Black Eyes!" shaking his fists at the ghost. The ghost looked at the man and jumped out the window, and he never returned to the old hotel again!

. . . As told to me by a visitor when I was in kindergarten.

Dianna T. Whitaker, Grade 7  
Enfield Middle School  
Enfield  
Halifax County Schools

## The Hanging Tree

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Ten years before the Civil War, there were twin plantations built for two brothers. The houses were set about half a mile apart and were located in what we now call Pactolus. Both owners were rich and they owned many slaves. The first brother didn't beat his slaves for their wrongdoings as his brother did - he hung them. His slaves didn't get a second chance after one wrongdoing. The hanging tree was on the outskirts of the woods behind the plantation. There was a low branch where a short rope was hung. The slave was forced to climb up the tree and sit on that branch. At the owner's command, the slave fastened the rope around his neck and leaped from the branch. The body was given to his family

The slaves finally became outraged one night when the owner hung a pregnant black woman from the tree. They rebelled and captured the owner. They forced him to receive the punishment that so many of their people had faced.

At dawn, when the second brother learned of his sibling's fate, he and some of his friends

horror stories

gathered up all the slaves and shot them to death under the hanging tree. After this was done, he set fire to the trunk of the tree turning it black as a symbol of death.

The trunk of the hanging tree is still standing. Sometimes, you can hear the cry of slaves watching their loved ones being put to death.

Adrienne Murrell, Grade 10  
J.H. Rose High School  
Greenville  
Pitt County Schools

**One Version of the Vanishing Hitchhiker**  
As told by Denise Jensen

One very foggy night, a man was returning home from a party. As he drove around a curve, he was flagged to a stop by a young girl dressed in a white formal dress. She was cold so he gave her his jacket to wear. He asked for her address so he could take her home. The road was dimly lit as he drove towards her house. The man stopped the car, and the girl got out to go inside. The man left, forgetting his jacket. The next day he returned to the house for his jacket. He knocked at the door and an old lady appeared. He asked for the young lady that lived there because he would like his jacket back. The old lady began to cry and said that no young lady lived there. The man looked inside the house and saw a photograph of the young girl. He pointed at the photograph and said, "That's the young girl." The woman began to cry again and said the girl had died ten years ago last night. She told the man that the girl was buried in the cemetery down the road. Out of curiosity, he went to the cemetery. There, draped over her tombstone, he found his jacket.

Wendy Beavers, Grade 7  
Chocowinity High School  
Chocowinity  
Beaufort County Schools

**Another Thirteen Bridge Tale . . .**

Long ago before I was born, there was a wedding. The bridegroom and his bride were traveling on SR1003 over thirteen bridges between Scotland Neck and Enfield, near Dawson's Crossroads. Suddenly their car ran off the last bridge. The bride was killed. Since then some of the bridges have been removed and two new concrete bridges replace the series of wooden bridges. Stories have been told that late at night around midnight, if you ride across the eastern

bridge, the bride jumps onto your car windshield, trying to kill anyone who is in the car.

Schnika Pender, Grade 6  
Brawley Middle School  
Scotland Neck  
Halifax County Schools

**The Walker**  
As Told By Brenda Goad

Back when my grandfather was a young boy they had to walk or ride mules to get to neighbors' houses for visiting. On such a visit one night my grandfather stayed later than he usually did and it was very dark coming home. About half way home he had to walk by a graveyard so naturally he was scared. When he was almost by the graveyard he thought he heard someone walking behind him. He could hear the crunch of the rocks and sand as if someone was walking with him. But when he stopped and looked, no one was there. By this time his heart was beating very fast and he was very scared. After checking behind him several times and finding no one there, he heard somebody say, "Hello, Harry." and with that he started running as fast as he could toward home.

His parents always thought someone was just playing a prank on him, but my grandfather really believed that a ghost walked beside him that night.

Mandy Goad, Grade 4  
Sandy Ridge Elementary School  
Sandy Ridge  
Stokes County Schools

**Lorie's Grave**  
As told by Denise Jones

One cold night there was a girl walking down the street. Her name was Lorie Michelle Ane. They called her Lorie for short. A man on a motorcycle came by and said, "Do you want a ride, little girl?"

"My name is Lorie Michelle Ane. You can call me Lorie," Lorie said.

"Do you want a ride?"

"No thanks," said Lorie.

Another motorcycle came by. This time a woman was on it. "Do you want a ride, little girl?" asked the woman.

"Yes," said Lorie.

"OK then, hop on," said the lady. "Where do you live?"

"I live down the street from the old shack," Lorie said. The woman asked Lorie her name and if she'd like to borrow a jacket. Lorie told the woman her name and borrowed a red jacket.

The next day, the lady came to Lorie's house to pick up the red jacket. She knocked on Lorie's door, and waited. Finally there was an answer by an elderly lady.

"Yes," said the elderly lady.

"Is Lorie here?" asked the woman.

"Oh, no! she died fifteen years ago. Come, and I'll show you her grave," the old lady said.

"That's weird!" said the lady.

"What's weird?" asked the old lady.

"That's the jacket I gave to Lorie," said the woman.

There on the grave lay the red jacket.

Heather Jones, Grade 4  
Kirkman Park School  
High Point  
High Point City Schools

### **A Different Bridge Tale**

There is a bridge turning east off NC 125 near Hobgood. It is said that a woman's head is hanging on a tree limb above the bridge. It may be an odd growth on a tree limb, or some object thrown into the tree by the wind. It really does look like a woman's head. What do you think it could be?

Vanetta Williams, Grade 5  
Thomas S. Shields Elementary School  
Hobgood  
Halifax County Schools

### **Revisited By A Ghost As told by Bernard T. Smith**

This story goes back about 40 years in the Smith family. It was told to me by my father, Bernard T. Smith. "A while back, near Highway 125 in Scotland Neck, was an old house where Mary L. Smith lived with her little children. Two nasty children, Josephine Smith, now residing in Grabull, and Mary Jane Smith, now residing in Hobgood, loved to fight."

"One day in the late summer time, they started to fuss. Their grandmother came outside to say, "Stop it this moment!" They replied, "Yes, 'mam, Grandma, we will." So their grandmother went into the house, and immediately they began tussling again."

"A while later, sadly, they heard that their grandmother had passed away. They cried for a while, but soon they were back to fighting again. One day as they went out to fetch water, the ghost of their grandmother appeared at the door while they fought and fussed. It scared them so badly that they ran through the screen in the back door! They

said that her ghost was in the same white dress in which their grandmother had been buried. Her ghost said nothing, but only shook her finger at them as a warning. From that day to the present, they watch their mouths!!!

Stacy M. Smith, Grade 7  
Brawley Middle School  
Scotland Neck  
Halifax County Schools

### **The Brave Ghost As Told By William Smith**

During the Civil War the Union was marching in northern Iredell County; they were burning everything in their path. They came across a man standing in front of his house with a rifle threatening to shoot. Realizing how outnumbered he was, he decided to surrender his weapon. He did not want his house to be burned. Using his rebellious actions as an excuse, they hung him from a rafter on his porch. The real reason they hung him was in revenge for the deaths their army had suffered. They spared his house which still stands today. The man they hung, whose name is unknown, still haunts the house today with the rope they hung him with around his neck. The ghost was quoted as saying, "You ain't gonna burn my house."

Shane Ireland, Grade 8  
Harmony Elementary School  
Harmony  
Iredell County Schools

### **Uncle Luther As told by Lucille York**

My Grandmother's uncle was about 30 years old, and his name was Luther Smith. Luther had been visiting his sister on Tabor Church Road. Late that evening he was starting home on Highway 21 south to Statesville. He started driving through Allison's Woods area, and his car began to sputter. The woods were thick and seemed to go on for miles without another living soul in sight. Luther pushed his car off the road. It was dark by now.

He was feeling uneasy about getting out of his car, but he did because he couldn't wait for hours for someone to come by and maybe help him. He found a wire loose under the hood and put it back in place. He turned to put the hood down, and his eye caught a glimpse of light off in the woods. Luther's heart was pounding, and his legs wouldn't move. He could hear moaning and chains hitting together as a slumped over shadow moved closer.

**horror stories**

Uncle Luther slammed the hood down and ran to the car door.

He jumped into the car, locked the doors and prayed to God to let the motor run. It did, and Luther spun his wheels as he got away from there. He knew that the shadow was a fearsome one-eyed old hermit that lived off in the woods in an old run down shack. He scared people away from the woods to protect his money, which people said was buried beneath his old house.

Kelly Campbell, Grade 4  
Harmony Elementary School  
Harmony  
Iredell County Schools

### The Old English Inn

There is this lovely old inn, not that old, but it may be. Some people think...well, I don't know what some people think, but I think it's nice. In the upstairs there is one room different from all the rest. When you are in it you have a scared, sad and lonely feeling.

There was a woman who spent the night in that room. During the night she woke up with a feeling of something in the room with her. She turned on the light but saw nothing. When she turned the light off and laid down, she saw something at the foot of the bed. It looked human but it wasn't. She screamed and it disappeared. After telling her story, she left the next day.

They had lots of fireplaces, but they wouldn't keep the inn warm. So they replaced them with gas logs, but they never kept the inn warm either. It is known that ghosts like the cold.

On one occasion all the guests were in the dining area. The owner went to check the fire and he saw someone or something in the hall. This was just one of many such happenings like this that he saw over the years.

No one has solved the mysteries of the Old English Inn which happened right here in Spruce Pine, North Carolina.

Preston Lance Hinson, Grade 3  
Dayton Primary School  
Spruce Pine  
Mitchell County Schools

### Doc

As told by Anner Potter

About 40 years ago, somewhere around 1950, a tragedy occurred in what was then called the Northfork area in Watauga County. A man by the name of Doc lived

here. He had a family, a wife and several kids, and seemed to be a pretty hard worker, but one day this man, who everybody thought of as a casual neighbor, shocked the whole community. Rumors had been going around the neighborhood that Doc and his wife had not been getting along too good, and that she was going to take her kids and leave. On this terrifying day as Doc was walking home from work, he met his wife and children walking down the dirt road from their home. Doc must have known that they were leaving, and he must have been outraged at this, because before anyone knew what had happened, he had pulled a gun from his pocket. He shot down his wife and two children and then turned the gun on himself. They all died not long after the incident. Some people say he was insanely jealous, and others just do not know what to think about this peculiar man. Everybody, however, seems to agree on this detail. Most everyone who remembers the shooting, say that in the spot where the shootings occurred and where all the blood was shed, no grass would grow in that spot after that day. To this day, no weeds, grass, trees, or any kind of vegetation has been known to grow in that spot.

Amy Potter, Grade 8  
Mabel Elementary  
Zionville  
Watauga County Schools

### A Dead Man's Shadow As told by Nancy Guthrie

Once many years ago there was a young girl playing in her back yard, when she was kidnapped. Later that day she was found. She had been murdered. A black man was seen near where the crime had taken place. Blood covered his hands. When police arrested him he said he had been skinning rabbits. The police did not believe him. He was sent to jail. At the trial he was judged guilty as charged. The judge said he was to be hanged. On the day he was hanged he gave his last words. They were: "The soul of an innocent man will never die."

After they hanged him and took down the body and the rope, there was still a shadow of a hanging man on the jailhouse wall. The shadow was there for a couple of years when they finally decided to take some action. First, they tried to repaint the wall. The shadow went right through the paint. Second, they tried to grow moss all over the wall, but it still didn't work. The Rutherfordton City Council finally decided that the building would have to be torn down. After the building was torn down the shadow was gone.



left was a town filled with people wondering if the man was really innocent or guilty.

Neal Guthrie, Grade 8  
East Junior High  
Marion  
McDowell County Schools

### **The Ghost in the Mill** As told by Bernice Pittman

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One time my grandpa was working at the Rocky Mount Mills in 1965. He was working at 3:30 in the morning by himself. He was guarding the mill when he saw a lady walking towards the mill. He saw the lady go through the wall of the mill. He followed the lady in the mill. He opened the door and cut the light on. But when he looked, he did not see the lady. The next day he told a man that also worked there and the man said that the same thing happened to him. So maybe grandpa knew it must have been a ghost.

Jason Pittman, Grade 4  
Williford Elementary School  
Rocky Mount  
Nash County Schools

### **The Old Man Named James** As told by George Arney

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There is an old saying about where I live. Sometimes you can see a light in front of my yard. People think that it is an old man named James finishing his old goals. He used to own a saw mill and was trying to build a house. My grandfather was a good friend of his, and he worked for him. One sunny afternoon when they were working, a board flew out of one of the machines. When it did, it hit my grandfather and James. It broke my grandfather's nose, and it killed James. Right where my dad parks his car, it has always been wet. That is exactly where James was killed. To this day people in my neighborhood are haunted by the sad story of James.

Michael Arney, Grade 8  
Newton-Conover Middle School  
Newton  
Newton-Conover City Schools

### **The Mystery of the Log Cabin** As told by Mildred Johnson

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About 90 years ago a dispute started over a property line between Rory Matthews and Dan McLeod. Rory, who was the owner of

the cabin said that the line was on the other side of the creek--meaning he owned it and Dan disagreed.

A couple of days later people saw Rory walking around town with a shotgun saying he was going to kill Dan McLeod, and one day that is what he did.

A few weeks later he was tried and sentenced to die in the Electric Chair. He was the first person from Harnett County sentenced to die that way. Two or three years later he was retried and sentenced to life in prison. He was released on parole in 1944 and returned to Harnett County.

Now imagine years later between Lillington and Angier. A black family moved into the cabin. After a few days a neighbor called the sheriff. She had heard children screaming and crying in the cabin. The parents were gone. Later the sheriff and two deputies rode to the cabin and found the three children chained with trace chain and put in the corner of the room. All they had was a pan of food and a bucket of water. The parents were put in jail for two years and the children were placed in foster homes.

Today the cabin is owned by Attorney William A. Johnson. The cabin is sitting in Mr. Johnson's garden as an historical building because it was built in 1735. Now we'll see if Mr. Johnson and his wife suffer as the previous residents of the cabin have suffered, or has the spell been broken?

Clay Langdon, Grade 7  
Lillington Middle School  
Lillington  
Harnett County Schools

### **Death on Dead Man's Curve** As told by grandparents

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Dead Man's Curve is located in the Piedmont section of North Carolina in Anson County. Lilesville is the name of the town in which it is located. The curve got its name because of several wrecks that happened there. Here is a story about one of the wrecks.

One rainy Saturday night Jack Meachum, a fifty year old man was walking home from a New Year's Eve party along the side of Dead Man's Curve. It was a cold, foggy night and Jack decided to hitch a ride home, so he could get home quicker. As Jack was standing along side the road he noticed a strange car coming toward him. The car didn't look like a usual car and it made a strange sound as it approached him. Anxious to get home, when the car stopped at Jack, he hopped in. Suddenly the car seemed to have mechanical problems, so Jack jumped out of the car to see if he could help the driver fix it. While both men were

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standing outside of the car, suddenly from nowhere a transfer truck was speeding down the road. As it approached Dead Man's Curve it lost control and flipped over crushing Jack to death. The story has it that every New Year's Eve if you happen to travel along Dead Man's Curve you will see Jack trying to hitch a ride home.

Larry Carpenter, Grade 5  
 Daniel Miller, Grade 5  
 Heather Murdock, Grade 5  
 T.W. Bennett Elementary  
 Lilesville  
 Anson County Schools

**How The Jack-in-the-pulpit Got Its Name**  
**As told by the Hemstreet Family**

I 'member when my ole grandpaw uster tell me stories bout de mountins up yander. One I 'member de mostis twas 'bout a preacher man. Now lest see iffin I can 'member. O yea!

Onct der was a circuting preacher man who roamed des parts to dem parts, all cross de Smokies a preaching de Word. He was a devcut man, and I knowed he'ad never missed a service sinced de day he became a "man of de cloth." He twas always on time, with a good word for everyone.

One winter de air twas bad cold. Ole Jack Frost had gone in hiding. When de smoke came out of de chimbls it froze, along with de fishes in de ponds. We twas all worried 'bout de Preacher man, bet he kept on with his rounds. He went to Morganton and preached a fine message. De folks in de town beg'ed him to stay cause of de cold, but he said, "God will provide," and he went on his way. De next mornin' de Preacher twas to be in Crossnore for a weddin'. Much to de surprise of de congregation he twas nowhere to be found! Dey thought he might a slept over somewhere, but at noon, no Preacher man

Days went by and den months, but no Preacher man. Finally spring came, and de wildflowers started bloomin'. Three miles outta Morganton there appeared a large patch of Jack-in-the pulpits, about two hundred or so.

When our chillen ask, "Where's de Preacher man," we just answer, "He's gone home."

Molly Hemstreet, Grade 7  
 Liberty Junior High  
 Morganton  
 Burke County Schools

**My Magical Great-Grandfather**  
**As Told by Melissa Ridenhour**

A family member I wish I had known was my magical great-grandfather, Pa-pa Willie. My Pa-pa Willie was the most wonderful, magical person there ever was. He had many ways of magic. He could give you the yuckiest medicine that no one else could get into your mouth. Within seconds, it was swallowed and already working. His magic touch made it taste like sugar! He could pull loose teeth quickly without your realizing what was happening. All he used was sewing thread and his special magic. Pa-pa Willie had a great way with words. He often told stories about his childhood--growing up on a tobacco farm where you got three plants for every seed, and each plant grew ten feet tall. The tobacco would always die if he didn't talk to it.

My great-grandfather had a lot of wise sayings. One of his best ones was "If you start winning, don't give anything away, or you will not win anything for years." It worked for him because he always used to win.

Another wise saying was about snakes. Since he lived in the woods, snakes would often come up into his yard, and he would kill them. Pa-pa Willie warned, "The snake's mate will come looking for it within hours." It never seemed to fail that when he killed one snake, another would soon appear.

Storybook magic is what authors make up, but my Pa-pa Willie had real life magic.

