



Hubert and Donna Berry on their wedding day!

Bumpas awarded MCHC scholarship

The local historical commission has placed a great deal of importance on recording Mills County Oral History. In order to involve the youth of the county in recording history, the local group has placed scholarship applications in each of the four county high schools. Applicants must interview a Mills County resident who has lived in the county for fifty years, and submit an essay to the commission.

This year's scholarship recipient is Kendell Bumpas, a Goldthwaite High School Senior. She is the daughter of Sherri Donica of Goldthwaite, and Ken Bumpas of San Antonio. Her essay follows:

A Legacy of Integrity

The little country town of Goldthwaite we call home has evolved and grown more than some can comprehend, as have the people that grew up in it. The true question is, have the people formed our home, or has our home formed the people in it? Views may be set, and opinions

voiced, but the simple truth lies within the lives and memories of the people that have seen Goldthwaite through the changes, wars and depressions. I was blessed enough to meet and interview Hubert Berry, a gentleman filled with fascinating information and an unbelievable life story.

Hubert was born July 7, 1923, the son of a sharecropper in Pleasant Grove Community, where he tells stories of a simple life, without plumbing, electricity or cars. At age four, young Hubert was expected to do his part in the cotton fields. "My dad didn't make much, but he didn't spend much." Hubert said at one point, stressing the importance of hard work and making sure nothing went to waste. During harsh winters, three or four families would come together to share a hot meal, stretching every last piece of meat to last the hard times. One bath a week in a bucket filled with unheated water that was reused by each family member was allowed. Milk was placed in a tray filled with water on the front porch as refrigeration, and each of the three family cows were milked twice a day. Children worked just as hard as their parents, raising and growing all their own food, and only going into town once a week by horse and buggy for flour. He learned to appreciate simplicity, as he had to, growing up during the Great Depression.

At the age of six, Hubert joined his two older siblings in walking two and a half miles to his one room school house. His mom packed a homemade biscuit and sausage with the treat of homemade teacakes and a well was dug next to the school house for the children to pump drinking water. In 1936, the first school bus started running, allowing young Hubert to attend Goldthwaite and graduate in 1941. From there, he did what very few young adults did and went to college. He hitchhiked from Goldthwaite to Stephenville to attend JTAC, John Tarleton Agricultural College, a junior military school, now known as Tarleton. He majored in Agricultural Education in preparation to become an agriculture teacher.

On the date of December 7, 1941, Hubert was walking across campus when he overheard news about the attack on Pearl Harbor from a fellow student's radio. What men didn't sign up for the military, the draft forced in. Hubert volunteered for the enlisted reserves core and joined active duty on June 4, 1943. He traveled from North Africa to Italy with only enough room to stand, and no idea where or what to expect. "All hell broke loose." Hubert said about war and combat in Italy during World War II. He was forced to leave the frontline when he was hospitalized for six weeks due to trench foot and relocated to a safer job on the shore.

At the closing of World War II, Hubert headed home to attend Texas A&M University to finish his studies. After graduating, he went on to teach agriculture in Lometa for five years, when he decided to move back home. Interested in a new adventure, he purchased a small piece of land and built Dairy Cup (the building has since been Keller's, along with many other restaurants) in 1953.

Today, Hubert lives with his wife in a home less than one mile from the house he was born in. What Goldthwaite may be lacking in entertainment or interstates, it makes up for in character and integrity. Hubert Berry began his journey in our small town, went out to experience the world and the things, good and bad, it offers, and brought his knowledge back to our home to

better it. Many changes have occurred and through the generations, many more will, but we need to slow down and appreciate the history surrounding us and what can be learned from it and everyone in it.

Footnotes:

- 1. A man that crops on another mans land, receiving part of the profits.*
- 2. Small community that was located on what today would be considered the outskirts of Goldthwaite.*
- 3. "Frozen feet" common during World War I due to cold weather and exposure to damp conditions.*