

Upcoming Dates

Clanton Library, 2:00 PM:

- July 28, 2013 – CCGS Quarterly Meeting - BRING OLD PICTURES AND RECIPES! Paige Landry will speak.
- Annual dues of \$10.00 are now due, please bring to the meeting.



Clanton's Own Mr. Jack Hayes

as related by Scarlett Teel

Mr. Minter Carney (Jackie) Hayes grew up in Clanton, Alabama, the son of Dr. Julius Poe (Sie) Hayes and Mrs. Celeste Jones Hayes. He had brothers, Mr. Dick Hayes, Mr. Alec Hayes and a sister, Mrs. Kathryn Hayes Wade.

Mr. Jackie Hayes played baseball and possibly some football for the University of Alabama. As a result of his college play, he was hired by the Birmingham Barons but before he could play much for them, he was picked up by the Washington Senators from 1927 to 1931. He then played for the Chicago White Sox from 1932 to 1940 at the short stop position or as a third baseman. He was said to be the "best double play artist in the league."

He was the first one of the major league players to ever wear a batting helmet. He was already suffering from glaucoma before going blind, so he wore the batting helmet to protect his head and eyes from any further damage. Later the batting helmet

became standard procedure, as it is now, for batters in the batting box.

In 1978 Clanton's largest baseball field was named the Jack Hayes Field in his honor (the occasion of the photo).

Mr. Hayes played golf in tournaments of the Blind Golfers Association with Mr. Fred Sington, a blind golfer from Birmingham, Alabama.

A story was told that at one of the golfing tournaments in Birmingham in which Mr. Hayes played, that the golfers were asked if any of them had anything to place in the hotel safe for safe keeping and as a joke, one of the blind golfers took out his glass eye and handed it to the poor fellow asking, grossing him out!

Mr. Hayes trained with and used seeing eye service dogs for many years after becoming blind. His first dog to serve him was a boxer named Abono. Abono is the service dog buried in the Clanton City

Cemetery. For many years, Mr. Hayes and his faithful service dog, Abono, were a familiar sight walking very ably around the sidewalks of Clanton.

Mr. Hayes ran for Chilton County Tax Collector and was elected to that post in which he served for fourteen years.

His wife, a native of Andalusia, Alabama, Mrs. Alice Brooks Hayes, helped him in the office. Mr. Hayes and his wife were parents to a son, Mr. Jackson Poe Hayes, and grandparents to two grandsons, Mr. Minter Jackson Hayes and Mr. Samuel Brooks Hayes of Chilton County.

In the mid 1970's, Mr. Minter Carney (Jackie) Hayes of Clanton, Alabama was recognized for his talents and inducted into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame in Birmingham, Alabama. The year he was inducted was the same year that Mr. Bart Starr, Coach Shug Jordan and Coach Bear Bryant were also inductees.

Mr. Charlie Saxon Jr. and Mrs. Gussie McDaniel Saxon

as related by Scarlett Teel

Mr. Charlie Saxon Jr. was born and reared in the town of Wetumpka, Elmore County, Alabama. He was educated in the Elmore County school system and was known to be an excellent singer. He sang with a quartet from about 1945-1952. The quartet traveled around the area doing performances and so it was that Mr. Charlie Saxon Jr. met his future wife, Miss Gussie McDaniel in Clanton, Alabama at her church, Fountain Chapel. This young lady caught Mr. Charlie's eye but perhaps because of shyness, rather than approaching her for himself, Mr. Saxon asked a friend to intercede on his behalf. He was so enamored that on their first date, dinner in Selma, Alabama, he proposed to Miss Gussie McDaniel. The couple married on March 28, 1953 and enjoyed a fifty-three year marriage until the time of Mr. Saxon's death. The couple was blessed with one son, Mr. Wendell Howell Saxon, born March 5, 1959. Mrs. Gussie described her husband, Mr. Charlie Saxon, Jr. as a good husband, a good father and a Christian.