Melissa Ridenhour, Grade 6  
 Wolf Meadow School  
 Concord  
 Cabarrus County Schools

**Mister William and the Resurrection**

When great, great, great granddaddy, William Fariss, who served General George Washington in the Revolutionary War died, he was buried in Walker County, Georgia. The local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution thought it was a shame that he was buried in the piney woods, miles from town. They felt he should have a place of honor in the town cemetery, near his descendants. In the late 1920's the D.A.R. was granted their wish. A couple carloads of dignitaries went to the woods and exhumed granddaddy's remains. The old headstone was attached to the car's running board, and the big wooden box with granddaddy's remains was attached to the other side. Of course, they didn't really find any remains. A hundred years in the moist Georgia soil had taken care of that. They just dug down about six feet and shoveled up some dirt.

The procession reached the cemetery and the remains were taken to the grave. When the lid was removed and the box tilted - nothing happened. The box was tilted farther - nothing happened. The box was turned upside down - still nothing happened. Granddaddy's remains had blown out between the cracks of the box during the trip into town. Everybody stood speechless. An old woman who had been a slave finally broke the silence. She spoke, "Po' ole Mista William. When de day of resurrection comes an' de dead rise forth from day graves, Mista Williams gone have to rise ALL up and down Main Street.

Sam Fariss, Grade 3  
 Mariam Boyd School  
 Warrenton  
 Warren County Schools

### **How Lake Norman Came To Be As told by Lillie White**

Long, long ago a tribe of Algonquian Indians settled near where Lake Norman is today. The chief of the tribe had a daughter named Running Fawn. It was arranged by her father for her to marry the son of one of the other men in the tribe. The son's name was Wild Stallion. Running Fawn liked Wild Stallion and Wild Stallion liked her. In a couple of days the chief found out that all of the men had to go to war so they could keep their land. That meant that Wild Stallion had to go to war. This was the day that Running Fawn and Wild Stallion were supposed to be married. Wild Stallion led Running Fawn over to a tree. Then he said, "Wait here for me. I will try to return and when I do we will be married." Running Fawn began to cry. Wild Stallion left never to return. Running Fawn continued to cry and her tears made Lake Norman. The big puddle made her drown but even after she died her eyes kept draining and her heart kept groaning. If you swim to the exact spot in Lake Norman where Running Fawn died you can still hear her crying.

Cindy Pack, Grade 4  
 Central School  
 Albemarle  
 Albemarle City Schools

### **The Legend of The Headless Brakeman As told by Mike Clark**

This is a story that has been told many times and in many versions, but this is how it was told to me. It all started back in

the nineteen hundreds. It was late in the evening. The Norfolk Southern Railroad train had left Chocowinity going towards Aurora. Approximately five minutes after leaving Chocowinity, the train hit a severe bump in the track. The last car came unhooked from the rest of the train. The brakeman riding on approximately the third car realized they had lost a car and with his lantern motioned for the engineer to stop the train. As the train came to a complete stop, the brakeman stepped off. Walking along the side of the rail which was covered in loose gravel, he lost his balance and fell with his neck across the rail. The train had already started backing up. Not realizing the brakeman had fallen across the tracks, the engineer backed the train over his neck and cut his head right off, leaving the brakeman's lantern in an upright position. This signaled the engineer to pull the train forward. The train hooked to the car and continued on its trip, leaving the brakeman headless on the tracks. The brakeman's head was never found. According to my father, on almost any night you can stop and see a red glow bouncing aimlessly along the tracks. Legend has it that it is the headless brakeman looking for his head.

April Clark, Grade 7  
 Chocowinity High School  
 Chocowinity  
 Beaufort County Schools

### **Successfully Bound As told by Clint Eudy**

A famous family member I wish I had known began his life being "bound". Starting out as a type of slave, my great-grandfather became a well-known, loved, and successful businessman.

Henry David Crayton was bound out to another family as a young boy, after his own father died. Being bound meant he worked for a family for room and board, but no wages until he was twenty-one. At this time he was freed and given a horse and a calf. At age twenty-six, he borrowed some money to begin a wheeling-dealing career.

At the peak of his career, he owned a saw mill, flour mill, cotton gin, two general stores, and around two thousand acres of land. My great-grandfather traded cattle, real estate, and other commodities. He gave customers his own "due" coins. Due coins looked like money with my great-grandfather's name on them. People would take due coins and come back for extra supplies. The coins were only used to trade at his stores.

When my great-grandfather died in 1943, approximately two thousand people attended his

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funeral at tiny Mission Baptist Church. Mission only held one hundred fifty people so it was crowded. He had been sick and asked to be baptized but had a heart attack and died while being immersed. His obituary said he possibly had a wider acquaintance than any other man in Stanly County.

My great-grandfather was "bound" in the beginning, but he was bound to change it, and he did.

Clint Eudy, Grade 5  
Mount Pleasant Elementary  
Mount Pleasant  
Cabarrus County Schools

### The Ghost of East Junior High School

As told by Sonjia Mace

This story is about a ghost that lives in Marion, North Carolina. One night a group of girls went on a field trip to Carowinds. When they got back to East Junior High and got off the bus most of the girls got in the cars with their parents and went home, except for one girl. The girl was waiting for her ride when she noticed a bright light coming from the library. She thought it might be the janitor but then she saw him in his house next door. She then looked up again and saw a big grey cloud moving around in the top part of the library. Then it disappeared and the light went off. Her ride finally arrived. The next morning she came back to school and told her story. Had she seen the ghost of East Junior High? Nobody knows for sure who or what it is. Some say it's a former student of East coming back to haunt the school. Others say it's an old teacher who picked up a hitchhiker and then was killed and died in the teacher's work room. Who knows what the outcome of this mystery will be!

Billie Mace, Grade 8  
East McDowell Junior High School  
Marion  
McDowell County Schools

### Torchitae, The Troublemaker

While visiting the North Carolina mountains recently, I was intrigued by Blowing Rock. A native told me this tale.

There once lived a man named Torchitae, who was nothing but a mere mortal and an awful stingy troublemaker! Torchitae never really killed or stole anything. He just made fun of people and sometimes he would tease poor people along the roads. You see, Torchitae was a very wealthy man

and thought nothing of the people who were poor, starving, and homeless.

Now Torchitae had a father who was very sick, and when his father died, Torchitae would inherit his vast wealth.

One dark night his father called him to his bedside.

"Son," he said, "you have a brother that is unknown to you. He is the god of the moon, and his name is Romeatheas. When I die, you and Romeatheas will share my riches."

"Yes, father, I understand." And with that Torchitae left.

"I will not split my money with any unknown brother," thought Torchitae. "I will kill him!"

The next evening Torchitae went to the Hall of Acers where all gods have meetings. Torchitae waited for his chance, then murdered Romeatheas!

When the gods heard this they were outraged! They punished Torchitae by making his father well again and by banishing Torchitae to the rock where all bees of the world live. They tied Torchitae to the tall rock.

Ever so often you can hear Torchitae wailing and you can see the winds lifting his tears toward the sky.

Kelly Pugh Grade 5  
R. Brown McAllister Elementary  
Concord  
Cabarrus County Schools

### Indian Rock

As told by Mrs. Batchelor

A long time ago there was an Indian tribe that lived where Richlands, North Carolina is today. The Indian chief died and he did not have a son to become chief. All the young braves decided to battle to see who would become chief. There was one young brave that was very small. He was 12 years old. When an Indian brave turned 12 he was called a man. This brave was small but very strong. Everyone told him not to go to battle because he was so small and would be hurt. The other braves said he would be a chicken if he did not battle. The young brave went to battle to see who would become chief.

There were contests that were fighting for animals and hunting alone. The young brave did get hurt but he kept on fighting like the older braves. The final contest was the hardest. Each brave had to go through the rock tunnels to the hot springs and bring back a fish. He was small enough to fit through the rock tunnels to get to the hot springs and find a fish. He returned with the fish and became the chief.

Because the chief was so small they carved

the shape of his body into the Indian rock or the chief's chair. As he grew they carved a knotch in the rock to show how big he grew before he died. The Indians called the land The Devil's Playground. That is where Indian Rock is.

Justin Heady, Grade 3  
Northwoods School  
Jacksonville  
Onslow County School

## **Pamanandes As told by Nola Suttles**

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Once there was a little boy and his name was Pamanandes. His mammy, whom he called his mammy, said he could go to his Granny's house and when he came back he had some butter. The butter was melting and when he got to his house his mammy said, "What you got there?" And he said, "Butter, mammy." She said, "Don't you know when you get butter you supposed to wrap it in grape leaves and cool it in the water, and cool it in the water, and carry it or home? Pamanandes you ain't got the sense you was born with."

He went back to his Granny's and he came back with a puppy that was almost drowned. Then his mammy said, "What you got there, Pamanandes?" He replied, "Puppy, mammy. I wrapped him all up in leaves and cooled him, and cooled him in the water." And she said, "Don't you know if you get a puppy you supposed to tie a string about it and drag it on home?" "Yes, mammy."

He went back to his Granny's the next day. And she gave him a loaf of bread and he started on home. He tied a string to it and dragged it on home. "What you got now?" "Bread, mammy." "Pamanandes, you ain't got the sense you was born with. You never have had the sense you was born with. And you never will have the sense you was born with."

Heidi Suttles, Grade 3  
Hillcrest Elementary School  
Morganton  
Burke County Schools

## **A Quaker Family**

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It was in the early years of a new century, around the year 1908. A young Quaker couple was living in the small community of Center Hill in Chowan County, North Carolina. As Quakers they were known to be very religious people, out even their fel-

low church members were stunned when the young Quakers sold everything they had to follow the Lord's leading.

The husband's mission was to be Colporteur to the Egyptian people. Gathering his wife and three young children together he set out on a three week journey to Alexandria, Egypt.

The excitement was short-lived. Problems with the Arabic language, a diet of goat milk and figs, a third-floor apartment with no play area and the hot and dry climate caused much concern.

Even though the family was struggling, the work the young father was doing was prospering. His officials praised him for his work among the Egyptians and asked him how he was able to accomplish so much. His simple answer was, "Through prayer."

The young wife became sick and gave birth to twin boys who died. Her condition became worse and the doctor recommended a return to America. Relatives raised the money for passage on a freight ship.

The couple moved to the Weeksville area of Pasquotank County, North Carolina where they reopened the Old Quaker Church at Symons Creek.

This Quaker couple who are a great part of my heritage were my great, great grandparents, John and Ella White. I wish I could have known them.

Karre Saunders, Grade 5  
Weeksville Elementary School  
Elizabeth City  
Pasquotank County Schools

## **The Legend of Mr. Miller and Find-screek in Haywood, N.C. As told by Betty Grant**

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At a school in Finds creek, no teachers lasted long because a group of teenage boys would always run them off. The teacher could not throw these kids out because their fathers wanted them to have schooling. Every teacher the school board found, the children ran them off.

Then Mr. Miller came to the school. He was only 21 and had never had training but he was the only one the school board could find. So they decided to give him a try.

He came to the school at the beginning of the year. The first day he went in the one room school and the boys laughed at him. Then Mr. Miller started to talk, and a boy in the back of the room made a noise, "PHFFT". Mr. Miller looked at him and gave him a mean look. Then he said, "I think I ought to tell you something. Just then another student went "PHFFT." Mr. Miller picked up a book and

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threw it. He missed that kid's head by an inch. Then he turned over his desk, kicked the stove pipes and soot went everywhere. Mr. Miller said, "There is something I ought to tell you. I have a terrible temper. I would hate to lose it in front of you." After that day Mr. Miller did not have a bit of trouble out of any of them. He taught there for 40 years.

Cunis Johnson, Grade 8  
Harmony Elementary School  
Harmony  
Iredell County Schools

## **Our Dearest Sol. Paul As told by Dora Bryant**

It was told to me long ago, so the years aren't very clear to me any longer, but I know it was while the settlers were moving west. Now as you could guess many people became ill on this tedious journey and even more didn't ever get to see the Rockies because of death. As the story goes a young couple with only a few small children were passing through the area which is now Shady Grove. Their youngest son, Paul, lost his life to the terrible illness. The family didn't know then that when they placed that small rock in a clearing in Shady Grove that they would be starting something to be used for years after. It takes a while to find, but you can still see the very grave that started the Shady Grove Graveyard, one of the oldest in Cherokee County.

Jamie Bryant, Grade 8  
Ranger Elementary School  
Murphy  
Cherokee County Schools

## **Redwine Johnson As told by Gary McCurry, the student's father, who was told the story by his grandfather. Gary McCurry is currently president of the Sons of the Confederacy in Burke County.**

Redwine lived in the South Mountains of Burke County. He was a grown man when the War Between the States started. Refusing to fight for the Confederacy, he hid in the South Mountains.

In 1864 he was caught by the Confederate Home Guard. At a place called The Little Spring, he was hanged from a giant lindus tree and shot while hanging. His family found him days later and buried him on a nearby ridge.

It is said that the rocks under the lindus tree are still red with his blood. Many times since on dark nights as a horseman would pass the The Little Spring, the pitiful groans of a dying man could be heard. A red light has often been seen near his grave.

The moral of Redwine's story is: Woe unto him who fails to defend his homeland. Long live the memory of the heroic Confederate soldier. Lest we forget! Lest we forget!

Jessica McCurry, Grade 4  
Salem Elementary School  
Morganton  
Burke County Schools

## **Brown Mountain Lights**

Some people say there are lights in the Brown Mountains. A lot of people camp in the Brown Mountains so they can see them at night.

There are a lot of legends about them. I heard that they are thought to be torches from Indians looking for their leader. Some people think they're dancing stars flashing up on the mountain. Scientists don't even know what the lights are. Some people say that they are lights from ghosts of hunters long ago. I have heard they rise up and drift a little sideways, then disappear and other lights rise from the mountaintops. Some people think they are automobile headlights. Nobody knows.

Zack King, Grade 4  
R. Brown McAllister Elementary  
Concord  
Cabarrus County Schools

## **The Confederate Soldiers As told by Don Osborne**

When I was a little boy my grandfather, Lindley Osborne, told me about an event that occurred when he was a little boy. But, before I tell you his story, let me tell you a little about my grandfather.

My grandfather was born into a Quaker family on Hickory Creek in Southern Guilford County in 1852. Living on a farm, he had many opportunities to help with the growing of fruits and vegetables. His father was also a Millwright who made wagons and wagon wheels. He enjoyed playing around the shop, helping grow the crops and feeding the farm animals. He particularly enjoyed the wagon ride to church every Sunday morning to Centre Friends Meeting. His family was religious and believed strongly that all people were created equal and everyone should be free to pursue a happy and meaningful life.

One hot summer afternoon a group of Con-

federate soldiers came riding up on their horses to his home. The soldiers got down off their horses and asked his mother where his father was. She refused to tell them, so the soldiers spent most of the afternoon trying to get him and his brothers and sisters to tell where their father could be found.

Finally, in the late afternoon, having given up on finding his father, the soldiers captured all the horses and cattle to take with them. One young soldier, who was just a boy himself, was ordered to catch the chickens. He succeeded in catching all but one hen that ran under the house. The young soldier threw sticks and stones, trying to get the hen to come out, but she would not. Finally, as darkness drew near, the soldiers gave up on the one last hen.

With the other chickens and cattle captured, the soldiers hitched the horses to the new wagons that his father had made and rode away.

When my grandfather went to bed that night he was unhappy his farm animal friends were gone, but so happy that his father who had returned home after dark would be there with them, and of course that one surviving hen.

Leigha Gamble, Grade 4  
Pleasant Garden School  
Pleasant Garden  
Guilford County Schools

### A Jamestown Legend

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There was a man and woman driving on a bridge in Jamestown. The car went into the water and the wheels were spinning in the air. The man lived, but the woman died.

The woman came back as a ghost. Another woman stopped at the bridge to see what happened. The ghost girl wanted a ride. The old woman took her home. When they got to her house, the ghost girl was gone. She had disappeared or something. She left purple flowers in the car. Other people tried to take her home, but she always disappears.

Ben Jarrett, Grade 2  
Wallburg Elementary School  
Wallburg  
Davidson County Schools

### Grandmother's Ghost As told by Joseph Clark, uncle

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Many years ago in the small town of Rockingham, N. C., my uncle Joseph Clarke had a frightening experience. The year was

about 1938. Joseph had come home to visit his three elderly aunts. The house where they lived was a big two-story white house that was built by my great-great grandmother. Grandmother Nancy had died about twenty years before. It was getting late so my uncle Joseph decided to spend the night. He went to bed in Grandmother's old room. Sometime during the night something woke him up. As he got out of bed, he noticed someone sitting in the rocking chair. It was Great-Great Grandmother Nancy. Suddenly right before his eyes she disappeared! From that time on, my uncle never slept in that room again. Joseph tried to convince everyone that he had actually seen Grandmother Nancy. Many did not believe him, but they chose not to ever sleep in that room.

Matthew White, Grade 5  
Northwest Elementary School  
Lexington  
Davidson County Schools

### Legend of Falling Rocks As told by Roy Harvell

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My grandfather told me this lighthearted legend about an Indian boy and girl who were deeply in love. The boy's name was Falling Rocks. One day the boy was called to battle. During this battle he disappeared, and the girl was devastated. She was extremely upset, so her father sent a group to look for him. They never found him, but they are still looking. If you will notice, there are signs all around the mountains saying, "Watch for Falling Rocks."

Legends are an important part of North Carolina's heritage. Through the years, family members and friends have shared their stories with all who were willing to listen.

Kristy Ann Hamilton, Grade 8  
Lillington Middle School  
Lillington  
Harnett County School

### Watch for Falling Rocks As told by A.R.

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Once upon a time, back in the days of cowboys and Indians, there lived two young Indian boys named Little Bear and Falling Rock. They were a part of the tribe of Cherokee Indians that lived in the western mountains of North Carolina.

