



This Blue Mirror  
Eagles Nest Clock  
Hung Behind the  
Counter at the  
Restaurant for 50 yrs.  
Now owned by  
Georget Mary Alfrey.  
MOREHEAD

From The Collection Of  
Dr. Jack D. Ellis  
552 W. Sun St.  
Morehead, KY 40355  
724-7478

cal

001

III III (6)



~~UNKNOWN "D" D 96"~~  
~~MOREHEAD MAIL ST~~

1929

FRONT OF EAGLES  
NEST LOOKING  
EAST

JACK LEWIS  
FIRST MOREHEAD CITY  
LETTER CARRIER

From The Collection Of:  
Dr. Jack D. Ellis  
552 W. Sun St.  
Morehead, KY 40381  
606-784-7473





WA 1772 - COOK  
"LAWSON" IN  
FRONT OF ENVELOPE  
NE 1930

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Dr. Jack D. Ellis  
552 W. Sun St.  
Morehead, KY 40351  
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EAGLES NEST

1922

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Morehead, KY 40351  
606-784-7479





EAGLES NEST

ELSIE HOGGE  
AND ? IN FRONT  
OF MURKHEADS  
RESTAURANT -  
EAGLES NEST

~~1930s~~

~~1930s~~

1930s<sup>r</sup>

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Morehead, KY 40351  
606-784-7473



AUSTIN RIDDLE - MAIN ST  
FRONT OF ENGLE'S REST  
1930s

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Dr. Jack D. Ellis  
552 W. Sun St.  
Morehead, KY 40351  
606-784-7473



ELSIE HEGGE INTD AS  
OFFICER'S NEST 1921



2 MR 4 W 4 T R E S S " T U A " S T R  
1 N F R O A S O F E A D L E S A S 7  
19805

From The Collection Of:  
Dr. Jack D. Ellis  
502 W. Sun St.  
Morehead, KY 40351  
606-784-7473





MARTHA BARNOLLAR  
THE MAIN COOK AT THE  
EAGLES NEST RESTAURANT  
FOR 37 YEARS.

From The Collection Of:  
Dr. Jack D. Ellis  
552 W. Sun St.  
Morehead, KY 40351  
606-784-7473

Austin Riddle  
CO-OWNER  
MANAGER OF THE  
Eagles Nest Restaurant  
1937-1972

From The Collection Of:  
Dr. Jack D. Ellis  
552 W. Sun St.  
Morehead, KY 40351  
606-784-7473

J.M. "Chin" Clayton  
CO-OWNER + FOUNDER  
OF  
MOREHEADS EAGLES  
NEST RESTAURANT  
1925-~~1972~~  
1972

133

#5



Morehead, Ky - main St.

Eagles Nest Restaurant  
Glennis Fraley Grocery

1930's

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Morehead, KY 40351  
606-784-7473**



Eagles Nest  
MAIN ST  
Morehead Ky  
1961

**From The Collection Of:  
Dr. Jack D. Ellis  
552 W. Sun St.  
Morehead, KY 40351  
606-784-7473**

# MIKE and CHIN ANNOUNCE

— THE OPENING OF A —

## A Complete Restaurant Service

IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR SODA FOUNTAIN  
AND DRUG SERVICE.

---

---

### Opened Wednesday, Feb. 16th

1927

WILL SERVE PLATE LUNCH AND SHORT ORDERS OF  
ALL KINDS, AT ALL HOURS.

FAVORS FOR EVERYONE— We will make a specialty of serv-  
ing private parties, either in your home or our dining room.