Mr. Charlie Saxon Jr. served in World War II and attained the rank of corporal but never got over the trauma of the atomic bomb and the sights that he witnessed while serving. After his honorable discharge from the service, he attended Tuskegee Institute and studied shoe repairing and building of orthopedic braces. He was active in working for his church and his community. He began work in about 1956 or 1958 for Alabama Power





Company, working there for many years. He also began part time work for the U. S. Postal Service at the Clanton, Alabama Post Office during the mid 1960's. After retirement from Alabama Power Company, Mr. Saxon worked full time for the post office in Clanton, working there for a total of twenty-two years.

Mrs. Gussie McDaniel Saxon was born in Chilton County in the Mountain Creek community to Mr. Jessie Washington McDaniel and Mrs. Mary Davidson McDaniel, however, Miss Gussie McDaniel was sent to Birmingham, Alabama to be cared for by an aunt, so her early education was from the Jefferson County school system. After graduation from Parker High School at the age of eighteen, she returned to the home of her parents in the rural Mountain Creek area of Chilton County for a big dose of culture shock! Her first job was cleaning in the home of a Searcy family until they asked her to kill a cooped chicken for preparation to cook it. She would reach her hand in and then recoil at the idea of what she had been asked to do while the family watched from a distance. She finally was brave enough to get her hands on the chicken enough that she finally choked the poor chicken to death! She decided that was a better job for someone else and happily turned it over to a friend. Later she worked her first public job as housekeeper for the Exchange Hotel on U. S. Highway 31 South in Clanton. All of this and the influence of

a teacher friend that taught at Mountain Creek was enough for eighteen year old Miss Gussie McDaniel to look into another career area. After she and Mr. Charlie Saxon Jr. wed she decided to return to her high school alma mater, Parker High School, to attend Alabama State University Extension classes taught there. She graduated from there in 1965 with a degree in elementary education and in 1968 with a master's degree in education.

At that time telegrams came to Wright Drug Store in Clanton to be picked up and three telegrams came there to Mrs. Saxon to offer teaching positions in Birmingham, Opelika and another location. As she was already supply teaching at West End City School in Clanton, later known as E. M. Henry School, she decided to remain in Clanton. After talking with Chilton County School Board member Mr. O. J. McGriff, Mrs. Gussie Saxon was hired by Superintendent Gordon Conway to teach fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grade language arts and social studies at West End City School. She was teaching first grade two years later when Chilton County schools were integrated. To meet the integration legal requirements, Mrs. Saxon was assigned by the school board to teach at Thorsby High School. She was given only one class---health education, far out of her field of studies---to be taught at 7:00 A. M. She was given no desk or place to do her paper grading or class preparations. The librarian, Mrs. Rosa Pilgreen gave her a place in the library to do this work. Some students did take part in her classes but others went instead to the office to sit and socialize rather than to attend her classes. When report card time came she gave those who chose not to attend "Incomplete"—much to the dismay of some. She taught from 1971-1986 in the Thorsby schools and gradually began to feel that she was accepted by both faculty and students—even being presented with a plaque recognizing her as Outstanding Educator from Thorsby. All-in-all she felt the children were nice to her.

Not only did Mrs. Gussie McDaniel Saxon earnestly teach nine months of the year in the public school system, but she also taught school in her garage to neighborhood children from 7:00 A.M.-4:00 P.M. each day for six weeks each summer for free! She taught children from preschool age to eighth grade in whatever area of studies was needed by each child. She organized Neighborhood Watch in her community; was involved and worked in the American Legion Auxiliary; Fountain Chapel A. M. E. Church; Alabama State University Alumni and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Reading from a letter written to Mrs. Saxon from a former garage summer school attendee, "I love you simply for being you. You are one in a million and I am grateful to have you in my life. Mrs. Saxon, you will always be FOREVER BEAUTIFUL." This appropriately sums up the busy giving life of this citizen and native of Chilton County. Mrs. Gussie died in July, 2012.

**CHILTON COUNTY
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**
P. O. BOX 703
THORSBY, AL 35171