Little Bear and Falling Rock were the best of friends. They were inseparable. As they grew older, they were put through the initiation of braves. They passed and soon became known as the best in the tribe. They fought together, hunted together, and even fought over the

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same squaw a few times.

They were always together until the great war between the Indians and the White Men. Little Bear and Falling Rock were separated for the first time during one of the battles. When the battle was over, Little Bear searched for Falling Rock everywhere. He could not be found.

Little Bear never saw Falling Rock again but he made sure that others would know of his plight. He placed signs all over the mountains that stated: Watch for Falling Rock. So now, everytime that we travel to the mountains, we will be sure to lend Little Bear a hand and watch for his long lost friend.

Sara Mann, Grade 10  
Rose High School  
Greenville  
Pitt County Schools

## The Headless Brakeman

Once upon a time there was a brakeman standing on the back of a train. He was swinging his lantern to signal the train behind him. The train behind him suddenly smashed into the train the brakeman was on. The brakeman fell off of the train and the wheel of one of the train's cars ran over his neck and cut his head off.

Some people say that if you go to this train track when there is nothing but darkness around you, the only light you will see is the light of the swinging lantern of the brakeman. The brakeman is better known as "The Headless Brakeman." If you want to see this for yourself, go to Tarboro and drive on the dirt path that runs beside the old Atlantic Coastline Track that goes to Rocky Mount just beyond the end of Anaconda Road. Go down the path as far as you dare!

Darlen Wright, Grade 5  
Inborden Elementary School  
Enfield  
Halifax County Schools

## The Headless Horse of Bynum Creek

There is a certain road in Halifax County, SR 1104 where there is a deep curve in the road where it crosses Bynum Creek. It is in this area along Bynum Creek where ghosts are said to lurk. One of the more famous ghosts is that of a headless horse.

My Uncle Bud once told my grandmother this story. One night while Uncle Bud was traveling through the Bynum Creek area,

the apparition of the headless horse fell out of a tree onto the hood of his car. Uncle Bud mashed the accelerator to the floor, but the car would barely move. After creeping through the creek area, the car began to accelerate quickly.

This headless horse has been seen many times before. In 1988, my babysitter said she had something to tell us. She lives less than a mile from Bynum Creek, but she had never heard of the tale of the headless horse. Later on the evening of the Black and White Review at Southeast Halifax High, she heard a noise outside her window. It sounded like her neighbors' pony running down the road. She looked out her window and saw something that was not her neighbors' pony. It appeared to be white, winged horse which had no head. She could hardly breathe because it frightened her so. The creature was running so fast that it seemed like it was going to take off into the air. She ran to tell her sister, but the horse was gone. When she saw me on the following Monday, she had a picture that she had drawn to describe the strange thing that she had seen in the early hours of that Saturday morning. In telling about what she had witnessed, she found that others had seen it too.

Ebonia N. Whitaker, Grade 4  
Dawson Elementary School  
Scotland Neck  
Halifax County Schools

## Working on the Blue Ridge Parkway

My Grandad hope build the Blue Ridge Parkway from 1928-1930. His name was Sidney Montiville Bryant. He helped construct roads, bridges, overlooks, and landscapes. A passion for speculation in 1928 and 1929 ended in disastrous results. The stock market crash of Oct. 1929 marked the start of a severe depression. Economic conditions grew increasingly worse, unemployment increased, banks and businesses failed and factories closed. The depression left 13-15 million people unemployed. President Roosevelt created an Act to put people back to work. The new Legislation of the 100 days was a remarkable period of Governmental cooperation. Civilian conservation corps was established for improving the park and forest resources. My Grandfather was a part of this program and what we know today as the Great Blue Ridge Parkway.

Melissa Bryant, Grade 5  
East Bend Elementary  
East Bend  
Yadkin County Schools



## **Traveling Church at Swan Quarter As told by Richard Walser**

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Swan Quarter is a low-lying village only a few feet above the waters of the Pamlico Sound. In the 1870's the Methodists decided to build a church on a vacant lot that was the highest ground in the village. The owner of the lot refused to sell it at any price. The church people were disappointed but found another place on the waterfront to build their church.

The church was almost complete in 1876 when a hurricane hit land. By the second day of the storm, the streets were flooded. The foundation of the church gave away. It floated like a ship in the water. Much to the surprise of the Methodists, the church stopped and settled itself on the first location they had chosen.

The owner of the lot was shocked and probably scared. He suddenly agreed to sell the land to the Methodists.

The church remains on the lot today. At the church is a sign that says that it is "The Church Moved by the Hand of God."

Monica Holley and Clarine Hayes, Grade 3  
John P. Law Elementary School  
Merry Hill  
Bertie County Schools

## **When Cyclone Mack Came to Town As told by Keats Sparrow**

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The smell of whiskey and sounds of drunken people roaming Greenville were typical in the year 1920. It was not until October 31 of this year that the Reverend Baxter Franklin McLendon—better known to the citizens as "Cyclone Mack"—pitched his tent behind the old downtown post office aiming to get the citizens to "give God a chance." He provided that chance from October 31 until November 30, and during this time he managed to transform the usually drab routine of a small town to nightly excitement.

Revival services were everyday at 7:00 pm and occasionally at 3:00. Although at first attendance was very low, advertisements and news of raucous testimonials helped rapidly increase the numbers of curious townspeople. Cyclone Mack strongly opposed dancing and using alcohol or smoking, about the only diversion open for a small town. Speaking against women's dresses that were "too short at the top and too high at the bottom," the Reverend stirred up the people to see things his way; the use of alcohol and tobacco decreased while his revival sermons grew more animated and loud. Everyone

was impressed by the enthusiastic speaker and continued to fill the offering plate to make him stay.

Upon Cyclone Mack's departure, the people returned to their original churches, taking their lessons seriously and praising God for Cyclone Mack. But, let the dreary months of winter pass and righteousness loses its glory; the people were back to their old ways. Greenville was the same again.

Gloria F. Taft, Grade 10  
J. H. Rose High School  
Greenville  
Pitt County Schools

## **Never Trust A Snake As told by Michael Askew**

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In 1952, in the middle of the winter, a 35 year old woman found a snake in the woods. It was frostbitten and nearly dead. The lady took the snake to her cabin. She nursed the snake back to health. For days she stayed with the snake. Over the days the snake got better and better. The lady left the house one day to get some wood. When she came back the snake was gone. She searched for the snake for more than 2 hours. She finally found the snake curled up in a coil, rattling it's rattle. The lady paid no attention to the snake. She went to pick up the snake and it bit her on the leg immediately. The lady wondered why the snake had bitten her. She later found out that the snake was pregnant.

Michael Askew, Grade 8  
Colerain Elementary School  
Colerain  
Bertie County Schools

## **Wally the Wonderful As told by the students of Mrs. Huckabee**

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Every once in a while, there comes along an individual who seems to change our lives in little ways. Wally was this man for many people in Charlotte, N.C. He was a kind, gentle man who never offended anyone; yet many people disregarded his sweet spirit because he was unusual.

Wally came from a poor family in what is now part of old Charlotte. He never left his parents, not that he couldn't have, but again some people did not like him because he was "unusual." Children taunted him throughout his life, but that did not seem to bother Wally. Wally acquired many wonderful talents during his life. One of which was playing the violin.

When Wally was eight years old his father

**tail tales**

# place names

died. Shortly thereafter, Wally discovered his father's neglected violin. Every chance that Wally would get he would practice the violin by himself. Soon, Wally became a master at the violin. Nobody ever knew this until one day in the local coffee shop. A small girl with soft, braided, brown pigtails was waiting for her mother to pick her up from music lessons. Wally gently asked to see her violin, and she cheerfully agreed. As Wally began to play the small, chipped violin, magical music flew off the strings. People stopped eating and began to listen. Cash registers stopped ringing and everything was silent except the music. People were awestruck as Wally finished and returned to his normal task of directing traffic outside with his white paper napkin. And so, every afternoon, Wally would give a concert in the coffee shop.

Yes, Wally was not only master of the violin, but hero of the Charlotte roads. Doing this he saved many lives.

But then, on the night of September 22, 1989, Hurricane Hugo struck Charlotte. Trees were down everywhere. Power lines dangled dangerously near every intersection. Nobody expected Wally to be out there directing traffic. But sure enough, Wally was out there, braving the wind and rain to keep the people of Charlotte safe. There was a huge tree blocking the path of a frantic mother who was trying to get her five year old son to the hospital. A tree had fallen on his leg while he was in bed, and his leg was broken. Little Wally gathered all his strength and went to the base of the fall tree that was blocking the road. Then, the little man wearing a V-neck sweater, army pants and a small hat pulled over his brown eyes with dark rimmed glasses, pulled a tree weighing over 250 pounds to the side of the road. The woman then rushed away to the hospital. Wally watched her disappear as tears welled up in his eyes.

Once again, Wally had given himself to the people of Charlotte. No one can explain how a little man could pull a tree like that off the road. That woman was very grateful to Wally and gave him a cedar violin lined with silver and gold. Wally then took his new violin and gave it to the little girl that was in the coffee shop.

Paige Hess, Grade 8  
Alexander Graham Junior High School  
Charlotte  
Macklenburg County Schools

## How Nags Head Got Its Name As Told By Emma Ryan

In the old days of pirates and robbers, on the shores of the Outer Banks, there was a group

of "bankers" who were very poor and hungry. As the legend goes, these people thought up a great way to lure ships into the dangerous shoals around the banks. Then they could board the ships and rob them of their cargo. The way they would go about this deed was to put a lantern around an old horse's, or nag's, head. The ships out at sea would see the bobbing of the lantern and would think that it was safe to go in closer. The ships would then get stuck on the dangerous shoals of the Atlantic so the "bankers" could rob the goods from the ship. This is the story of how Nags Head got its name.

Emma Ryan, Grade 10  
Rose High School  
Greenville  
Pitt County Schools

## How the Hub Got It's Name As Told By Marge Henderson

The Hub is an old name applied to a roadway located in Northern Alamance County. The Hub is north of Ossipee and south of Altamahaw. These are both mill towns located on 87 North, 14 miles from Burlington. Many years ago, Old 87 North ran from Burlington, N.C. to Reidsville, N.C. The Osceola Road connected Greensboro and Roxboro. Even when they were gravel or dirt roads, these roads existed.

In early to mid 1900's, Old 87 was first paved with amacadam surface. Where Osceola Road and Old 87 North intersected became known as the Hub. It was called a Hub because it was the center of mail and trade in Northern Alamance County many years ago. It was a Hub of travel because people traveled from Burlington to Reidsville through this area. It was a Hub of trade because a large store existed here for many years selling goods and supplies to local people. The Hub means center like the hub of a wheel.

Craig Henderson, Grade 8  
Western Middle School  
Elon College  
Alamance County Schools

## The Johnson Pine As told by Esta Davis

Around the year of 1906 or 1907 a man named Johnson killed another man and was put in jail. One night a group of men went to the jail. They broke into the jail, took Johnson out, and hung him on a pine tree near Morven Road and Burns Street. My great-grandmother was a young girl at that time and

lived near the scene. She remembers hearing all the shooting and screaming that took place. My great-grandfather woke all his family because he thought a war was taking place. My great-uncle, Ed Billingsley, had to pass the tree on his way to work so he saw the dead man still hanging on the tree. He said, "It was a terrible sight to look at." The Johnson Pine stood there many years before it was cut down.

Katie Pegram, Grade 4  
Wadesboro Middle School  
Wadesboro  
Anson County Schools

### **How Welcome Got Its Name** As told by Mrs. Beulah E. Koontz, grandmother

Many years ago there was a little village in North Carolina between Lexington and Winston-Salem. It was called Hinklesville because there were so many people who lived there with the name of Hinkle. The community grew and grew and it became known in Davidson County for its friendliness and kindness to strangers. One day a salesman passed through the village and stopped at the Craver and Haynes General Store for some nails and crackers. As he entered the store he saw a sign above the door that said "Welcome." The salesman thought that Welcome was the name of the village and he commented on the name to the storekeeper, who told the salesman that everyone was welcome to come in and sit around the potbellied stove and chat and chew. Some of the men in the store decided that the village needed a real name and the name of Welcome passed from person to person. Soon a town meeting was called and the people decided to name the village "Welcome" after the idea given by the salesman. The town is still called Welcome. So you all come and visit us here. "Welcome to Welcome: A Friendly Place."

Erik Koontz, Grade 4  
Welcome Elementary School  
Welcome  
Davidson County Schools

### **"That's Where Minnie Sot"** As told by Jimmie Rowe

This is the story about how Minnesott Beach got its name. Long ago there was an old man and his wife. They lived near the beach. The old man's wife was named Minnie. Years past and Minnie died. Her husband had a hard time accepting his wife's

death. Neighbors and even strangers would see the old man standing near some old stumps. Extending his hand out toward the stumps, he would look at them and say, "That's where Minnie sot." This is said to be how Minnesott Beach got its name.

Candace Rowe, Grade 7  
Chocowinity High School  
Chocowinity  
Beaufort County Schools

### **How Harmony Got Its Name** As told by Ann Poole based on information from the late Miss Nannie Powell

After the Civil War, a man named Mr. Nubia started a corner store on the corner leading to the present school, also known as Five Points, where the present Gene's Video is today. Then people started to move there. There were so many people that it became necessary to give the town a name. They named it Harmony Hill. Perhaps the people named it that because they were in harmony with one another. Since the land wasn't mountainous, they decided to call it Harmony Hill.

After the town was settled, a post office was established in North Iredell. Hill was dropped from the town's name, and it became Harmony. Mr. Nubia was the first postmaster.

Heather Marshall, Grade 6  
Harmony Elementary School  
Harmony  
Iredell County Schools

### **How Black Jack Got Its Name** As told by Nan Shearin

Have you ever questioned how little dots on the map such as Lizard Lick and Frog Level got their names? Well, throughout the years, the legend of how Black Jack got its name has been handed down to generations by a large number of North Carolinians. Black Jack is a quaint town located in Pitt County, North Carolina. Exactly when the community received its name is not known, but it is suspected that the name was given around 1831. It has been told that when a church was being built while the community was being established, workmen putting the roof on the church wondered what to name the new town. One of the workmen threw his hatchet from the top of the church and it stuck in one of the surrounding trees, which happened to be a black-jack oak. These oaks are very abundant in this area. The man suggested that they should name the community Black Jack. Everyone agreed on the idea, and it has remained the

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same ever since.

This agricultural community is still on the North Carolina map, and has a country store, supermarket and grill combination, two beauty shops, three Baptist churches, a volunteer fire department, and a barber shop.

To this day, many blackjack oaks grow within view of the Black Jack sign post, and that is how Black Jack got its name.

Stacey Mewbom, Grade 10  
J.H. Rose High School  
Greenville  
Pitt County Schools

## Kitty Hawk As told by Imad Omar

The most popular theory concerning the origin of the name Kitty Hawk is that it derives from the local Indians' reference to the time for hunting geese as "killy honker" or "killy honk." Through the years it is said to have changed from "Killy Honk," to "Killy Hawk," and finally to "Kitty Hawk."

Another story is that it derives from the large number of mosquito hawks frequently found in the area. This became "Skeeter Hawk" and then "Kitty Hawk." Strangely enough there seems to be no local legend concerning an even more plausible possibility, for "kitty" was a name once applied to a type of wren, and a "kitty hawk" would then have been a hawk which preyed on wrens.

The probability that the name stems from an actual Indian place name, however, is attested by the appearance on maps as early as 1738 of the name "Chickehawk." But regardless of its origin, by the time the area was fairly well populated in the middle and the late 1700's, the residents were spelling the name much as it is today, there being frequent references in old deeds to "Kittyhuk," "Kitty hark," "Kittyhawk," and "Kitty Hawk."

Imad Omar, Grade 10  
J.H. Rose High School  
Greenville  
Pitt County Schools

## Bonnetsville - The Unknown Place As told by Ron Cannady

Do you know where Bonnetsville is? Well, it is four miles west of Clinton, N. C. on Hyw. 24 and four miles east of Roseboro, N. C. Population is unknown because the city limits is unknown. Some say the limits start with the "reduce speed to 35 miles per hour" sign and end with the

"resume speed to 55 miles per hour" sign.

Around the 1930's Bonnetsville was a real swinging place. It was also about this time the name Bonnetsville came into being. One day a traveling salesman stopped at one of the local stores and asked, "How in the world did you come up with a name like Bonnetsville?" He was told that some wanted to name it Cannadyville because there were so many Cannadys that lived there. Some felt it should be named for a woman who sat day after day in front of the stores. Many never knew who she was or how she looked, because she never took off her bonnet, not even when she went to bed. All the people did agree that she got everyones attention because she wore such pretty bonnets. So the place was named Bonnetsville and it remains that today.

Ron Cannady Grade 7  
Roseboro-Salemburg Middle School  
Roseboro  
Sampson County Schools

## How the Ararat River Got Its Name As told by Donald & Judy Clifton

A long time ago, men would walk to the nearest river to set muskrat traps along the riverside. They would catch muskrats and sell their hides. One river in Surry County got its name in relation to this trapping. With one man on the right side of the river and another on the left side, they would check their traps every day to see if they had caught anything. One man would yell to the other man, "Air a rat?" (Is there a rat?) From then on, this river has been known as the Ararat River.

Emily Clifton, Grade 7  
Gentry Middle School  
Mount Airy  
Surry County Schools

## Heritage As Told By Darrel Lester

Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, was first called Stone Chimney, North Carolina, before 1810. It is said it was named Stone Chimney after a huge rock that stood straight up in the shape of a chimney. The stone was located at the location of the present day Knight Quarry just down from Amostown Road. The chimney-shaped stone was crushed along with the adjoining stone and used on our present day highways along Stokes County.