**Our Kitchen is Open For Your Inspection At All  
Times. Come in and look us over.**

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# EAGLE'S NEST

CLAYTON & FLOOD, Proprietors

Cech Building, Main Street

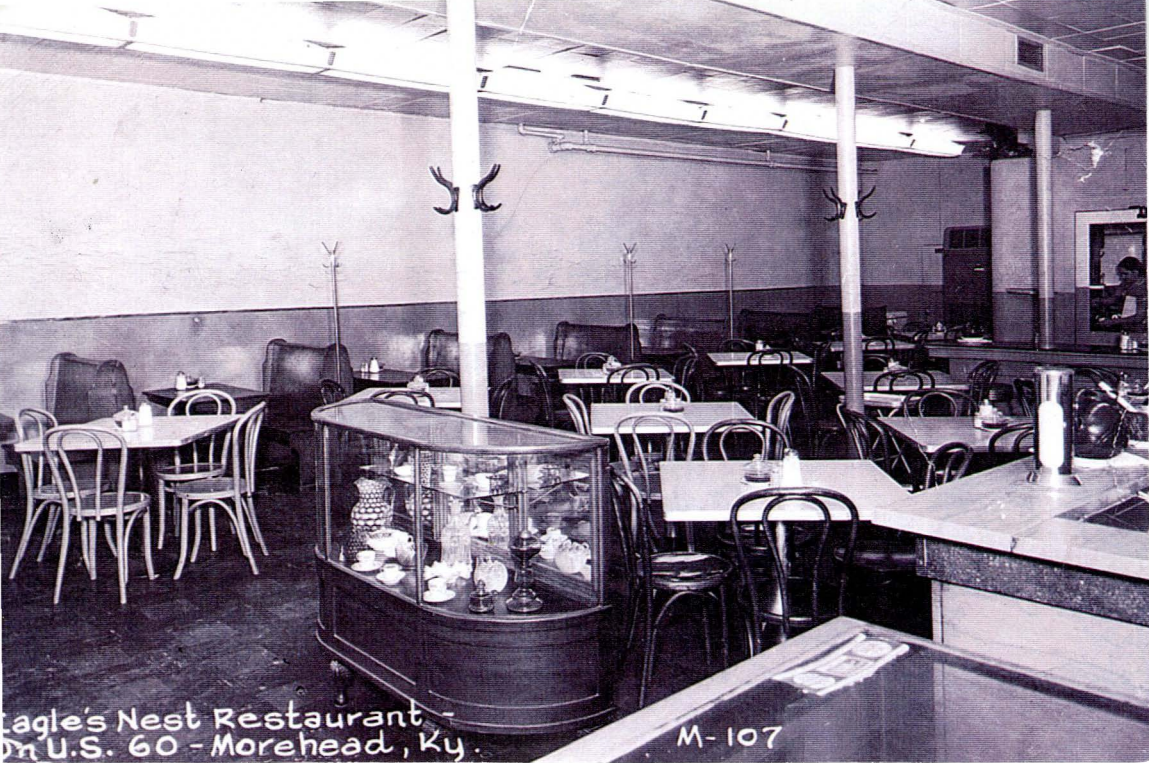
Morehead, Kentucky

(MIKE FLOOD + CHIN CLAYTON)  
ALTHOUGH THE RESTAURANT  
OPENED IN 1925 IT  
WAS GIVEN THE NAME  
OF EAGLES NEST IN  
1927. WHEN IT WAS  
ENLARGED INTO A  
FULL SERVICE  
RESTAURANT

80

2cols

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Morehead, KY 40351  
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Eagle's Nest Restaurant -  
on U.S. 60 - Morehead, Ky.

M-107



from an old post card shows what was  
the rare image of the most famous Morehead  
Restaurant. It was  
in business

for over 50 years, Founded in 1925

By "Chin" Clayton and "Mike" Flood.

People still come to Morehead  
looking for the Eagles nest.

used  
10-25-02

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552 W. Sun St.  
Morehead, KY 40351  
606-784-7473**