The name was changed to Crooked Creek in 1810 and thought to be named after a creek that was through this area. The creek is still known as Crooked Creek today because it

curves in and out around the foothills common to the county. In 1873, it was changed to Sandy Ridge. It was said the reason it was named Sandy Ridge was because Sandy Ridge was the name of a large plantation located here. Sandy Ridge plantation was named for the light-colored, sandy nature of the soil located along ridges in the area.

Travis Lester, Grade 4  
Sandy Ridge Elementary School  
Sandy Ridge  
Stokes County Schools

### **The Story of how Whynot, North Carolina Got Its Name** **As told by Martha Banks**

Once upon a time, there was a little town in North Carolina that did not have a name. To remedy this, the people of the town called a meeting one night. The meeting was a long one, and just went on and on. Everyone had conflicting views on what to name the small town.

"Why not call our town 'Washington,' after the great president?" one man asked.

"Well, in that case, why not call the town 'Leeville,' after our great Southern general?" queried another.

"Why not call it 'Greenville' for the green hills and trees?" asked a woman, as the meeting erupted into a roar of "why not call it this's" and "why not call it that's." Finally, one very sleepy man stood up and said,

"Why not just call the town 'Whynot', and all go home to bed!" And that is what they did.

Susan Bramley, Grade 10  
J.H. Rose High School  
Greenville  
Pitt County Schools

### **The Drummer's Home**

The Drummer's home is a historical landmark in East Bend. The home was established in 1846. It burned down and was rebuilt in 1901. It was built by Aziariah Horn. At that time it was used as a hotel or bed and breakfast inn. One could stay at the hotel, get a bath and a meal for \$1.00! They served fresh vegetables and meats. The deserts included cakes and pies and were served through the pie larder. The pie larder extended from the kitchen into the dining room. There are 15 rooms in the home excluding the attic. The lower level has a trap door that leads to a cellar that at one time was used to hide confederate soldiers.

There are many original features which remain in the home. The Drummer's home sign hangs in the hallway which is over 100 years old. The dining room is lettered, "DINING ROOM" in real gold. The upstairs bedroom doors are still numbered! The hotel was often visited by traveling salesmen who carried drums, thus receiving its name. The home is presently owned by Bob and Dinah Guden and their 5 children.

April Hunt, Grade 5  
East Bend Elementary School  
East Bend  
Yadkin County Schools

### **Doctors Ain't Like They Used To Be**

At the turn of the century, in Jackson County, a man might travel as far as forty miles seeking the help of the doctor.

According to his widow, the following scene was a familiar one at the home of Dr. John B. Painter. "Doc, come quick!" "Doc" would grab his bag, which seemed to be a part of him, and head for the stable to saddle his long-time traveling companion.

On one such occasion a light from a small shack appeared in the distance. As he approached, he sensed the hush that had fallen over the house of sickness. Stepping through the front door, he patted a black hound which lay on the doorstep. "Doc" heard the familiar wheezing and coughing and knew at the moment the woman had pneumonia. For four days he sat at the sick woman's bedside. Her drawn, pale face was distorted with pain, and she took each breath as if it were her last. Finally the crisis came, and she was better.

When it was time for Dr. Painter to leave, the recovering woman said she had no way to pay him, not even in kind with farm goods and produce. "Doc," with a warm smile, assured her the debt was forgotten. "I hate to let you go off without something," she protested.

"Doc" paused and replied, "If you're really worried about paying me, that old hound will be sufficient."

"That hound ain't worth nothin', but you can have it," she said.

As he was on his way home, a mountain man on foot motioned the doctor to slow down. "I sure would like to trade you outa that there dog," he said.

"You can have him," Doctor John B. Painter said, "for free."

Mitzi Searcy, Grade 12  
Smoky Mountain High School  
Sylva  
Jackson County Schools

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### A Scary Adventure As told by Thomas Hull, father

My dad told me a story about a scary experience he and three friends had when he was sixteen. After getting off work one fall night, he and his friends drove to the Devil's Tramping Ground near Siler City, N. C. Dad said that what he saw was very strange. It was a well-worn path that formed a circle about forty feet in diameter. The path was about one foot wide. The ground outside the path and the center of the circle had grass growing but there was nothing growing in the foot-wide path. He had been told that Satan made this path with scorching footprints while stonping in a circle plotting his evil deeds. He was also told that if you put an object in the path at night it would be gone by morning. Dad and his friends decided to camp in the circle. While they were sitting and talking, two girls and a guy came walking up and joined them. They told ghost stories and the girls became scared. The only light they had was one dim flashlight. Everyone heard a noise in the trees. As they looked around, they saw a shadow with what looked like red eyes coming toward them. One guy shot a gun into the tree. The girls screamed. The shadow came closer, and the red eyes grew brighter. They all ran to their cars, never looking back. Dad and his friends never went back to that place again.

Jeffrey Hull, Grade 5  
Northwest Elementary School  
Lexington  
Davidson County Schools

### The Headless Horserider

When my great grandfather was young he lived in the country surrounded by woods. One evening late, he went to visit a neighbor who lived down a wooded path across a creek. He played with his friend until very late in the night.

While he was there his friend's father told a ghost story about a headless horserider. This headless rider was supposed to ride a white horse every night at midnight on the very same path my grandfather had to travel. He looked at the clock and it was fifteen minutes till midnight. His parents had told him he must be home by midnight. My grandfather jumped up and went on his way.

As he ran along the dark wooded path dressed in his overalls, barefooted, and wearing a straw hat he became more and more frightened as he remembered the

ghost story. As he ran along the path he thought he heard a sound in the bushes and he started to run. He thought he heard horse hooves, but it was probably his own heart. He ran as hard as he could and he could feel someone patting him on the shoulder. The harder he ran the harder he felt pats. He finally fell into his back door exhausted.

Do you know who was patting him on the shoulder? It was his own straw hat!

Becky Arthur, Grade 5  
B.F. Grady School  
Albertson  
Duplin County Schools

### Water Spouts As told by Crystal Hoggard

One day my family and I went to an island at Carolina beach for a vacation. The island was long and narrow.

We drove the boat into a shallow bay. We unloaded the camping gear. Then we unloaded the fishing gear on the island. Suddenly before I even had time to play, the wind began to blow hard. A long black cloud reached down across the island and touched the ocean. I saw the ocean explode. The water boiled white where the cloud touched it. The wall of water was coming down the island towards us. I was scared. Sand was blowing everywhere. The wind tore the tent down.

We were trapped. The boat was stuck in the mud. All we could do was get in a hole, cover up, and watch the water come towards us. As suddenly as it appered, it changed directions. I watched the scariest sight of my life turn and walk out of sight. I will always remember what a water spout looks like because that day I saw five water spouts.

Crystal Hoggard, Grade 4  
West Bertie Elementary School  
Lewiston  
Bertie County Schools

### The Fair As told by Cecil Ballard

When I was small my father farmed for a living. We had to pick cotton. We would pick our cotton and then go to our neighbors and pick his. My dad told the children whoever picked the most cotton for Mr. Jones would get to go to the fair. At the end of the day, I had picked the most cotton. I had worked very hard. So, I got to go to the fair. I didn't know what to expect. I dreamed about what it would be like. I was very mischievous. When we got to the fair, I was so excited. I had a quarter to spend. I put my money in

my pocket and carried it myself. My dad had to pay five cent to get in. I had never seen so many different lights. It looked like a big town. We saw all the animals. They had horses, pigs, cows, and all kinds of animals. I heard my dad say he would like to have that white and black cow. It was so pretty. As we walked along looking at the animals, I could hear my dad saying he wanted that cow. He did not have any money. So, I slipped and untied the cow, while my dad was not looking. The cow began running everywhere. It ran into a man and knocked him down. He ran into the fence where the chickens were. The chickens ran everywhere. Everyone was in a state of confusion. Finally someone caught the cow. Dad told me to get in the car, that we were going home. I did not get to go back to the fair for two years.

Michelle Justice, Grade 5  
Boiling Springs Elementary  
Boiling Springs  
Cleveland County Schools

### **Hermit Crabs Aren't All They're Cracked Up to Be** **As told by William Isenhour**

Many days, months, years ago, I had hermit crabs. They were fun-loving critters. Hermit crabs aren't scared of anything; mine would walk upside down on objects ten times their size.

We researched hermit crabs to discover what environment they needed to survive. I fed them nutritious food, like lettuce and raw oatmeal. I dreamed of being the best owner the world had ever seen. Everything was fantastic until one gloomy afternoon I walked into my house to find one of my crabs out of its shell. We presumed it dead and buried it in my grandparents' backyard, complete with a big whoop-de-do funeral, concluding in song and prayer!

Two weeks later, the second died, with the same symptoms. Now I was beginning to think I had killed them, and decided to give up on hermit crabs.

The next summer, my uncle, a marine biologist, came to town. I told him about the hermit crab disaster and he asked me to describe the corpses. After I had done so he said, "I hate to tell you, William, but you've been HAVING FUNERALS FOR MOLT!" I had been burying my hermit crabs alive.

You see, hermit crabs molt periodically, shedding their outer layers to make room for new growth. This stressful process tires them out, so they crawl back into their shells and lie dormant for a day to rest and recover.

Hermit crabs should come with a warning that says CHECK MY VITAL SIGNS BEFORE BURIAL!

William Isenhour/Grade 6  
Concord Middle School  
Concord  
Cabarrus County

### **The Car That Went Up Backwards** **As told by Louise Thomas**

One time when my grandma Thomas was eight or nine years old she remembers going to her grandma's house. Her family had to pay someone to take her because she had no car. She rode in an old T-Model Ford car. It had no windows, just curtains, no heart or radio. They had to wrap-up in blankets to stay warm.

They had to cross over a bridge that had no sides. It was called a low-water bridge. On the other side of the bridge was a big hill. The old car only had high and low gear. The car wouldn't make it up the hill. The car then had to back up the hill in reverse. It was only 35 miles to her grandma's house, but it would take about two hours to get there. Once they got there, they would have to stay all day.

Shane Walters, Grade 3  
Polkton Elementary School  
Polkton  
Anson County Schools

### **The Vanishing Money** **As told by Zelma G. Rowe**

Back in the old days, when my great-grandfather was a young man, something strange happened to him. Every night before going to sleep, he'd see a strange, orange light. He never could figure out why this strange, orange light would appear night after night. Each day my great-grandfather would work hard plowing his farmland. He had a big gray mule which he used to plow his land. Year after year went by and he still saw the big orange light.

Then one bright sunny spring morning, while he was plowing in the same field, he saw the strange and mysterious orange light he had seen night after night. The old gray mule stopped dead in its tracks, and great-grandfather could no longer make him go. He went around in front of the mule to try to coax the mule on. My great-grandfather pulled on the reins of the mule to make him go. He hadn't gone two steps when something hard that was buried in the dirt hit the plow. Great-grandfather ran around the back of the

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plow to see what the plow had hit. There, lying in the dirt was a mason jar. The jar was very old with an old rusty lid. Inside the jar was a large roll of confederate money. My great-grandfather twisted the old lid until it finally came off. As soon as the air hit the money, it vanished. After that day great-grandfather never saw the strange, orange light again.

Audrey Rowe, Grade 7  
Chocowinity High School  
Chocowinity  
Beaufort County Schools

## School And Home As Told By Joy Davis

I started school in 1937. I had to walk about a mile to meet the bus. An elderly man named Casey Jones drove our bus. The bus had one long seat down both sides of the bus and two little seats in the middle for the little kids. Everyone behaved on the bus. We were taught the basic subjects in school. They were reading, writing, and math. We also had music class and wrote poetry. We didn't have Social Studies. At recess we played games. We did not have swings or playground equipment. We had devotions every morning. We went to school for eight months out of the year and graduated after eleven years. We took our lunch to school. Once a month, a grandmother would bring us a treat. Everyone behaved themselves because if they got a whipping at school, they got one when they got home. When we got home we had to bring in wood and water. We also fed the cows and milked them. We had to feed the pigs and horses and gather the eggs. We didn't have electricity at home but we did have it at school. We also did our homework for the next day. By the time we did our chores it was dark. We didn't have time to do a lot of playing at home after school.

Amy Davis, Grade 4  
Altamahaw-Ossipee Elementary School  
Elon College  
Alamance County Schools

## At the Church As told by Virginia Brock

My grandmother Brock was in church one night for a revival service. This was when the church windows and doors were left open to cool everything. It had rained a lot this day and everything was wet. A big green frog hopped on the window sill next

to the choir where my grandmother was sitting. He hopped along the choir rail until he sat in front of my grandmother. He sat there and blinked his eyes looking back at the choir. All the choir members had their eyes on this frog, wondering what he was going to do. The preacher had no idea what was happening. My grandmother had a fan lying in her lap. The frog jumped in her lap right on the fan. She slung the fan, throwing the frog clean across the church. The preacher had to turn services out for that night because everyone was laughing so hard.

Carri Brock, Grade 2  
Polkton Elementary School  
Polkton  
Anson County Schools

## She Never Rode a Horse As told by Bessi Rushing

My great-grandmother lived on a farm. They had a horse, mules, chickens, cows, barns, fences, houses for the chickens and lots of food to eat. My great grandma Bessi lived with her Uncle Pete and Aunt Alice. She had two older brothers who sometimes would ride the farm horse whose name was Mag. Great grandma thought it would be fun and easy to ride a horse so she kept asking uncle Pete to ride the horse. She begged and begged Uncle Pete to let her ride the horse. She tried to do like her two brothers and not hold on to the ropes when they finally let her ride. She let go of the ropes. The horse started to eat grass. When he put his head down to eat she slid down right off the horse's head and cut her foot on a hook. Her Uncle Pete left the horse and carried great grandma home. Aunt Alice put some soot and sugar on her foot and tore a piece of cloth and put it on her foot. She said that it would heal her foot very well. From that day on she never rode a horse again.

Maleah Hamilton, Grade 3  
Polkton Elementary School  
Polkton  
Anson County Schools

## Fairview Elementary School As told by Lillian Clayton Baldwin Willis (Attended first grade at Fair- view School in 1923. Grew up on Cane Creek near the school.)

Much of our heritage is most interesting to remember: like how the materials for sweaters, caps, stockings and wool comforters came about. My Grandfather raised a flock of sheep



and each spring--around May 1st--the sheep were sheared with a pair of hand clippers. This was a tedious process and was tiring for the shearer's hand.

After the wool was gathered up, it was washed, then dyed in a large pot of brown dye made from walnut hulls. Then it was air dried.

The next process toward making an item was to "card" the wool with two 5" by 8" pieces of wood with handles-- and one side of each carder was covered with flexible wire teeth--similar to a brush. The wool was pulled through the teeth to straighten it and get out any burrs or straw. This made the wool into a fluffy stage ready to spin.

My Grandmother Tweed would spin the raw wool into yarn. She taught my mother to knit the yarn into their winter socks and stockings. Of course sweaters and caps were made, as well as wool comforters.

My mother knit so much while she was young and growing that her two little fingers grew into a bent position from holding the yarn tension as she was knitting.

My Father, Lawrence Clayton, had sheep and I've helped with the shearing, washing wool, carding, and I knit as well. My knitting consists mostly of sweaters and caps though and not stockings.

I have very dear memories of some of yesteryears' craft processes.

Special thanks to Sherry Hayes, counselor  
Fairview Elementary School  
Fairview  
Buncombe County Schools

## Milking

As told by Hazel Iseley

I grew up in a large family and everyone had certain daily chores. My twin sister and I had to do the milking early every morning and again in the afternoon. My parents assigned this task to us when we were ten years old and we milked cows as long as we lived at home. I shall never forget my first milking experience. The cow I had to milk had long horns that curved at the tips. When I sat down on the milking stool, she turned her head and gave me a threatening look. As soon as I touched her, she turned around and the next thing I knew she had those horns around my waist lifting me over the fence. She sat me down as if she had just thrown her troubles over the fence.

My dad laughed and told me that you milk a cow on the right side and I had started on the left side. I have always wondered how the cow knew the difference. I did not argue with him or the cow. Now almost

everyone goes to the store to get their milk. I wonder if it matters if you get it on the right or left side of the store.

Jonathan Iseley, Grade 5  
Altamahaw-Ossipee Elementary School  
Elon College  
Alamance County Schools

## Unusual Wedding

As told by Rev. Joe McMurry

I have had more than my share of unusual happenings at weddings. The one I remember best was in my first church. The bride wanted her grandfather to assist in the ceremony. Her grandfather was a local preacher and had never had a church wedding. He was a wonderful person but was as nervous as the bride and groom. When he started to give them the vows, he read the entire ceremony, and when he finished, he said to the groom, "Now say that." The poor groom looked at me and I said, "Just say, I do." To this day, I am not certain that couple is legally married. The further we got into the ceremony, the worse it became. After the ceremony, the grandfather said there would be no more wedding ceremonies for him. I agreed that would be good. In the 70's a hippie couple wanted me to perform their ceremony. I took them in the sanctuary. Both were dressed in blue jeans and had extra long hair. When I asked the groom if he took this woman to be his lawful wedded wife, he answered, "Yeah, man!" Now I know the wedding ceremony is a sacred thing, but I got tickled, and try as I might, I couldn't stop snickering. We went through the ceremony with all three of us laughing like crazy. I always felt bad about that, but I just couldn't help it. It was the happiest wedding I ever performed.

Matthew Hambright, Grade 4  
Altamahaw-Ossipee Elementary School  
Elon College  
Alamance County Schools

## The Good Old Days

As told by James E. Calhoun

As a young boy I would sit for hours and listen to my dad tell of his boyhood capers. However there's one story he told that has really stuck with me through the years. That's the story of how he along with his mother, father, five brothers and three sisters came from North Dakota by wagon train to settle in northern Wisconsin. I remember him saying, "Son, those were the good old days." He told of how they would shoot wild game and pick berries along the way in order to have some-

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thing to eat. He told how they would come upon a small town and buy dried beans, bacon and flour for the journey. The roads they followed were nothing more than wagon trails because there were no cars back then. He told of one place where the road had been washed away by a storm. There was such a deep gorge that they had to unload the wagon, take it apart and carry everything across, then put the wagon back together. "Boy, those were the good old days," he would say. But you know, I've come to believe that we're living in the good old days right now.

Clint Hazelwood, Grade 4  
Altamahaw-Ossipee Elementary School  
Elon College  
Alamance County Schools

**The Stolen Sandwich**  
**As told by Karen Jones**

Many years ago, when my Uncle Larry was a little boy he was having trouble in school. Everyday he took banana sandwiches for his lunch and someone would steal them. One day grandma got very tired of it so she mixed Fab detergent with the mayonnaise that morning. That was the last sandwich to get stolen!

Kerry Jones, Grade 2  
Polkton Elementary School  
Polkton  
Anson County Schools

**The Piano Playing Bear**  
**As told by Jack T. Williams**

Back in the early 1920's, my great-grandfather had a bear cub as a pet. This story is about how he got the bear and the bizarre incident that happened. One of the loggers that worked with the logging outfit that ran through Wilmar caught a bear cub. My great-grandfather's older brother bought the bear cub from the logger for five dollars and gave it to my great-grandfather. (He was told that the cub would not live in captivity.) The bear cub became my great-grandfather's pet. He named it Claudia.

He spent a lot of time with the cub, and as it grew older my great-grandfather taught it to wrestle with him. My great-grandfather was very strong when he was a boy and could easily out-wrestle the cub at first. Within six months, however, the cub could beat him everytime. The bear, Claudia, became my great-grandfather's constant companion. He was not afraid when he walked all over Wilmar at night with Claudia by

his side.

One day the bear was in the parlor of my great-grandfather's Uncle Henry's house, and was watching Uncle Henry play the piano. (The piano had a mirror across the back of it.) Soon after he left the parlor, there came a loud racket. When he went to see what it was, he found Claudia banging on the piano, trying to play it and grinning at herself in the mirror

Brandie Williams, Grade 7  
Chocowinity High School  
Chocowinity  
Beaufort County Schools

**What, No Refrigerator!**  
**As told by Frances Gilliam**

We are use to going to the refrigerator and getting ice cubes, cold milk, ice cream, and butter; but in the days of my Granny Gilliam her family had no refrigerator. They didn't even have electricity. For Sunday lunch instead of getting the chicken out of the refrigerator, they would go to the chicken coop, get the chicken and cut his head off. The chicken was put in boiling water. The feathers were plucked off and the chicken was cleaned and cooked. I wonder how many families would have chicken for Sunday lunch if we had to go to that much trouble today? In order to have cold milk and butter, a different process had to be followed. My great grandfather would milk the cows in the morning and bring the milk to the house. Part of the milk was put in glass jars and placed in the spring to cool. Butter was made by putting the milk in a large stone jar with a lid on it. The milk then spoiled and was put in a churn. As the milk was churned, the butter rose to the top, and was skimmed off and placed in a mold. To have a cold glass of lemonade a hundred pound block of ice was bought in town, brought home, and wrapped in paper and gunny-sacks. It was usually stored in the pack barn. Pieces of ice were chipped off as needed. I sure am glad we have refrigerators today.

Derek Jones, Grade 4  
Altamahaw-Ossipee Elementary School  
Elon College  
Alamance County Schools

**The Germans**  
**As told by Mary Todd Dickey**

This is a story about my grandfathers, Emerson Dickey from Charlotte and J. Nimrod Harris from Burlington. At this time my parents were not born. My grandfathers did not know each other. Living conditions had gone from bad to worse in the late 30's. There was a

shortage of everything. My grandfathers were fighting in World War II. The Germans were taking over everything in Europe. Both grandfathers were sent to Europe to fight. Grandfather Harris was captured about a week after being sent to Europe. Grandfather Dickey was captured three weeks after being sent to Europe.

At first, they were in two different cities in Germany. Grandfather Dickey was put in a truck and was sent to the same city as Grandfather Harris. For the next week, they were in side by side cells. Then the next week, they were moved into the same cell! They had to play checkers or games like that when they weren't being tortured. Everyday, they thought, would be their last day. They lived in fear for over one year.

After the war ended, it took about a week for them to be set free. They each returned to their respective homes. Thirty years later, they were reunited, but in the strangest way at my parents' wedding! This story was told to me last year at a family reunion. Now, of course, you are being told of how the Germans brought my grandfathers together for the first time.

Mary Margaret Harris, Grade 6  
Western Middle School  
Elon College  
Alamance County Schools

### Teenage Life in the Late 1930'S As told by Edna Whitesell

My grandmother, Edna Whitesell, who is now 64 years old, was born on August 25, 1925. She was a teenager during the years of 1938 to 1944. Teenage life in the late 1930's was a lot different from the teenage life of the 1990's

When my grandmother was growing up, there were many chores and lots of school work to be done. She also had to help look after her younger brother. Church was a big thing in her family's life. They attended many church activities and my grandmother was very active in the youth activities. She spent many weekends with her family. She loved to visit her grandparents and aunts.

When my grandmother did find free time, she spent it with her friends. There was no television so they made up games to play. They did not go on dates very often but when they did, they usually either went to a baseball game or to a movie. Most of the dating was "group" dating.

One of my grandmother's favorite activities was when a crowd of girls would gather at a friend's house and have a slumber party. The girls would make candy, play games,

and have lots of fun.

As you can see, there are many differences between my grandmother's life as a teenager and the life of the teenagers of the 1990's.

Carmen Wright, Grade 8  
Western Middle School  
Elon College  
Alamance County School

### The Biggest Mess As told by Irene Wallace

Children can be the messiest things! My grandmother once told me a story about one time when my Aunt Donna and Aunt Delane were little. My grandfather was babysitting my aunts for my grandmother while she went shopping. Once my grandmother left, my grandfather decided he would take a nap. While he did, my aunts snuck into the kitchen.

When my grandmother came home, she woke up my grandfather. She asked him where my aunts were. He said that they must be busy because everything was quiet. My grandmother thought "Oh no!" She ran into the kitchen and there they were! My Aunt Donna, who was the oldest, had gotten down 5 pounds of sugar and flour! Even a whole box of salt! She was sifting it onto my Aunt Delane's head. All you could see were her eyes! My grandmother shouted to my Aunt Donna "Donna Gail, what are you doing?" "I am making a cake!" she replied.

Sarah Whittington, Grade 5  
South Mebane Elementary  
Mebane  
Alamance County Schools

### The Long Walk Home John Albright

My grandfather was about ten to twelve years old. He and his father had gone to a medicine show where people display home remedies for ailments. His father had told him that he would pick him up after the show, at least that is what my grandfather understood. They held the show where the post office is now. He watched all the shows which ended around ten thirty or eleven o'clock p.m. My grandfather waited and waited, but his father never arrived. He did not want to walk home down a mile of darkness, which was only lighted by a few street lights along the way. That was not the only reason he did not want to walk home, his older brother had told him, that around the corner before you reach home, a person had been killed in the woods. There was no moon or stars out that

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night, just total darkness. My grandfather spotted a black object moving toward him, but he could not figure out what it was. Being so young and the night being so dark, he was terrified. Once he figured out that it was just a dog, he made tracks for home. When he finally reached the steps of his home, he found that the door was locked, so he pounded on the door. His father came to the door half asleep. He looked befuddled and angry because his recollection of what he said was that my grandfather was to walk home right after the show was over. In his hand was three or four foot long hickory stick which he used to give my grandfather a sound thrashing and sent him straight to bed. After my grandfather told me this story he said, "I will never forget that day, and with good reason!"

Meredith Thornton Grade 6  
Woodlawn Middle School  
Mebane  
Alamance County Schools

### How My Dad's Warts Disappeared As told by Robert Wetherington

A long time ago, when my dad was a little boy, he had a lot of warts appear. He had warts between his fingers, a row of warts on the inside of his right foot, and one wart on his right arm. His mother tried several ways to remove the warts. None of the ways worked. He was at the store one day telling an old-timer about his problem. The old-timer suggested that he see Mr. Gilbert Norman. Mr. Norman did something that my dad's mother had not tried. He took an oak branch and cut it about three inches long. The man asked my dad how many warts he had. For each wart, he cut a notch and then rubbed a different notch on each wart. Then the old man buried the stick. Mr. Norman said the warts would disappear after that, and to this day my father does not have any warts.

Glenn Wetherington, Grade 7  
Chocowinity High School  
Chocowinity  
Beaufort County Schools

### The Night I Fell in the Vault As told by Aubrey Mizelle

I was a child of nine when Aunt Beth died. That was a night I shall never forget. In those days a person's body was prepared for burial in the home and stayed there until the funeral. That always scared me, even though it was family or close friends. Moth-

er had a hard time getting far from me as I had a tight grip on her coat tail.

As friends gathered at Aunt Beth's and Uncle Mark's house, I watched closely the coffin that sat in the corner of the room. I felt that she might like a little company in there and I was set on making sure I wouldn't be her choice. It was the proper thing to do, being Aunt Beth was family, but I just wanted to get out of there.

Going with my cousin to the store seemed like the perfect solution, so I was the first one in the car. No sooner had we gotten a few yards down the road than we were stuck. After much pushing, Uncle Bob told me to go back for help. My heart jumped in my throat, for it was as dark as I had ever seen it. But I was too ashamed to let on.

I started back to the house. As soon as I was out of their sight I set out running as fast as I could. All I could think of was Aunt Beth, and I felt as though someone was right behind me about to catch me. Suddenly, I fell head over heels into the box the coffin was to be put in. The undertaker had left the box in the yard, and I was running so fast I had forgotten about it. Let me tell you, friend, every hair on my head stood straight up. I wasn't in there long before I scrambled out and almost flew to the door nearby, knocking it down. To this day when I see an open vault I step back and remember that night long ago.

Stephanie Mizelle, Grade 5  
Askewville Elementary School  
Windsor  
Bertie County Schools

### Great-Grandma Gilchrist as told by Ellen Gilchrist

She was a very wise lady who was brought up in the old fashion way. She had to walk 6 miles to get to school and back from school. She had to stop going to school at the age of 14 because her mother died and she had to help in her house. She moved to Asheville. First she lived in South Carolina.

Johnnetter Logan, Grade 2  
Aycock Elementary School  
Asheville  
Asheville City Schools

### Virginia's Cry As told by Mary Walser

High up on a hill in Asheville, there was a beautiful old house. In the old house lived Virginia Gaither. As rumor has it, she lived in the house for 15 years without stepping into the sun. She was confined; trapped with-

in her own little world. For food she would ask children to go to the store for her, get her food, and charge it to her brother's tab. There was one area she would sit in front of the door watching for her "Gofers."

One day, a child went to the house and it was quiet. This was unusual. The child peered into the window and there she saw a figure leaning against the door. At this, she knew something was quite wrong. The girl rushed home and called the police. Their response was immediate. Virginia Gaither was indeed dead. When they brought her out, her nails were long, her hair was long, stringy and gray and her skin had a greenish tint.

My Mother's family moved into the house soon after. That's when a certain peculiar haunting began. Late in the night, at times, there would be a faint woman's cry followed by the sound of a baby's cry, yet, no baby lived anywhere in the neighborhood. Sometimes you would hear footsteps coming up to the front door, but there was no one there, or someone would knock on the furniture. What caused Virginia to close herself away from the world? No one knows. The mystery remains to this day.

Madalene Walser, grade 5  
Reeds Elementary School  
Lexington  
Davidson County Schools

### **A Visit at Midnight** **As told by Bradforde Pope**

Back in the olden days when everyone lived on the farm and tobacco was cured in the old log-dabbed barn, strange and unusual sights could sometimes happen around these barns late at night. My grandmother told me of one such occurrence. It was around 12:00 midnight on one of those nights when she sat around the barn, tending to the fire in the furnace. Grandpa was sick and in the hospital and Grandma was left to tend the fire all by herself. The tobacco had almost cured out, and it was of utmost importance to see that the heat remain constant in the barn. About midnight when she was adding more wood to the furnace, she was approached by one - a man dressed in white from head to foot. He walked up to her and said, "Where is your husband?" He even called Grandpa's full name. Grandpa had instructed Grandma that should anyone come looking for him, just to say that he was in the house. Grandpa didn't want anyone to know that Grandma was home alone. So, Grandma told the stranger that Grandpa was in the house. At that, the stranger vanished into thin air. He

disappeared right before Grandma's eyes. Grandma said that the experience left her visibly shaken. But, after a while she regained her composure, added more wood to the fire, and watched the flames flicker in the furnace until daybreak. The stranger dressed in white was never seen again.

Bradford Pope, Kindergarten  
Mariam Boyd School  
Warrenton  
Warren County Schools

### **During The Depression** **As told by Juanita Britt**

I was about eight years old during the depression. I had one sister a year older than me and a sister three years younger. Our mama raised us right by herself. Many is the time we went to bed hungry. Everybody had it hard, but a woman alone with three young'uns had it extra hard. I know one time there was no food in the house, but mama had come by a nickel. She bought a loaf of bread with that nickel and we ate mustard sandwiches for a while. One time we were living in Raleigh near the state prison. A man was unloading ice cream cones and he gave me a case of them. The case was bigger than me and it took a long time to drag it home, but by golly, we ate ice cream cones with water for two weeks. We kept from starving. My sisters and I used to go out and watch for wild guinea hens. They would hide their eggs in the woods and go back home. We would eat those eggs and wild greens that we would get along the riverbank. It was hard but we made it and it made us tough so we could handle other bad things. Young people today just don't know how good they have it.

Billy Kernodle, Grade 4  
Altamahaw-Ossipee Elementary School  
Elon College  
Alamance County Schools

### **The Cookbook Disaster** **As told by Roger Gaddis**

When my daddy was a little boy he lived near the A & F supermarket. He always had to walk to the store to get milk, and bread for his mom. One day while he was at the store he saw a display of paper cookbooks, that caught his eye. He thought to himself, that his mom would love to have one, so he picked one up and put it in his pocket.

Later, after he had gotten home he took out the cookbook and was going to give it to his mom when he noticed there was a price tag on it for \$1.00. He was afraid that if his dad

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caught him or knew he had accidentally stole it, he would be in big trouble, so he hid it in the basement. He couldn't sleep that night because he was worried about stealing the cookbook. So he got up real early the next morning and went down to the A & P supermarket and put the cookbook under the WELCOME mat. He never got caught, and never told anyone, until now.

Deborah Galois, Grade 4  
Boiling Springs Elementary  
Boiling Springs  
Cleveland County Schools

## The Fight

As told by Van Edwards

My great grandpop was born in 1889 in Alleghany County, North Carolina. He used to make music on a fiddle. In 1905 or 1906 he played with Great Uncle George at a barn raising in Rich Hill. Great Uncle George played the banjo.

All the men at the barn raising got drunk on white corn liquor they still in the woods behind Great Uncle George's house.

As they were fighting, they broke all but one quart of liquor.

That was when Great Grandpop Edwards got into the fight. He took Great Uncle George outside behind the barn and whipped him.

Johnathon Coleman, Grade 4  
Oak Hill Elementary  
Morganton  
Burke County Schools

## The Tree Trimming Trio

As told by Karie Long

"On the 6'th day of Christmas, my true love gave to me 6 uh, uh,...penguins waddling?" Sounds like "The Tree Trimming Trio" is here. Every year our family decorates the Christmas tree at my grandmothers.

Before the trimming begins, Dad and I must cut the "perfect" 10-foot cedar that he's been watching all summer. Then we all pile into the truck with the tree and zoom to Grandma's for hot oyster stew. Each year when Dad brings in The Tree, it has always mysteriously grown at least another foot while lying outside.

Now the fun begins! The Tree Trimming Trio (Dad, Uncle Marvin, and my brother Todd) strings the lights and begins to sing their favorite Christmas song, "Christmas Time's a' Comin'." It's the only one they have memorized since it repeats the same words.

The whole family sings as we decorate until the Trio starts "The Twelve Days of Christmas" in the style of Kermit and Miss Piggy. They sing well until they get past "5 Golden Rings". After that, each day of Christmas is confused and the rest of us are laughing so hard we're crying. They substitute the first thing they think of like "7 reindeer rapping", or eight elephants echoing". It takes hours to decorate with the Tree Trimming Trio entertaining us.

Grandma bought the songbook "The 12 Days of Christmas for the Trio. I hope she can't find it, because I like it just the way it is. We shouldn't break the tradition.

Karie Long, Grade 5  
Mount Pleasant Elementary  
Mount Pleasant  
Cabarrus County

## Stray Thought

As told by Frank Guthrie

The coastal winds had been blowing from the southwest for a couple of days. The Carteret County boys knew from experience that they could enjoy one of the many clamming grounds of the coast and make money at the same time.

The boys had been clamming for several hours. Both were gloating about how they were going to spend the money once the clams were sold. The water was now less than knee deep. The boys were daydreaming and didn't notice the boat in the distance until they could see the radio antenna of the Marine patrol sticking up over the side and heading in their general direction.

The boys knew they didn't have a valid commercial clam license as they had taken the skiff without permission in the first place. Now it seemed they were trapped. Anyway that's how it seemed until one of the boys had a stray thought. He told the other one to quickly get down on his knees and continue clamming. Of course from a distance it would appear the water where the boys were clamming was about waist deep. According to the boys, the power of suggestion worked rather well.

The Marine patrol boat suddenly hit a shoal with a thud and rolled over on its side with the outboard motor still racing. At this time, the boys didn't let any eel grass grow under their feet as they made haste to the skiff and headed home as fast as it would carry them.

Dustin Daniels, grade 4  
Smyrna Elementary School  
Smyrna  
Carteret County Schools

## Close Friends

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A long time ago my great-grandma had an unusual experience. She and her sister-in-law Polly were very close friends. They could always talk to each other about anything because they were so close. It was very lonesome for Grandma Bert when Polly died.