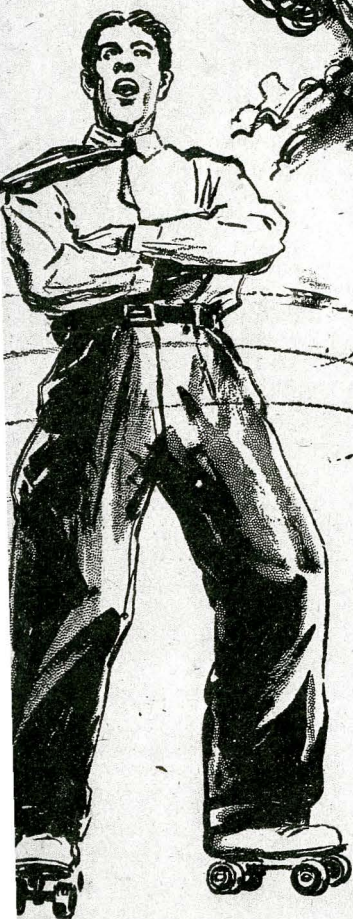
It Or Not --- By Robert Ripley

1942

The  
BELL BIRD  
HAS AN ANTENNA  
ON ITS HEAD



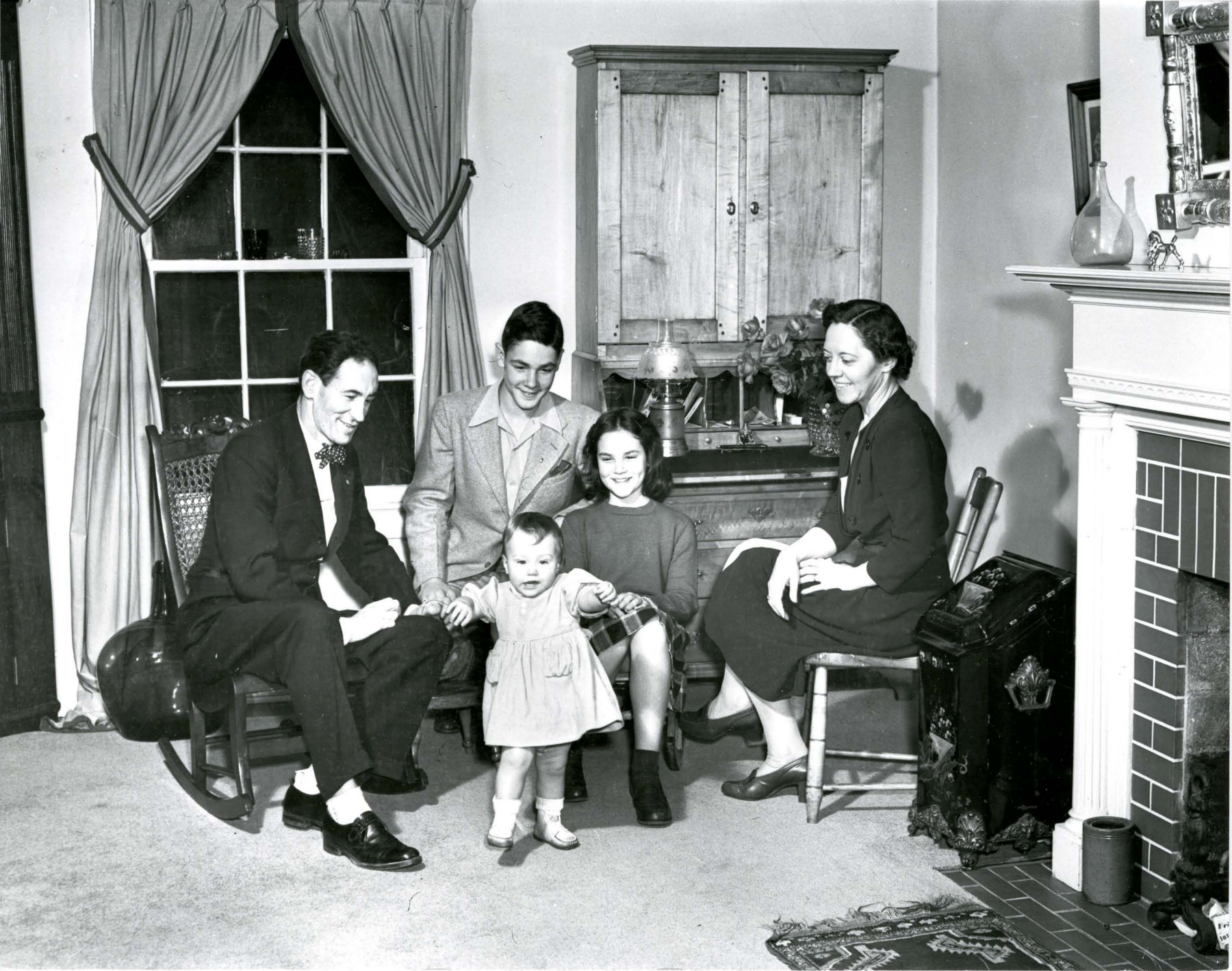
S. AMERICA



MRS.  
CLARA ROBINSON

BAKED 50,000 PIES IN 12 YEARS

Eagle's Nest Cafe  
Morehead, Ky.



Mr + Mrs Morgan "Chie" Coyster  
OWNERS OF THE EAGLES NEST  
+ Children Jimmy, Lida Lou + Laura

19 42

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Morehead, KY 40351  
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NINE D

[Redacted] 9  
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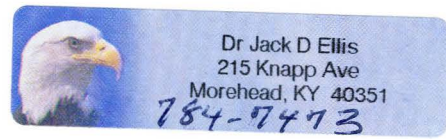
Seated Front Left (2nd Girl) Beulah Flannery.  
behind Counter - 2nd from left Chin Clayton (owner)  
3rd Clyde Smith (in front of mirror) (with cap)

Seated in front - Fred Cassity (between two girls)