As Grandma Bert lay in bed one night, she heard a noise and then she saw Polly coming toward her bed. Polly came over and sat in a chair near the bed. She had on her favorite apron with a snuff box in the pocket. Grandma Bert wasn't sure what to do. In a little while she asked Polly what she wanted. Polly then said she wanted to talk.

After they talked a while, Polly said she had to go but that she would see her later.

I don't know if Polly ever came back again. Now that Grandma Bert is gone, they probably talk a lot!

Geishla Stroud, Grade 5  
B.F. Grady School  
Albertson  
Duplin County Schools

## Grandmother Stewart Reminisces As told by Docia Stewart

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When my grandmother Stewart was my age she had to walk to school. Her father, my great-grandfather, raised tobacco for money. He traded chickens for meat, eggs, cows milk and butter. He traded chickens or either used money from tobacco crop to buy cloth. My great-grandmother made their clothes. They had no electricity. They used oil lamps for light. She walked or rode a wagon to church. She carried a packed lunch to school. My grandmother's favorite was biscuits. After their evening meal and chores, they did their homework. She was in the 4th grade when they got a car. Later they had electricity in the house.

Jennifer Stewart, Grade 4  
Bethel Hill Elementary School  
Roxboro  
Person County Schools

## The Yearly Treat As told by Madeline Meads Sawyer

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Charles Herman "Jack" Meads was born on September 14, 1884. He was the fifth of eleven children. He married a woman by the name of Dora Brothers. She was born January 27, 1880. On October 31, 1909, Jack and Dora had a baby girl named Madeline.

Madeline's sister, Margaret Vivian, was born two years later. The first son, Charles Herman (named after his father), was born on December 7, 1913. A second son, Seth Elihu, was born on November 9, 1915.

To celebrate the Fourth of July, Jack would order a cake of ice from Elizabeth City. The cake was shipped to Shawboro on the train. He would go to the train to get it. He would bring a horse and cart with him so he could carry it home. The ice was packed in sawdust. It was wrapped in burlap. The ice was stored in the cool and dark smokehouse. The kids stuffed themselves with ice cream and lemonade as long as the ice lasted. It was a once-a-year treat!

Stephen Wardle, Grade 4  
Central Elementary School  
Maple  
Currituck County Schools

## Fluffy And The Elastic As told By Alexander Christie, grand- father

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"When your father was still a boy, and we were still living in Scotland, we had a cat named Fluffy. One day your Grandma was making a pair of pants for your Aunty Morag. She laid out the materials on the sofa. Now, anyone who sews knows that in order to make a pair of pants you need elastic.

The next day, the elastic was missing. Since I always move everything around, I was blamed for its disappearance.

That night, when I came home from work, I noticed Fluffy standing by the front door, waiting to be led in. When she turned around, I noticed something small and white sticking out of her--well, you know. On a hunch, I took a hold of it and pulled. I pulled and pulled! And I pulled some more! Finally, when I was done, there it was--the elastic! It looked just about the same as it did when it went in. I don't know why, but for some reason, your favorite Grandma threw it out.

Fluffy wasn't really changed by this happening at all. As a matter of fact, she ate your great grandma's elastic garters a few years later, leaving only the knots.

Evan Christie, Grade 8  
E. B. Aycock Junior High School  
Greenville  
Pitt County Schools

## A Family Tradition As Told By Kevin Hall

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Every year during Christmas, our family always gets together, and my father reads to us

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the Christmas story from the Bible. We all listen to him while my mother and my aunt make us a big supper. When my father is finished we all eat a huge meal and dessert. Afterwards, we all talk about what we want for Christmas and what happened to us over the last year. We also discuss what we want to do over the next year. We normally do this on Christmas Eve, so we can all open one of our gifts that night. We have always done this for as long as I can remember.

Kevin Hall, Grade 7  
Gentry Middle School  
Mt. Airy  
Surry County Schools

**Saved by Man's Best Friend**  
**As told by Jonathan Silver**

Many years ago when my great grandmother became quite elderly, she lost her sight. Her children wanted her to come and live with one of them, but Grandma insisted on remaining in her own home. No amount of persuasion could get Grandma to change her mind. Concerned about Grandma's safety, the children decided to purchase a good watchdog for Grandma's protection. One night about midnight, Grandma was awakened by all kinds of commotion: loud barking, squalling and the sounds of tussling. The noises seemed to be coming from an adjoining bedroom. When Grandma entered her bedroom, she saw nothing, of course, because she was blind. So, after the commotion ceased, Grandma returned to her own bedroom and went back to sleep.

The next day Grandma was visited by one of her daughters. During the conversation, Grandma related the incident which had occurred the night before. When the daughter entered the bedroom where all the commotion had come from the night before, she stood speechless and motionless! There lying on the floor was a man - dead. His throat had been slashed. Grandma's dog was sitting on the floor beside the man.

Investigation into the incident revealed that a burglar had entered Grandma's home, possibly with the intent of robbery or murder and Grandma's watchdog had averted the attack. Therefore, Grandma's life had been saved by man's best friend - the dog.

Jonathan Silver, Grade 1  
Mariam Boyd School  
Warrenton  
Warren County Schools

**The Flood of 1916**  
**As told by Carol Ann Hoke Shook**

Ivie, My great grandmother told my sister about the great flood of July 1, 1916. She was 15 years old at that time. The day it started raining, the chimney to their double fireplaces fell in. She can remember seeing the bricks fall as they filled both fireplaces. After the rain stopped, her father took Ivie and some of her brothers and sisters to Lookout Dam in the surry. There were all kinds of things being washed down the river. Among them were pig pens, parts of houses, cotton bales from Rhodhiss, and pigs. The rain had washed away part of the dam and a portion of the earth and a portion of the earth around it. To this day there is a hole large enough to be several acres wide.

Jennifer P. Hoke, Grade 5  
Shuford Elementary  
Conover  
Newton-Conover City Schools

**Marguerite Harrell**  
**As told by Jennifer Bass**

Marguerite Harrell is my great grandmother. She paid 25 cents for her lunch. She ate soup and carried her lunch sometimes. She went to school at 9:00 and left at 2:45. She had the same subjects as we do now. Back then, she skipped the 6th grade due to her brightness in her books.

During World War II, her brother was in active duty. Her family was very scared that her brother might get killed but he survived.

When she was older, she worked in a department store. Her parents were farmers.

My great grandmother is still living today and I enjoy her telling me about the olden days.

Jennifer Bass, Grade 4  
Hobpton Elementary School  
Newton Grove  
Sampson County

**Christmas in the Merritt Family**  
**As told by Ruth Minick**

Mrs. Merritt grew up in Elkin, N.C. in the late 1800's, when there were no modern conveniences.

On Christmas morning, real buckwheat cakes with the "high-priced spread" and delicious, homemade sausages were always served. Later, there would be knocks at the door, and then "Christmas Gift" shouts. When they opened the door, they found friends with



gifts for everyone.

Christmas centered in the home and church. On Christmas Eve, everyone dressed warmly and walked to church, which was always bright, and packed with friends. After the carols and the minister's message, "Old Santa" called out every child's name for a gift of a toy and some candy. The needy and the poor were not forgotten. And something was sent to those the missionaries told them about.

Back home, the mother played carols and the children sang. Children never saw the tree until Christmas morning. It was always a large, fragrant tree of cedar or spruce with wax candles.

Christmas preparations began soon after Thanksgiving. Children came home early from school everyday until the baking was finished. They prepared cakes, cookies, and homemade molasses.

In those days, there were no cocktail parties, dressed up dinner parties, nor places to "eat out." But there were fine, heavy meals with friends and relatives. And during the holidays, people "dropped in" for snacks of wine, fruitcakes and cookies.

Life in those days was lived with great dignity and satisfaction and with a fastidiousness which must be hard to come by.

Jennifer Martin, Grade 7  
Gentry Middle School  
Mount Airy  
Surry County Schools

### Pass It On

As told by Inez Hussey Hooker

Sometimes things turn out for the best, but I'm sure my great grandfather sometimes wondered. He was born "across the sound" in 1893, and to reach it a barge called the HATTIE CREEF had to be ridden until it docked at a place called Frying Pan (really!). Samuel's twin sister did not survive birth and at age three Samuel's thirty-two year old father died. Though his natural father was a school teacher, Samuel grew up illiterate. His two step-fathers needed field labor worse than an educated son. It was Samuel's one regret in life—that he never knew how to read or write.

However, Samuel was not one to let a problem stand in his way. As a husband and father he found employment at Parson's Warehouse, which sold seed and farming supplies. Daily he memorized the customer's names, what they purchased, and how much it would cost. At the end of each day he would repeat it back to his wife, Minnie, who would write it down.

In that manner he kept his accounts

straight and Mr. Parsons always had confidence in Samuel's memory.

Samuel's legacy to me, his great granddaughter, is the ability to face adversity head-on and not let it get the best of you. It's a legacy I hope to pass on.

Heather Hooker, Grade 9  
Northeastern High School  
Elizabeth City  
Pasquotank Schools

### Early Days

As told by Mary Witt

I was born in 1902 on a farm and I was one of sixteen children. We went to school in a one room schoolhouse. We walked and carried our lunches in a big basket. We ate our lunch together as a family. We had recess twice a day. We played ball and tag or jumped rope. While at school we had to get our own water. We had to go about as far as a city block to get to the spring. We carried the water back to the schoolhouse. We didn't have any electricity. Our restroom was in the woods. We were kept warm by the stove in the middle of the schoolhouse. The boys would cut the wood. Sometimes it was so cold our fingers turned blue. It would take us a while to get warm. The school had only one teacher. She taught up to the seventh grade. My father was in charge of choosing the teacher. The teachers were real nice to us. Later when I got older we had box suppers. We made the boxes as fancy as we could. The boy that liked you would bid for your supper. We enjoyed it.

Jaime Shepherd, Grade 4  
Altamahaw-Ossipee Elementary School  
Elon College  
Alamance County Schools

### The Life of Being A Country Doctor's Son

As Told By Joseph J. Henderson

My great grandfather John P. Henderson Sr. was a country doctor. He started practicing in 1920, in Swansboro, North Carolina. After practicing four years at Swansboro, he moved to Jacksonville, North Carolina. He still practiced in Onslow County. My grandfather, Joseph Henderson, remembers when his family had a cottage at Carolina Beach. My great grandfather would go down every night and come to Onslow County in the day. There was a little boy who was one of his patients. The boy lived out where the Marine Corps base is now. His father had brought him to the office. The little boy had swallowed a bunch of quinine chocolate coated pills that they used back

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then for malaria. My great grandfather pumped his stomach and the boy still didn't get any better. There wasn't a hospital in Onslow County. My grandfather was 16 years old and he had to go with his father, the boy, and the boy's father to James Walker Hospital in Wilmington. On the way to the hospital the little boy died. My grandfather had to go on and take his father to Wilmington. My grandfather had to drive from Wilmington all the way back to Hadnot Point on the base with and dead child and the child's father. It was 11:00 that night. On his way back to Carolina Beach, my grandfather was so frightened and sleepy that he stopped in a country store. They gave him a lemon to suck on to keep him awake! This is an experience that happened 53 years ago and my grandfather still remembers it vividly.

Suzanne Henderson, Grade 5  
Northwoods Elementary  
Jacksonville  
Onslow County Schools

**My Ancestors**  
As told by David Kelly, Sr.

My great, great grandfather, Alfred Fox, was born in Randolph County, North Carolina. He was a Lutheran minister who did mission work in Tennessee. He was told that the people needed a medical doctor. He got his medical degree from the University of Alabama and moved to Lincoln. He became the minister of Salem Church and practiced medicine in a cabin nearby.

A story about Dr. Fox is still told by my family. He was delivering a child to the Coon family. Someone peeked in the door and asked, "Dr. Fox, has the baby come yet?"

Dr. Fox answered, "No, the baby hasn't come yet. It takes a long time for a Coon to come out of a log when it knows a Fox is waiting for him."

Crystal Kelly  
South Newton School  
Newton  
Newton-Conover City Schools

**Wigilia (Polish Family Traditions of Christmas Eve)**  
As told by Aunt Joan Phillips

In olden times the father brings home a sheaf of grain and places it in the corner. This represents the home's Guardian Angel. Hay is placed on the tablecloth in the center of the table with figures of the Holy Family.

Children look out the windows at dusk for the first sight of the Christmas Star.

The family then gathers around the table for a meatless meal which includes: pierogis (a type of Ravioli stuffed with sauerkraut), and Babka (Polish raisin bread). The meal begins with the breaking and sharing of the "Oplatek," the Christmas wafer. This is a very special part of the meal.

An empty place is set in memory of ancestors and Christ. There is hope that Christ, as the unexpected guest, will come and bless the gathering.

Food is set aside for the animals since they were the only honored eyewitnesses of the birth of Christ. The vigil is then ended by the family going to church together.

Ricky Schwartz, Grade 5  
Shuford Elementary School  
Conover  
Newton-Conover City Schools

**Our Sewing Machine**  
As told by Debbie Eller

We have a very old Singer sewing machine at our house. It does not have a motor, and you do not plug it in. To make it run, you have to pedal it with your feet.

Over seventy years ago, my great grandmother made clothes for her family on this sewing machine. Almost all their clothes were homemade. When she passed away, the sewing machine was handed down to my grandmother.

My grandmother made clothes on the machine for my mother when she was little. Grandma made a Superman cape for me on it, and some other things, too. She took very good care of it, and she showed my mom how to use it. When Grandma passed away two years ago, the sewing machine was handed down to Mom.

Mom uses the sewing machine sometimes. I like to watch it and listen to it. She says some day it will belong to my little sister. We must take good care of it, too, because it has been in our family for four generations. As long as we have it, we have part of our past that we can see and touch and use.

Zac Eller, Grade 2  
South Newton School  
Newton  
Newton-Conover City Schools

**Good Neighbors**

In 1929 times were hard for Tarheel families. My grandfather had an especially difficult time. His story goes like this:

"I was nine years old - would have been ten in two months. It happened on June 19th at four in the afternoon. A neighbor loaned us his mowing machine. Me and my brother were in the field. The old man was up at the house because of rheumatism and my mama had my two week-old brother up there too.

Kate was the mule. I went around to grab hold of her, I fell behind the blade of the mower. My brother, Howard, ran for the neighbors. The neighbors came a-running and handed me over and over across fences and back to the house.

My mama started screaming. All I could do was beg my daddy not to whip me. For you see, my foot was cut off and I was bleeding alot. A neighbor called for some rags and tied one around my thigh and one around the calf of my leg. This made like a tourniquet until a doctor could get there.

I lost my foot and had operations to keep the bone from coming through. "Doc" put three stitches in my leg without anesthesia. You could a-heard me yell for miles."

Because the family was poor the neighbors pitched in and raised one hundred dollars for grandpa's first wooden leg. He owed his life to his good neighbors.

Ashley Hooker, Grade 7  
Elizabeth City Middle School  
Elizabeth City  
Pasquotank County Schools

### **Red Polkadots**

Americans were not free in 1775. Americans fought in a war with England. Americans won the war. We celebrate on July the 4th. My family goes to see the parade in Clinton every year. I like the clowns the best. I like the one when his pants fall down because it shows his underwear with red polkadots! This is what we like to do on the 4th of July.

Karen Fann, Grade 2  
Salemburg Elementary School  
Salemburg  
Sampson County Schools

### **3 Chickens in 1 As told by Harvy Squires**

One Saturday afternoon, when I was about 10 years old, my brother William and I wanted to go to Prichett's Store and get some stick candy, but we didn't have any money. We decided to catch a chicken and sell it. We caught a chicken that was in the feed barn and set out for the store, which was about a mile away. William and I took

turns carrying the chicken. When we got to the store, I took it in and Mr. Prichett weighed it. He paid me and told me to put it in the chicken coop behind the store. Instead of putting it in the coop, I took it outside and gave it to William. He took the same chicken inside to sell it again. Mr. Prichett weighed it and paid him. He told William to put it in the chicken coop behind the store. Instead, William brought it outside to me. In a little bit I took the same chicken into the store. Mr. Prichett weighed it and paid me again and said, "That's alright, I'll put it in the coop this time myself." We made pretty good money off that chicken, but we spent it all in Mr. Prichett's store on stick candy.

Kristy Keck, Grade 5  
Altamahaw-Ossipee Elementary School  
Elon College  
Alamance County Schools

### **Winter Time in Canada As Told By Janet Bass**

This is a story about my mother and her two brothers and sister. They all lived in Canada. The winters are very cold there and when they were growing up they didn't have a lot of money to do things.

My mother's brother Al liked to ice skate a lot. He looked forward to the winter so he could make an ice skating rink where the garden was in the summer. Starting in September Al would get ready for cold weather to set in. He'd put 2 x 4s of wood together around the outside of the garden and smooth the dirt out evenly. After the first hard freeze, Al would flood the garden with water and wait for it to freeze hard. All the kids in the neighborhood would come to ice skate.

One year when my mother was about eight years old, Al had made his ice skating rink and would watch over it and check it daily. My mother and her friend Diane decided that year to make frozen snowballs. They decided to use some of the cold water from the ice skating rink to coat their snowballs. They started scooping water out of the rink. All caught them and chased them all over the neighborhood because he was very mad. When he caught them he made them help him fix his skating rink.

The ice skating rink turned out alright that year, but that was the last time my mother ever tried to make frozen snowballs.

Charles Brandel, Grade 4  
Sandy Ridge Elementary School  
Sandy Ridge  
Stokes County Schools

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**Memories and Remedies**  
**As told by Mary Lupton**

Medicine wasn't available like it is today. Everyone had home cures and remedies for their aches and pains. Whiskey was used to mix with sugar and honey for cough medicine. Mustard plaster, I don't know exactly what was in it, was used to break up a cold. If you had a snake to bite you, someone would make a cut in your skin and suck out the poison. It was said that if you had cavities, the poison would destroy your teeth. Certain roots were boiled and the liquid drunk for stomach aches.