INSIDE EAGLES NEST RESTAURANT (BEFORE AIR CONDITIONING)  
A BIG FAN ALSO SAT IN THE BACK ON THE FLOOR  
MOREHEAD KY. © 1935

~~Standing~~ Standing (R) UNIFORMS (L-R) ? CHIN CLAYTON (owner), Clyde Smith (Front of mirror)  
Front of Counter (L-R) ? Bob Tatum, Harold Blair, ~~Raymond~~ Gladys Allen (with coke),  
Joe Wolford, Eddie Kufall, Raymond Allen, ~~J T Dougherty~~  
J T Dougherty

Table at Front (Facing Camera) Beulah Flannery  
Seated right (Facing Camera) Fred Cassity



EAGLES NEST

From The Collection Of:  
Dr. Jack D. Ellis  
552 W. Sun St.  
Morehead, KY 40351  
606-784-7473

RACONTEUR

# *"The Eagle's Nest"*

"A Nice, Clean Place to Eat"

"WHERE THE CROWD MEETS"

FOUNTAIN



RESTAURANT

BEST COOKING    BEST FOOD

BEST SERVICE

DRUG SUNDRIES

CIGARS



MIKE and CHIN

PROPRIETORS

600-784-1473  
Morehead, KY 40351  
252 W. Sun St.  
Dr. Jack D. Ellis  
The Collection OK

EAGLES NEST RESTAURANT

*Begin*

Martha Stewart Barndollar worked at the Eagles Nest Restaurant for approx. 37 years. Beginning as a dishwasher and then to cook in 2 or 3 years replacing Mottie Jones.

During this time or part of it -- MSU was then the Navy School, during World War 2. Many of the sailors ate at the restaurant, their favorite was french fries and fried oysters.

Martha was known in Eastern Kentucky and beyond for her good cooking and pie baking. On one occasion the T.V. crew from West Virginia (I think it was WSAZ) ate at the restaurant and ask to speak to her and wanted her to appear on their program as a guest. She refused and they brought their equipment into the kitchen and took a picture of her holding one of the pies she had baked. (picture enclosed). They later aired this on their program. She walked 3 miles each way to work every day (7 days a week). Later in years she was financially able to get Bill McBrayer's Cab Co. one way.

Some to the people who worked at the Eagles Nest.

*Clyde Smith, Susanna Hall*

Bessie Binion, Berths Pelfrey, Bessie Switzer, Mottie Jones, Lillie Jones, Martha Barndollar, Georgia Markwell, Essie White, Flarcie Dulin, Monnie and Sam Kidd, Vivian Flood, Barbara Hogge, Margaret Johnson.

Det Highley, Martie Hall, Aalice Barndollar, Judy Elam, Bonnie Johnson, Ruth & Irene Jackson, Betty Cassity, Mary Lou McGary, Jerri Runner, Goldia Smith, Charlene Alfrey, Mary Moore, Mae Caudill, Loretta Barndollar.

*Betty Wallace*

Mr. Clayton was very particular about cleanliness - requiring all employees to wear hair nets (which you seldom see these days), clean aprons and was always saying to the waitresses "Be alert - but not a flirt." And a big smile was a must. His slogan was 'Be sure you're right = then go ahead.' And in those days the customer WAS ALWAYS RIGHT.

Information from Loretta Gevedon, Alice Martin and Mae Estep. 3-30-99

*784-514 +*



# Morehead Memories (People and Places)

## Eagles Nest

By Jack D. Ellis

(Editor's Note: This is one in a series of articles about local history entitled *Morehead Memories: People and Places*. The articles deal with those business and professional people that helped Morehead grow and prosper.)

"And He saith unto them - come and dine" (Jan. 21:12)

In 1920, two cousins, Virgil D. Flood, and James M. Clayton, migrated from this area to Ashland. In those days, Ashland was a growing community similar to Detroit, Mich. and Dayton, Ohio. Virgil and James went to work immediately delivering milk for the Sanitary Milk Company, a new dairy just opening in the city. But both cousins had a dream of returning to Morehead and opening their own business.



Virgil D. "Mike" Flood, co-founder of The Eagles Nest Restaurant in 1925, sold out to "Chin Clayton" in 1933.



J.M. "Chin" Clayton co-founder and founder of Morehead's Eagles Nest Restaurant 1925-1972.

between the Midland Trail Hotel and the Caskey Hotel. (Where Arby's is now located). They employed Noah Kennard, Morehead's last lamplighter, also a mayor, businessman, and excellent cabinetmaker. Mr. Kennard built the booths, fountain, counters, cabinets in the front and kitchen areas. He also built the famous blue mirror and clock that was behind the counter. (Now owned by George D. Alfrey Jr.) It was later that the tables and chairs were added, and the oval shaped glass check out counter with display shelves. (Those display shelves later housed dolls representing MSU's Homecoming queens.)

### No-name restaurant opened

The restaurant opened in the fall of 1925 with a gala celebration, attended by many local dignitaries. However, the restaurant had no name. So Mike and Chin, working with the students and faculty of the new Morehead State College agreed upon a plan to name the restaurant. Since the college planned new athletic teams that had not yet been named, and the restaurant had not been named, why not name the two at the same time. Therefore, Mike and Chin sponsored a contest among the students to name the athletic team and restaurant.

### Name is selected

Among those names submitted were Lions, and Lion's Den, Hawks and Hawks Nest, Bears and Bears Den, Bald Eagles and Eagles Nest. The group of student judges selected the winners (and the rest is history). The winning entry was submitted by freshman student, Peaches Ellis. (The writer's aunt). She received a \$25 saving bond for submitting the winning entry. Then one of Morehead's most famous restaurants and local landmarks was born.

### Eagles Nest served as student center

In the early days, with no food service on campus, the Eagles Nest catered to the college crowd. It served as a grill, cafeteria, and student center for many years. There was a piano in the restaurant, and students would gather in the evening and sing around the piano. Miss Olive Fannin, a student in college from 1928-1931, would often play dinner music in the evening. On Sundays, after church, many students would eat lunch at the Eagles Nest. Also, pep rallies were held there before football games. It was a popular social center for students and faculty before there was a cafeteria and student center on campus.

During the 1930s as the college enrollment increased, and

tomater cup. That insured that the taste and the aroma were delightful. Although the cost was 10 cents which was high for that time, it was well worth it because it included unlimited refills. It served as the coffee house of its day.

The Eagles Nest Men's Coffee Club was made up of many Moreheadians. Among those were Bill Sample, Claude Clayton, Roy Cornette, C.B. Cornette, Glen Lane, Glennis Fraley, Snooks Crutcher, "Cap" Daughtery, Jack West, M.L. Tate, Oscar Patrick, Murvel Crosley, Boyd McCullough, and many, many more. Mr. Crosley would sip his coffee by the inch. The waitresses always said he would ask for more coffee when it was only one inch below the rim of the cup.

### Mouth watering menu

In addition to the excellent coffee, the food was superb. When the restaurant first opened in 1925, their famous food menu included home-cured country ham, red eye gravy, roast beef au jus, oysters, chicken with little blue slick dumplings, country gravy, Kentucky Hot Brown, hot homemade yeast rolls, real cow butter, along with an assortment of vegetables, salads, and homemade pies. (Especially pecan pie). Also at each booth and table there was a honey jar. The honey dippers were made from old ice tea spoons with the handle bent in a curved shape so it would not slide down into the honey.

The Eagles Nest was particularly known for its county ham. Mike and Chin purchased most of their county hams from Bath County resident, Gene Toy. They would always buy them in the late fall just after being slaughtered and cured. They then brought them to Morehead and let them cure for six months. Next the hams were soaked in salt water for 24 hours before being fried in lard. (They also sold whole hams, always telling the customers to let them cure at least six months before cooking). Mike and Chin maintained close quality control over the food served at the Eagles Nest. That's why it became so widely known.



Stewart on TV today, Morehead's Martha (Stewart) Barndollar was shy and refused. However, she did agree for them to take a picture of her holding one of her pies. It was later shown on WSAZ TV in a program highlighting fine regional restaurants.

### Many Moreheadians worked at Eagles Nest

To be able to get a job as a waitress in the Eagles Nest was the ambition of many Morehead maidens (and men). Among those people who worked there during the early Eagles Nest days were: Bessie Binion, Bertha Pelphrey, Bessie Switzer, Lillie Jones, Mrs. LeMaster, Georgia Markwell, Essie White, Florcie Dulin, Monie and Sam Kidd, Vivian Flood, Barbara Hogge, Margaret Johnson and Dottie Highly. Other early employees included Clyde Smith, Sarrena Hall, Judy Elam, Bonnie Johnson, Ruth and Irene Jackson, Betty Cassity, Betty Wallace, Jeri Runner, Goldia Smith, Charlene Alfrey, Mae Caudill and many many more.