We had no electricity so we had to use Kerosene lamps. It was hard to see by them so we had to do our work while it was daylight.

I had five sisters and two brothers. We each had to help with the housework and farming. We grew tobacco. We talked and played together as there was no T.V.

My dad had a model A car, but we walked everywhere we went. We didn't have many clothes. They were all made by my mom and were washed on a washboard. Prices were lower at that time. Soft drinks and candy bars cost five cents.

Christmas was a special time. We didn't get but 2 or 3 things, but we always did a lot of visiting and everybody cooked lots of food.

Jayne Roberts, Grade 4  
Bethel Hill School  
Roxboro  
Parson County Schools

**My Great, Great Grandfather's Dream**

**As told by John Foust**

Years ago my great, great grandfather Foust founded Mt. Vernon Springs. Around 1881 John Monroe Foust came to Chatham County and found two mineral springs. He drank the water, and his health got much better.

Believing in the powers of the mineral waters, he bought the springs and some land and built a hotel. The two-story hotel he built had fifty rooms and beautiful porches. It also had bowling alleys and horse-back trails.

People came from all around to enjoy the resort. Families would come with their servants and stay for a month. The rent for a month was around \$25.00. People living nearby enjoyed the resort too. Families would bring their children to bowl. Court-ing couples would come to the resort on

Sundays. The hotel stayed pretty full from summer to winter.

My great, great grandmother Foust raised the vegetables and with help did all the cooking. They say she was a mighty good cook.

In the fall of the year my great, great grandfa-ther Foust leased the land to Northerners for hunting. But they enjoyed the springs and the food as much as the hunting.

When the roads improved and other resorts were built, the people coming to Mt. Vernon slowed down. The depression made things worse and the hotel closed in the 1930's.

Today when I go to the springs, the hotel is not there, but I can still drink from the springs for beauty and health.

Katie Wilkinson, Grade 5  
South Newton School  
Newton  
Newton-Conover City Schools

**The Neighborhood Witch**  
**As told by Dorothy Smith**

When my grandma was a little girl at the age of nine years old, she lived in Nash County, North Carolina. There was an old woman that lived in her neighborhood, and everyone thought she was a witch. Grandma asked her mama, "How can you tell if someone is a witch?" Her mother told her, "If you think someone is a witch stick a needle in their chair. After they sit down, they won't be able to get back up." One day the old woman came to visit. After she sat down my grandma stuck a needle in her chair. About one hour later the old woman said she had to be leaving, but she never got up to leave! My great grandmother made my grandma take the needle out of the chair. As soon as this was done, the old woman got up and left!

To this day, everyone that lives in grand-ma's Nash County neighborhood still believes the old woman really was a true witch!

Casey Smith, Grade 3  
Bridgers Elementary School  
Tarboro  
Tarboro City Schools

**Wooden Gavels for the President**  
**As told by Mrs. Claude Wheeler**

When Franklin Roosevelt was first inaugu-rated President of the United States, I was working as secretary to Congressman Frank Hancock, who was from my hometown, Ox-ford, N.C. One of my friends, who was active in Daughters of the American Revolution, asked me to request Mr. Hancock to have some mallets made for President Roosevelt.

They were to be made of the wood on which he stood when taking his first Oath of Office. My friend obtained the planks, and we took them to the House of Representatives. Mr. Hancock arranged for carpenters in the House workshop to construct the four mallets. The recipients of the mallets were President Roosevelt, Mr. Hancock, Mrs. Taylor (my friend), and me. I still have mine, and I treasure it deeply.

We gave President Roosevelt his mallet on President's Day with a dozen white roses. Later, I saw it in a museum in Hyde Park. It was a thrill to see this historic piece of wood on which he stood that first day as President. I felt that I was a part of the Roosevelt legacy, because I had contributed to his collection of historical remembrances. President Roosevelt was a brave and courageous man, and I will never forget that as long as I live.

Laura Howell, Grade 10  
J.H. Rose High School  
Greenville  
Pitt County Schools

### **The Old Days**

I am going to tell how the old days were. They did not have a bus to ride to school like we do. They had to walk to school every single day. They did not have a lunchroom either. They would have to carry lunch. They carried sausage, bacon, and ham, and a little soda. They would have to ride in a wagon. They all had to sleep in the bed together. It was a little house, but they made do. They had to get up really early in the morning. They would get a drink and a pack of potato chips with 25 cents and still have money left. They did not have toys like us. They took corn cobs and made dolls. They had a little barn and that was their play house. They would have to work for their money. Every little bit of their money went for their clothes. They would get one pair of shoes and that was all the shoes they would get that year. They had to work very hard. At Christmas they would get one thing, but they had to need it.

Amelia Hunt, Grade 5  
Magnolia School  
Lumberton  
Robeson County Schools

### **The Picnic Convict** **As told by Frances Hoffner**

One summer day my sister, Gladys, and I decided to go on a picnic with our friends,

Willard and Vivan. We put sandwiches and goodies into a bag and proceeded to find our picnic spot. As we crossed the pasture I saw it. A large flat rock was lying in the center of the creek. The water was low, so we crossed over to it. Our sandwiches and other goodies had never tasted so grand. Halfway through our feast, we heard someone walking down the creek. We snuck around the bend in the creek. A man dressed in gray scurried toward the hillside. As he turned, we could see numbers across his shirt.

My sister said that he was an escaped convict and we should capture him. We ran home and collected weapons. We returned to the scene ready to track him. Willard had a Bowie knife strapped to him. Vivian had a baseball bat. Gladys had a pocket knife and I had a butcher knife. Not having a sheath to put my knife in, I decided to slide the knife underneath the waistband of my slacks. I cut a four inch slit in my stomach!

We never became heroes that day. Our convict was nowhere to be found. But we learned a valuable lesson that day. Let the police capture the criminals and finish a picnic before the ants hear about it.

Alison Hoffner, Grade 4  
Mt. Ulla Elementary School  
Mt. Ulla  
Rowan County Schools

### **Memories of the Train** **As Told By Carlyne Hussey**

Once there was a little boy who lived in a small town in North Carolina called Star. This town was so small it only had one stop light and one school. The town limits were one mile square. This town grew up around the railroad tracks that ran from Charlotte to Raleigh. The train tracks ran through this little boy's back yard. Some days before the train came through town the little boy, his brother and sisters would take money coins and lay them on the tracks so that the train would flatten them and make them larger. They kept these coins in a piggy bank but they were unable to spend them. When the train ran down the tracks it shook their house and made the windows rattle. Sometimes the boy and his sister would go out and watch the train come around the tracks, but they never played on the tracks. The little boy grew up and went to a college that had a train track beside his dorm. He always thought of home when trains ran past at night, blew their whistles and shook his dorm. His sister grew up and married an engineer on the railroad. They bought a caboose and laid track in their backyard for her children's playhouse. This

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train does not shake her house, but it does remind her of home.

Trey Hussey, Grade 4  
Altamahaw-Ossipee Elementary School  
Elon College  
Alamance County Schools

**A Boy's Dream**

Once upon a time there was a boy called Monte. He always wanted to be a famous painter. He even dreamed about being a painter. His mother always told him he could be what he wanted to be, but he never believed what she said. One day his dream came true. He was so glad. Many people bought and talked about his painting. When he came home his mother said, "See, your dream came true." He is now a famous painter. His most famous painting now is the Santa Maria. It's a ship. He won't sell it because he loves it so much. He got it framed and hung it in his mansion.

Bobby Robinson, Grade 6  
Morven Elementary School  
Morven  
Anson County Schools

**Slavery  
As told by Mae Swanston**

My great-great-grandmother told stories of how she was sold on the slavery block. My grandmother has some earrings that belonged to my great-great-grandmother. They are gold with black stones in them. They are over 150 years old.

Robert Moore, Grade 6  
Northeast Middle School  
McLeansville  
Guilford County

**Years Ago In Clayton  
As Told By Ms. Lena Lee**

Overalls were always worn in the field when it was time for work. A straw hat was used to keep the sun from beaming down on our heads. There was no music or television. We did not have cars or trucks. Wagons and horse and buggies were used for transportation. We plowed cotton with an old mule. Our water was drawn by chain and bucket from our well. A luxury was killing hogs and eating fresh hog meat. We went to church every Sunday on our horse and buggy. We lived in an old wooden house with wooden floors. Beds and floors

creaked in our old house. We swept the yard with a yard broom. We used to go down in the woods and find a dogwood bush and break some limbs off and tie them together to make our broom. We cooked on a wood stove. The house was heated with wood. All our clothes were washed on a washboard.

At night our children ran up and down the road playing with tobacco sticks and make believe toys. Our children have worked hard all their lives. There were 11 children in our family. Before the children could go to school, they had to do their chores. After all jobs were done, we all sat down together and ate our meal.

Rodney Lee, Grade 8  
Cooper Middle School  
Clayton  
Johnston County Schools

**Life A Long Time Ago**

When my dad was little, his family had no electricity. My dad grew up in Michigan. They used candles for light at night. My dad had a white and black horse, but he died. My dad had to wear a certain suit to school. It was a big school. My dad has shown me where he went to school and where he use to live. He did not have an inside bathroom. There were no buses, so he had to ride his bike to school.

Mindy Amore, Grade 2  
John J. Blair Elementary  
Wilmington  
New Hanover County Schools

**My Grandpa  
As told by my mother, Glenda**

My grandpa is almost 76 years old. He was born premature and almost died. As he grew older he started to lift weights and got stronger. He planned to be a printer; but one day a man came to him and said, "Doug, I think God wants you to be a minister." So he went to college and seminary. He married my grandmother Carolyn and worked at Erie neighborhood house in Chicago helping poor people. They had four daughters. My mom was the youngest. Grandpa became a minister of a big church in Chicago. Now he is retired and we go to visit my grandparents every summer at their Michigan cabin. Grandpa loves to fish and he has a collection of pocket knives that he got from his father. Great grandpa Cedarleaf got them from his friend who ran a cleaners. People left their knives in the pockets of their dirty clothes and he kept them. Now my cousins and I get a few pocket knives from his collection when we visit

grandpa. Sometimes we trade our pocket knives for different ones from his collection. This summer will be special because my grandma and grandpa will have been married for fifty years and we will have a party. Grandpa is a nice man and I have a lot of fun fishing with him.

Jacob Clausen, Grade 2  
Pearsontown Elementary  
Durham  
Durham County Schools

### **It's All Changed As told by Bernita Ledbetter**

"It's all changed," said Bernita. "One of the biggest changes was the medical care and how you got it. Used to, when it came time to have a baby, you cranked up the phone, if you had one, and told that doctor to come on over 'cause you had a youngin' on the way."

Calling wasn't as easy as it sounded, because if you didn't have a phone, you had to find someone who did. Bernita was one of the lucky ones. "I was the only one in the valley with a phone, so everybody came to my house to use it, and of course you had to let them; they didn't have any other options."

Of course, when the doctor came, "You had to supply the sheets and a bed for him to sleep in—for he stayed as long as he felt he was needed." Although today we hear a lot about "boiling some water" and such, Bernita said, "They didn't sterilize anything because the midwife and the doctor didn't know a whole lot about it. They really weren't that careful, but there were fewer germs in your own house than in a hospital anyway."

The hospital at Sylva was around at the time, but "you got the exact same care, and it was a lot cheaper at home. And the doctors at the hospital weren't any better...doctors didn't know too much then, not much more now." Bernita commented that she couldn't remember paying more than ten dollars for any visit.

Jennifer Lee, Grade 10  
Smoky Mountain High School  
Sylva  
Jackson County Schools

### **The Flood of 1916 As told by Glenn Miller**

"My story begins in the summer of 1916. In July some of the highest amounts of precipitation ever recorded fell in McDowell

County. My mother was a small girl who lived near Clear Creek. The creek began to overflow its banks sometime in the evening of the 15th or 16th. The family was attempting to prepare supper. They had to build a fire in the hearth, for the rain came down too hard to permit one in the fireplace.

After supper it was dark until bright flashes brightened the creek. Grandma put the younger children to bed. The older ones set a watch, keeping an eye on the creek—now in the yard. In the night Grandma said she could hear loud booms like dynamite. She didn't know that it was whole sides of mountains sliding down. About one o'clock in the morning one of my uncles woke the small girls telling them to get dressed because it looked like they were going to have to leave.

My mother walked out on the porch and looked at the creek.

"Why, Stanley," she said, "this ain't anything. I saw the creek up to the foot log over at Byrds."

"You little crazy thing," said my uncle, "that foot log washed away hours ago." The creek came no higher and the cabin was spared, but many other homes were washed away and several lives were lost in the flood of 1916."

Joel Miller, Grade 7  
East McDowell Junior High  
Marion  
McDowell County Schools

### **Growing Up In Morrisville As told by Richard Davis**

In the good old days after the work was done, it was time for a quiet evening. The only entertainment was the Lone Ranger on the radio. As time went on television came along, and it was Lawrence Welk, Uncle Miltie, and the six o'clock news. You best be quiet when the news came on.

Bedtime came just after dark, because Daddy called from the steps before dawn, "Time to get up, boys." Mama had breakfast ready. You ate and off to work you went before the dew was off the ground. If you worked real hard, by nine o'clock you got a Pepsi, but if you just sat down at the end of the row and didn't work, you didn't get one.

After a while it was time for lunch. On hot days work would start back at four o'clock and last until dark. At supper time everything was quiet. Homemade biscuits were almost always on the table, and you didn't take them off the platter with your hands. You "forked" them. It was a real treat to mix molasses and butter. You would "sop" this mixture with the biscuits.

At six o'clock the news would come on, and

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by the time Jesse Helmes had his commentary, Daddy was asleep in his recliner. Mama was washing dishes, and thinking of all she had to do before the next day. She worked in the fields, fixed three meals a day washed and ironed, was a nurse, fixer, and friend. The past is now gone, but not forgotten.

Shane Davis, Grade 8  
Angier Middle School  
Angier  
Harnett County Schools

### A 'Train' of Thought

When the train first came to Dillsboro in 1883, people had different reactions. Some felt fear, while others had great expectations. Then there were those who simply waited its arrival with intense curiosity. As the experience was related to me, I drew a mental picture of this small part of history.

The hour of the first appearance of the train in Dillsboro drew near. Young children waited with anticipation for the loud whistle and the sound of the wheels on the metal tracks. Some young boys walked the newly-laid tracks. Those who did were considered brave because the tracks were slim rails on which they had to maintain their balance or fall on the rocky terrain below. As the train whistle was heard, the children's faces and those of many adults lit up, and their eyes became as big as saucers. For most of these people, it was the first time to see a train, and it was as if an enchanted spell were cast over them. Everyone watched in silence as if he were trying to memorize every detail.

Connie Huntsman, Grade 12  
Smoky Mountain High School  
Sylva  
Jackson County Schools

### Does He Still Pay Rent?

There is a rumor going around that my aunt's house is haunted. The house belongs to my grandfather and he used to rent it out to a man by the name of John Henry. This was told to me by my Aunt Sylvia:

"Before I moved in and remodeled this old house, my brother used to live here—until he moved, but before that, an old man by the name of John Henry had lived here. They say that he died in this house and that old John hated Christmas time.

Well, anyway, the trouble doesn't start until I put up my Christmas tree. I always buy the NON-BLINKING lights and I don't hook them up to a blinker. For the first few days, the lights don't blink; but, after the

third day the lights begin to blink. It never fails, it happens every Christmas. Sometimes I think I should charge him rent for this. You know, that's an idea."

Well that's what happens at my Aunt's house every Christmas. The question that's plaguing our family is, "Should he still pay rent?"

Wendy Ivy Wilson, Grade 7  
Brawley Middle School  
Scotland Neck  
Halifax County Schools

### Battleship

When my dad was little he had to save up to bring the battleship where it is now. My papa used to own the land the battleship is on. The government was wanting to melt the battleship down to scraps. The people of Wilmington decided to get together to raise money to save the battleship. After a few years enough money was raised to move the battleship to Wilmington. Now when I go to the battleship, I feel very proud that my papa use to own the land where the USS Battleship now calls home and my dad saved pennies to help get it here.

Meagan Prevatte, Grade 2  
John J. Blair Elementary  
Wilmington  
New Hanover County Schools

### Horseless Carriages and Smoking Dragons

It has been ninety-three years since Delia Hall Cowan was born in a one-room log cabin on East Fork. In her lifetime there have been drastic changes in Jackson County.

She remembers a time when medical care was very different. All her children were born at home with a doctor present, but when Delia was born, only a midwife attended. Delia's mother had miscalculated her due date and called for the midwife, Aunt Maddie Mason, a month too soon, so Aunt Maddie just stayed with them until Delia was born.

Illness and disease could be much more devastating many years ago. Once, Delia's uncle came to visit. When he arrived, he had "a cancer on his lip" which got progressively worse during his stay. He couldn't travel in his condition, so he just stayed until he died.

"She has seen many changes in transportation. She remembers the first car she ever saw. They had stopped at a spring on the way to Franklin and "here come this little car... it was shaped like a coffin! This man was a-sittin up there in that little car just a-flyin.



Well, we come home sayin' we seen something going without nothin' a-pullin' it. We couldn't imagine how it was a-goin' without something or somebody pullin' it." She also remembers, when the train first came to Dillsboro, and says that the people were frightened and "didn't know what to think." She recalls the roads were much worse when she was growing up, so it took much longer to get from place to place. Often people just waited in Dillsboro to catch a ride back home on the logging trucks. Delia recalls that one time she and her family walked much more, too. Delia recalls that one time she and her family walked all the way from Dillsboro to East Fork.

Beth Trigg, Grade 11  
Smoky Mountain High School  
Sylva  
Jackson County Schools

### **Always Keep a Promise**

The story I would like to tell is the story of how you should never go back on your word. This story is about how my great-great-aunt went back on her word. Fortunately she learned her lesson, but the old-fashioned hard way was the only way she could do it.