Martha (Stewart) Barndollar became a legend in her own time. After 37 years when the Eagles Nest closed, she opened her own restaurant on Carey Avenue (Old Johnson Boarding House). She was successful in that business for many years. She used to take food that was not sold to shut-ins and poor people. She never let good food go to waste and many who never went to her restaurant had a taste of her home cooking.

### Mike sells to Chin on coin toss

In 1933 at the height of the depression, the Eagles Nest was not making enough to support two families. Therefore, Mike and Chin decided one should sell to the other. They agreed on a price and flipped a coin to see who would buy the other's part. Mike lost and he sold out to Chin. Mike then bought a large home on U.S. 60 West and turned it into the Shady Rest Tourist Home. (He later became a rural mail carrier on Rural Rt. 2 in Rowan County and retired in that capacity). Therefore, Mr. Clayton then had the sole responsibility as owner-manager, and business started to increase as the depression eased and people were working again. He also began to get involved in other business interests, such as the local dealer for Frigidaire appliances. With the Eagles Nest open seven days a week, Mr. Clayton soon realized he had to have some help, and began to look for another partner.



The Eagles Nest barn advertisement on U.S. 60, 40 miles from Morehead, announced that air conditioning had arrived.

Mabel recalled those afternoons when many of the wives in Morehead dressed up and came to the Eagles Nest for coffee and gossip. She recalled among those who attended that afternoon ritual of coffee and gossip were: Edith Crosley, Mary Jo Blair, Mary Duncan, Edith Marsh, Hazel Daugherty, Frances Laughlin, Elsie Cornette, Lona Fraley, plus many many more.

The early Eagle Nest was the place for formal dining in Morehead. It was a place where hotel guests, tourists, and local residents came for fine good, service and atmosphere. (Lexington via old U.S. 60 was a long way to go for dinner). Although there was never a formal dress code, customers in blue jeans, t-shirts, and sandals would have felt out of place.

### Sailors "sail" to the Eagles Nest

During the 1940s when the sailors stationed on campus got liberty, many would put on their dress blues or whites, and sail to the Eagles Nest for dinner. Their favorite food was French fries and fried oysters. They especially enjoyed the food, and attractive waitresses and were generous tippers.

The Eagles Nest advertised extensively throughout the region on roadside barns. Also the restaurant advertised in college publications, but did little advertising in local media. Local work of mouth and advertising by traveling men and tourists traveling through Morehead helped make the Eagles Nest famous. Also those sailors stationed here made the name "Eagles Nest" known far and wide.

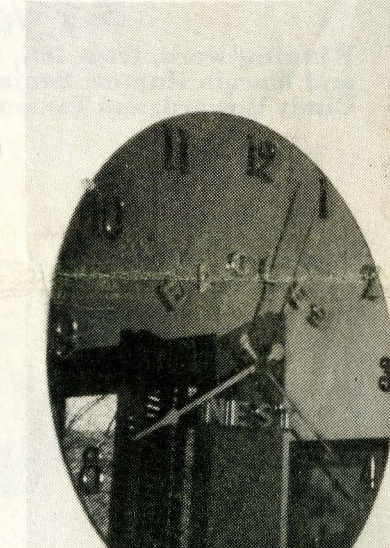
Wherever Moreheadians may travel even to this day, and people find out you're from Morehead, they still ask if the Eagles Nest is still in business. This writer and his wife were at St.

gravey, and did leave a generous tip (unlike Colonel Saunders).

### End of an era of food service

Before the death of Mr. Clayton, they were offered \$100,000 for the business. Mabel Riddle urged her husband to sell but they decided against selling. However, with the death of Chin Clayton and the retirement of Austin Riddle, the Eagles Nest was purchased by Phil Lewis, C. Roger Lewis, Paul Blair, and William Whittaker. In 1973, Bill Davis, local baker and restaurateur, bought the Eagles Nest and tried to revive the business again. However, by that time, I-64 had replaced U.S. 60, and all the fast food companies had discovered Morehead.

Therefore, with all the quick competition, and everyone in a hurry, Mr. Davis sold the Eagles Nest in 1980. But the Eagles Nest never came back. The building was last used for a restaurant called the Chinese Wok, which only lasted a few years. But for 55 years the Eagles Nest of Morehead was a vital part of this community, and remains a Morehead Memory of good food, fellowship, and good coffee.





**J.M. "Chin" Clayton co-founder and founder of Morehead's Eagles Nest Restaurant 1925-1972.**

#### **Dreaming of their own restaurant**

One of the customers on their milk route was a new restaurant called the Chimney Corner, that recently had opened on Ashland's Central Avenue. Virgil and James watched the new restaurant grow rapidly into a thriving restaurant. They believed Morehead had the potential for such a business. After talking with the restaurant owner, and getting some tips on opening a new restaurant, they left their jobs in Ashland to return to Morehead and opened their own business.