My grandmother told me that one day my great-great-aunt had a peach tree. Then one year she decided she would sell all of the peaches and give the money to the Church. This would be a good way to help the Church and to serve God. I know that my great-great-aunt had to be a devoted Christian to want to do that.

Well, when her husband saw how big and pretty the peaches were on that peach tree, he wanted to keep them for himself. Of course, my great-great-aunt thought this was wrong, but she let him have them anyway, because the Bible tells wives to obey their husbands.

Just before he was going to get the peaches off of the tree, a great wind storm came up. The windstorm tore the peach tree to pieces. When the windstorm was over, it didn't leave a single peach on the tree.

That windstorm was a lesson from God, to tell them that what they were going to do was wrong. After that, I know that whenever they promised something to someone, they didn't let selfishness get in the way. Also I hope they know to always keep a promise to God.

Abenah Vanderpuije, Grade 6  
Eastman Middle School  
Enfield  
Halifax County Schools

### **Dancing man As told by Grandfather Chief**

The dancing man was a toy played with many centuries ago. It was brought to the Appalachian region from Scotland. My grandfather would sing a song called "Mississippi Mud" and the dancing man would do a tap dance.

You sit on one end of the wooden paddle. You hold the wooden man still. With two fingers, you tap at the top of the paddle behind the dancing man. Then he does a tap dance.

Nelson Griffin, Grade 3  
Pearsontown Elementary School  
Durham  
Durham County Schools

### **The Kretlow Cowboy Gun As told by Bob Kretlow**

When my dad was in second grade, his granduncle visited him. His granduncle took him to the war store and said "take a fancy cowboy gun." My dad picked one out and his granduncle bought it for him. His mom kept the cowboy gun for him. When my dad finished the Navy, his mother sent it to him. My dad gave my brother Phillip and me the cowboy gun last year.

Steven Kretlow, Grade 7  
Northeast Middle School  
McLeansville  
Guilford County

### **A Grave Mistake As told by Mary Coward**

I never really understood why, whenever the name Javan Coward arose, people would grin and occasionally laugh out loud. After talking with my grandmother, Mary Coward, about him, I had to laugh too. He had to be the funniest person in my whole family and perhaps in Jackson County.

Javan was a great connoisseur of good corn whiskey and probably was never without a jug in case of an emergency. People could always tell when he had had just a little bit too much. A prime example occurred one time when Javan left home in the late afternoon to run some sort of errand but did not return home until the next morning.

It seems that he'd become mighty thirsty on his return trip, that the thirst soon developed into total intoxication, which almost freed him from consciousness.

Javan walked slowly alongside the road, teetering from one side to another, like a balance

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with unequal weights. As he approached his house he went up the road across from his driveway that led to the graveyard. He walked straight into the cemetery and fell between two burial mounds. He mistakenly thought he was home in bed. As he started to turn over, he met up with a mound. He thought it was his wife Jane. In a very loud voice, he demanded, "Roll over, Jane, roll over; you took all the bed last night."

Terry Ward, Grade 12  
Smoky Mountain High School  
Sylva  
Jackson County Schools

**The Lard Bucket**  
As told by JoAnn Crutchfield

There is an older generation who were taught not to waste. Almost every home had a lard bucket. It was a metal can that held five gallons of lard. The cans were always reused after being emptied. Some were used for feed in the barns. Some were used to protect valuables.

My Grandma used a lard bucket for valuables. Whenever one of us grandchildren did something amusing, she would say that memory would go into the lard bucket. We never understood until years later what she was saying.

As children we often looked into that lard bucket. It was always empty in our eyes, but not in Grandma's. When Grandma was on her death bed, she talked to me a lot. I asked her where that lard bucket was. She said it had served its purpose and was gone. She said it taught us children to look for happiness in our lives; no matter how bad it seemed, there was always a bright side.

She said the lard bucket had overflowed many, many times with memories of happiness.

Lisa Crutchfield, Grade 8  
Harmony Elementary School  
Harmony  
Iredell County Schools

**Catcher**  
As told Grandpa Rudd

When my Grandpa was a small boy he played a game called catcher. The game was similar to what we call tag. The only difference was the rules. The rules are for someone to be called the catcher. The catcher will try to catch a person around them without looking. If the catcher catches the same person more than three times the newly caught person will now be called the catch-

er. The game is played outdoors and can go on until the players decide to stop. Catcher was one of my Grandpa's favorite games.

Shaina Stapleton, Grade 3  
Pearson Elementary  
Durham  
Durham County Schools

**Australia**  
As told by my mom, Chris Rosenthal

My mom is from Australia. Her family's tradition is having plum pudding after dinner on Christmas night but you could not watch them make it because they would put coins inside the pudding! Every child was so excited because of the coins. Did you know that plum pudding does not have any plums in it? I would rather have coins any day.

Aaron Rosenthal, Grade 2  
Pearson Elementary  
Durham  
Durham County School

**Mrs. Sirena Byrd**  
As told by Mrs. Sirena Byrd

Mrs. Byrd and I sat facing each other at a table in her restaurant "Sirena's Courtyard." She smiled her warm, grandmotherly smile. Then she began speaking and I sat totally enthralled...

"I had five sisters and six brothers, two older than myself," she said. "Pearl, Rudy, Rachael, Robert..." She looked up from the table, where she had been counting them off, with a startled little chuckle.

"I remember them all in that order. I was born in 1913. ..Right between Rudy and Paul. 1913 sure was a long time ago," she said.

She relayed to me a story that made me sit very still for a moment in shock.

"My brothers, James and Robert, were outside chopping wood and Robert told James that if he'd put his finger down on the woodpile he'd chop it off. So James did and Robert did, and now James is missing a finger," she said.

Mrs. Byrd stopped now and looked out into main street, and I had the feeling that she was seeing something entirely different than what I was. I was right.

"When I was younger I worked in a store called Pope's. On Saturdays I'd work until 10 o'clock p.m. The streets would be packed full of people, and 10:00 was the time that most folks would come in."

For just a second I could see what Mrs. Byrd saw in her mind.

"Of course on the Saturday nights that I didn't have to work everybody came over to our house. We had a piano and two of my sisters would play while the rest of us made candy and ate peanuts." Mrs. Byrd's face shone and her eyes sparkled with long forgotten memories.

As I looked at this kind, gentle lady I was filled with awe. She has gone through several wars, the great depression and she's still going strong.

Emily Sparkman, Grade 8  
Lillington Middle School  
Lillington  
Harnett County Schools

### Mountaineer Meets Banana

I asked my Papaw if he remembered anything interesting about the railroad when he was young. With a twinkle in his eye, he began his story. It seems that when he and Mamaw got married, they decided to take the train ride. In Bryson City at the depot a man was selling fruit. Mamaw was looking the fruit over and found a curious-looking bunch of yellow things called bananas. Having never eaten one, she asked Papaw to buy some, and of course he did. They got on the train, and after awhile Papaw brought the fruit out and broke a banana off for Mamaw to let her try it. The train was just approaching the Dillsboro Tunnel when Mamaw took her first bite. When the train emerged from the pitch blackness of the tunnel, Mamaw was scared to death. She looked over at Papaw and said, "Lordy, Lordy! George, don't you eat none of them 'nanners! They're as bitter as green persimmons and all cob, too! They even turned me blind!" After looking Mamaw over, Papaw laughed an hour! Lying in Mamaw's lap was her banana—one bite missing, peeling and all!

Jo Jo McDowell, Grade 12  
Smoky Mountain High School  
Sylva  
Jackson County Schools

### The Original Community Center

A visitor would first walk by a wooden bench lined with faithful occupants, citizens of the community. He would also see a rusty barrel from which kerosene could be pumped with a hand pump. His eyes would be drawn to the tin signs nailed along the plank siding. "Coca-Cola", "Raymond Pills", and "Garret Snuff."

Fushing open the heavy wooden door, he might smell the aroma of fresh coffee beans

to be ground or peppermint sticks ready to be devoured. On the left was a telephone with a removable crank and a certain ring to answer. He might hear a deep voice saying, "Central, get me Doc Wilkes on the line." The voice would belong to the owner and postmaster, Napoleon "Ploe" Higdon. Farther into the emporium was a four-legged wood stove with a pipe extending through the ceiling. Sectioned off at the back of the store was a small area which served as the Gay Post Office. A patron might look forward to an occasional letter or a yearly Sears and Roebuck catalog passed through the wire-covered window. When the store was closed, a letter could be slipped through an opening in the front door, along with three cents to pay for a stamp.

In the 1920's the otherwise unknown community of Gay had an identity, a place on the map, because of the existence of the little post office-store. Upon departure, a customer took with him not only groceries but also a sense of belonging. I wonder if the multi-million dollar community centers built today fulfill their purpose half so well.

Linda Deitz, Grade 12  
Smoky Mountain High School  
Sylva  
Jackson County Schools

### A Crying Sound of a Boy From A Tree As told by Somhit Rattana

One day a little boy was playing with his friend. His friend chased him into the street. A huge garbage truck was coming. The boy fell and didn't have enough time to get up. The truck ran over him.

A few days after his funeral nobody could sleep because the boy was crying and calling something like, "Mommy, please let me in." Everybody in the neighborhood heard him calling and crying for his mother. They knew that the crying was coming from the tree that he liked to climb. Nobody could see him, but they knew it was he who cried. His mother went to see a man who people said could chase away ghosts. The mother wasn't sure if she should chase him away because she knew he was her son. But the man chased away the ghost. After that they never heard his crying and calling again.

Souchinda Rattana  
Kirkman Park School  
High Point  
High Point City Schools

### A Sign of the Future

Claude Cowan, Sr. and Jerry Moody set out early one morning to make that laborious trip

personal experiences

that took a whole day--all the way to Asheville and back. A black model-T Ford was the means of transportation. Chugging along at what by today's standards would be considered the proper speed for a funeral procession, they found the dust thick. The two longed to reach the top of Balsam mountain where they would benefit from a great invention. Pavement. Yes, all the way to Asheville. The hard part was over. When they reached the metropolis, they picked up the electrical supplies they needed for their newest job.

It was bedtime when they got home. The next few days they spent wiring the Ritz Theater, a new structure on Main Street. There was already electricity up and down the street, so what was so special about this job? Cowan and Moody had a little surprise planned. They were introducing a new attraction at the Ritz. No, it wasn't a smash motion picture. What it was was the "Ritz" sign, the first neon sign in Sylva. The town was beginning to look like one of those big cities--Asheville, for instance.

Scott Cowan, Grade 12  
Smoky Mountain High School  
Sylva  
Jackson County Schools

**How to Cure Chicken Pox**

One day this little girl's grandmother took her to visit a neighboring farm. The little girl had broken out with chicken pox. The grandmother wanted to borrow a live chicken to help her little granddaughter.

So the neighbor let the old woman use one of his chickens. The old woman stood the chicken on the roof of the barn; then the chicken flew over the little girl's head. The next day, the Chicken pox marks were gone.

Jermain Hieke, Grade 5  
Bakers Elementary School  
Scotland Neck  
Halifax County Schools

**Equal Rights For Grandma  
As told by Vivie Naylor**

After forty years of marriage and forty years of waiting on my great grandfather Naylor, my great grandma had had enough. She had fixed his plate at mealtime, run his bath water at bathtime, and laid his clothes out for whatever occasion for all their married life.

Grandma had heard times had changed. So she decided to let Grandpa in on that change. So at bathtime she ran Grandpa's

bathwater as usual. However as a normal thing, Grandma always laid out Grandpa's fresh change of clothes also. This time she didn't do that. Instead she waited for Grandpa to get into the tub, and then without his knowledge she left to go to a neighbor's house.

Grandpa finished his bath, got out of the tub, and went into the bedroom to get his clothes. But much to his surprise, there were no clothes laid out. He yelled for Grandma, but there was no answer. Instead of looking for his clothes himself, he headed for the neighbor's house.

What a shock for Grandma and all the neighbors when they looked out and saw Grandpa coming across the road clad in nothing at all, yelling "Vivie, where are my clothes?"

Joel Moore, Grade 8  
Angier Middle School  
Angier  
Harnett County Schools

**Toys of Long Ago  
As told by my great aunt Liza**

I interviewed my great aunt who talked about the things she played with when she was a girl. This is what she said, "When I was a girl I played with alot of things. One of them was a doll. The doll that I had was a doll that if the head got broken or the head fell off then you could go to the store and buy another one and sew it on. Another toy was a little tray called a waiter and a glass pitcher. When I had friends over to play, I would fix lemonade and serve it to my friends and sister from my pitcher on my waiter. Also my brother played with shoeboxes. He made little cars. He used cardboard for seats. My sister and I had paper dolls. We cut them out of magazines. My brother liked to put our paper dolls in his toy cars and take them for a ride. He sometimes pretended to take them to the fair."

Rebecca Crawford, Grade 3  
Pearsontown Elementary  
Durham  
Durham County Schools

**The Push That Backfired  
As Told By Donnie Hunter**

There were three brothers who were always playing tricks on each other. Some of the tricks they did were a little mean, but most were plain funny. Early one morning they were getting ready for school and the oldest brother thought it would be hilarious if he pushed his youngest brother out the door

with only his underwear on. When the school bus came by, B O Y, would the children laugh! His youngest brother really put up a fight so the middle brother joined in to help. The boys were making such a loud commotion that their mother hurried to see what was going on. When she saw her three sons "rough housing," all in their underwear she laughed and thought to herself, "I will fix them." The door was already open and the youngest son was half way out, so the mother ran toward them and gave a mighty push! The three boys were in shock standing in their underwear with the door closed behind them. But the horn from the school bus brought them back to reality. So for the first time, their practical tricks had backfired. And why? Their mother who was always scolding them for teasing each other had turned the tables to put them in their places. Out in the cold!

Tiffany Hunter, Grade 4  
Angier Middle School  
Angier  
Harnett County Schools

### **My Grandmother As told by Sandra Neely**

When I think of my Grandmother I have lots of fond memories. She was my best friend. When I was a little girl I would look forward to my Grandmother coming. She would spend a week or two at our house. I was between the ages 6 and 10 when I started to enjoy this. I would help her bathe and clean up. She would tell me about living on a farm and all of the work. She had 10 kids (one was my grandpa). She was a teacher who taught many people to read. She was also a traveling mid-wife. I enjoyed listening to her stories while I braided and combed her hair. She stood up for what was right. She died one day after President Kennedy was killed. My grandmother, my heroine, and my friend.

Tamika Neely, Grade 4  
Hope Valley School  
Durham  
Durham County School

### **The Little Rascal and the Eckie Swooshy Watermelon As Told by Bonnie Howard**

My mother grew up on a tobacco farm here in North Carolina. The work was hard, the hours long. Her father often hired boys in the community to help out during the busiest time of the year, "barning

tobacco time." One day after a long day's work one of the hired hands and my mother's brother went to the watermelon patch to get some watermelons. They took them back to the tobacco barn shelter, "busted" them open on the tobacco bench!

The tobacco barn was down below the house. When my granddaddy (mom's dad) noticed they were doing more "bustin" than "eatin," he told my mom to go down there and tell those rascals to get to the house!

My mom, who was about my age, whined about going because she just washed and rolled her hair.

She stomped down there and told her brother, "Daddy said you better get to the house and quit bustin' them watermelons."

The hired boy at work told her if she didn't get back to the house he would "bust" one on her head!

Mom said, "I dare you!"

He landed one right on top of the head that she had just washed and rolled!

She ran home crying. She was so mad.

She ran into the house crying, "Where in the world did you find that rascal?"

Eleven years later she married that rascal, my daddy!

Jana Rae Howard  
Angier Middle School  
Angier  
Harnett County Schools

### **My Great-Grandma's Charm Quilt As told by my mom, Linda Dimmick**

My great-grandmother liked to make quilts. We have some of the quilts she made. She lived with my mom and her family for 16 years. She taught my mom how to sew and cook. She told my mom about a special quilt she made when she was 12. We figured this out because she was 13 when she got married.

Great-grandma Provance heard about charm quilts. A charm quilt has 999 pieces of fabric. Each square had a different pattern or color. You had to make sure that you only had 999 squares because you had to get the 1000 square from your true love's jacket. If you accidentally put 1000 you will be an old maid for the rest of your life. If you dream a nice dream and are sleeping under a charm quilt, the dream will come true. She had to trade quilt pieces with her friends to get different patterns and colors. She couldn't wait until her father would go the feed store and bring back new feedbags so she could have a new dress and a different pattern for her charm quilt. A long time ago the feed for animals came in material bags.

personal experiences

She finally got 999 pieces sewed together and she waited for her true love to come. She had to wait one year until she got her 1000 piece and she finished her quilt.

Britney Dimmick, Grade 2  
Pearsonstown Elementary  
Durham  
Durham County Schools

**Taffy Pull**  
As told by Keith Sipe

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One family tradition that I found interesting is something called a taffy pull.

My great grandmother lived in the mountains of North Carolina. There were not many people around so one day every month all the women would go to church. They would make a kind of candy called taffy. Taffy needs to be pulled into long ropes before cutting into pieces. All the women would tug it until it was long and thin.

Then they would cut it up and take it home.

I have never had homemade taffy but I bet it's great!

Scott Sipe, Grade 2  
Pearsonstown Elementary  
Durham,  
Durham County Schools

**Growing Up**  
As told by William and  
Gwen Arnold

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My father was born in South Carolina where he had seven brothers and sisters. They used to walk to the Caroline School in the rain and snow. They had to get wood and coal to make a fire in their classroom before they could have class. My father had to pull his little brother and sister in a wagon when they went up to the old homeplace to visit their great-great-great grandmother and have dinner with her.

My mother and her sister used to ride the great big long bus to school. Whenever they had green beans for lunch, my mother would put her beans in her pocket so she would not have to eat them. She used to go with her daddy to her grandmother's house on Sunday. They would have ice cream and cake.

Al Arnold, Grade 6  
Northeast Middle School  
McLeansville  
Guilford County Schools

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