#### **Town and college growing**

The year they returned to Morehead was 1925. The new Midland Trail (U.S. 60) had just opened through the heart of downtown Morehead. The Morehead Normal School had just become a state college, and was beginning to increase rapidly in enrollment, facilities, and faculty. There was no cafeteria or food services on the new campus. Also, a new hotel had just opened (Midland Trail). In addition there was the Caskey and Peoples Hotel. Morehead was located half-way between Ashland and Lexington, and was a major stop for salesmen traveling by train and automobile. Sometimes, they would rent cars and buggies to call upon clients in Elliott and Morgan counties. Therefore, Virgil D. Flood, known as "Mike" and James M. Clayton, known as "Chin" recognized the potential for a new restaurant and Morehead's business climate was excellent. But when they moved their families back to Morehead they had no idea the business would exceed their wildest expectations.

Virgil D. Flood and his wife, Nell (Shelton) Flood had four children: Gladys, Frances, Charles and Vivian. James Morgan Clayton and his wife, Lucille (Moore) Clayton, had three children: James, Lyda, and Laura. With their families growing up in Morehead, Mike and Chin were even more determined to become a success in business.

#### **Site for new business selected**

In 1952, Mike and Chin rented a building from hotel owner, John Cecil, located on Morehead's Main Street (U.S. 60)

before working. Mike and Chin maintained close quality control over the food served at the Eagles Nest. That's why it became so widely known.



**Martha (Stewart) Barndollar, Eagles Nest cook for 37 years, displays one of her famous pies.**

#### **Compliments to the chef**

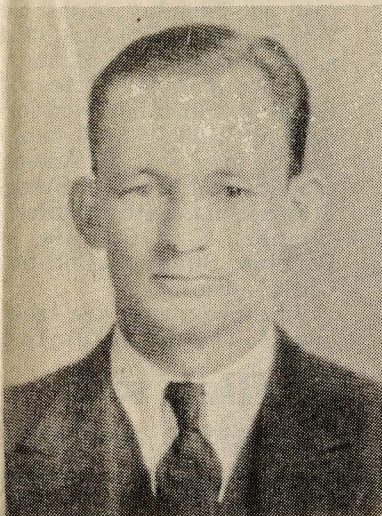
The Eagles Nest owners were quick to recognize that the cook was the essential ingredient of food service. It was then they hired Clearfield resident Martha (Stewart) Barndollar. After working for two years as a dishwasher, she replaced Mattie Jones as the cook, and remained for 37 years. When she began her cooking career she cooked on a coalstove. In order for her to get to work, she walked three miles each way, seven days a week. (Then she had to build a fire and get the old coal cooking range warmed up.) After cooking several years she became more financially prosperous and only had to walk half that distance, because she hired Ben McBrayer's Taxi one way each day.

Mrs. Barndollar's two daughters, Alice and Loretta, worked as waitresses in the Eagles Nest during their high school days. They said, "Mr. Clayton was very particular about cleanliness and service. He required all employees to wear hair nets and clean aprons." He always trained the waitresses to be alert but not a flirt. Also, a pleasant smile was a must. Mr. Clayton always said, "Be sure you're right then go ahead." And in those days the customer was always right. He believed excellent service made the good food taste better. Therefore, the Eagles Nest service was as famous as its food.

Mrs. Barndollar was famous throughout Eastern Kentucky for her cooking and baking. She was particularly known for her home-made pies. (This writer can still taste those pies just writing about them.)

On one occasion a TV crew from WSAZ in Huntington stopped to eat lunch at the Eagles Nest. They were so impressed with the food, they wanted to interview the cook on cameras. But unlike the Martha

tourist home. (He later became a rural mail carrier on Rural Rt. 2 in Rowan County and retired in that capacity). Therefore, Mr. Clayton then had the sole responsibility as owner-manager, and business started to increase as the depression eased and people were working again. He also began to get involved in other business interests, such as the local dealer for Frigidaire appliances. With the Eagles Nest open seven days a week, Mr. Clayton soon realized he had to have some help, and began to look for another partner.



**Austin Riddle co-owner/manager of the Eagles Nest Restaurant 1937-1972.**

#### **Enter Austin Riddle**

In 1937 Mr. Clayton approached local resident, Austin Riddle, about a job managing the Eagles Nest. Austin (named for the capital of Texas, had a sister also named for another Texas city, Laredo), was a former star athlete and graduate of Morehead College. He was employed as teacher, coach and principal at Haldeman High School. Since he had a good job, he refused Mr. Clayton's offer. However, when offered a chance for a partnership, he accepted. Mr. Riddle's wife, Mabel, said, "At that time she became a restaurant widow." Because for 30 years her husband worked every weekend, and seldom was away from his work anytime. However, she did say, that "the last five years he managed the Eagles Nest, he was off every other weekend."

Austin Riddle and his wife Mabel (Murphy) Riddle, married while in college. They have two children, Larry and Jerry. Mabel is active, alert, and living in a personal care home in Ashland. She enjoys life, and maintains a very positive outlook on life. She has a marvelous sense of humor, and is a meticulous dresser. She is active in her church and club work, and enjoys her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Although she has lived at the home for 20 years, her memories of Morehead and the Eagles Nest remain clear and happy. Although her vision was poor, her mind was sharp, and sense of humor keen.

generous tippers.

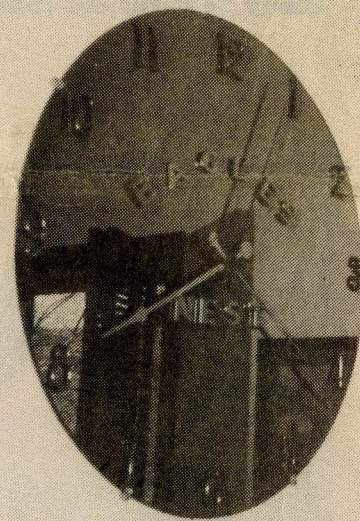
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Wherever Moreheadians may travel even to this day, and people find out you're from Morehead, they still ask if the Eagles Nest is still in business. This writer and his wife were at St. Simons Island off the coast of Georgia last year, and when the hotel clerk saw we were from Morehead, asked about the Eagles Nest. He could still remember the delicious meal he had eaten there 50 years ago. Also, the same thing happened to us on the same trip on down in Florida.

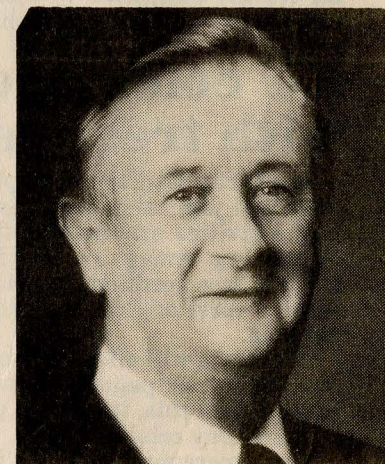
#### **Celebrities stopped at Eagles Nest**

There have been many celebrities that have stopped at the Eagles Nest over the years. In the 1960s, there was a man in a white suit and black string bow tie with distinguished white hair, mustache, and goatee. He was not the world-wide celebrity that he later became, but he was known to the waitresses as Colonel Saunders. He was trying to sell Mr. Riddle a franchise for Kentucky Fried Chicken, which Mr. Riddle turned down. But he did eat there and the waitresses were arguing over who would serve him, expecting a big tip. But they didn't know the Colonel very well. He left them a nickel tip (they should have framed it).

Lewis Satch Armstrong, the black musician and blues singer, ate at the Eagles Nest with all of his band. They really enjoyed the country ham and red-eye



**This Blue Mirror Eagles Nest Clock hung behind the counter at the restaurant for over 50 years. It is now owned by George and Mary Alfrey of Morehead.**



#### **About the author**

**Dr. Jack D. Ellis is a retired Morehead State University Library director and a retired minister.**

1928 Recreant (MS COLLEGE)

THE EAGLES NEST

"A Nice, ~~the~~ Clean Place to Eat"

THE STUDENTS MEETING PLACE

FOUNTAIN

Best Cooking

Restaurant

Best Food

Drugs - Sundries - Cigars

Best Service

MIKE and CHINI  
Proprietors

Waitresses: Loretta +  
Alice

Bar: Wozze, Vivian,

Murrel Crasley -  
Coffee 1" at a time

Oswin Baker? (Helen P.)

Mike + Chini worked  
Ashland Dairy

Vi's Mom did Cooking  
Married Mike April 7, 1919.  
Siblings, Francis, Charles  
"Bobby", Vivian

Eagles Nest

Clara Robinson

made it in to

"Believe it or Not"

With the number of

Pills she took for

the Eagles Nest

Mad Dillon

4-17-99