

# Myrtle's Tea Room

## First In Morehead

L. HOKE

A few years ago, Mrs. S. C. Caudill conceived the idea of opening a small tea room near Morehead where those who were so inclined might spend a few minutes or hours in relaxation, while lunching or visiting or where those who wished to do something different in the way of entertaining, might arrange and hold dinner parties. The erection of Myrtle's Tea Room was the solution to that idea, and the answer to a definite need for the city at that time.

Since that time several years ago, numerous other tourist camps, tea rooms, and filling stations have sprung up in this section, but Myrtle's Tea Room under the active management of Mrs. Caudill has maintained its position as the leader in this class of entertainment.

Mrs. Caudill serves regular dinners to her customers of home cooked and well prepared food. She will arrange to serve small dinner parties on request and by arrangement.

By strict attention to serve she has built up an excellent trade that seldom varies.

SUPT OF BUILDINGS

R  
AD



Nov 21, 1935

1935 Dunes Grill opens (Formerly "The Sweet Shop")

With Dinner Foods Prepared by VOLNEY BAYLER

Chief for 20 years at the West Baden Springs Hotel

West Baden Ind.

DAIRY MART  
DRIVE IN  
Phone ST 4-5472

*"Home of the College Boy"*

Ferguson Brothers, Paris and Paul, Former M.S.C. Students

W MAIN ST  
DASHED





WENDYS  
US 60 - RT 32  
2006  
Morehead KY 40351

#10A 30DEC06 004 RITE AID ONE HOUR PHOTO

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



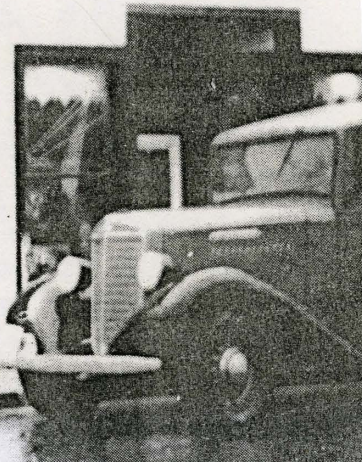
SEPRYS - 49351  
MATH ST.  
MORRIS ST.  
1960  
Home of  
1' FAT BOY  
BUREAU  
W. St. 49351  
Nethead, KY 40351  
606-784-7473

# DIXIE GRILL

"A GOOD SPOT TO STOP"

815 E. 1st St.  
12 W. 2nd St.  
Middlesboro, KY 40361  
808-784-7473

JACK WEST  
MIDLEBY



**From The Collection Of:**

**Dr. Jack D. Ellis**

**552 W. Sun St.**

**Shepherd, KY 40351**

**506-784-7473**

LOCATED ON THE  
CORNER OF MAIN ST  
AND CHERRY AVE. THE  
DIXIE GRILL OF THE  
1930S SOLD HOT DOGS  
AND DIXIE CUPS OF ICE  
CREAM FOR A NICKEL.  
ALSO HOUSED A WHISKY  
STORE THAT DID NOT SELL  
ICE CREAM. AT THE  
CHERRY AVE REAR DOOR  
WAS A SHOE REPAIR  
SHOP ONCE OWNED BY  
LOU ELLIS + RAYMOND BRIDGEMAN.

MORE ENDS ~~AT THE~~ MAIN ST  
DIXIE GRILL

1930s

A SHOE SHOP DOWN  
THE LEFT SIDE  
JACK WEST WHISKY  
STORE RIGHT







301  
SHOWN BEHIND THE  
COUNTER AT THE  
OLD AMOS & ANDY  
RESTAURANT ARE

(L) ALBERT PATTON  
BILLY TUTT, GLENN CLAY,  
CLELL BRUCE AND  
PAUL HACKNEY.

YOU COULD GET A PLATE  
LUNCH THERE FOR .20¢

# PARIS THE FERGUSON BROTHERS PAUL

Just now serving  
**COLLEGE GIRL**

- HAMBURGER • CHEESE
- STRIPS • BACON • TOMATO
- LETTUCE • MAYONNAISE

Decker  
**50¢**

INTRODUCING  
*The* **ROWAN COUNTRY**

*The* **BIGGEST** Sandwich for  
Miles around  
5¢ at BURGER  
Paul's Drive  
Paul, Rob. - Bldg.

**5**

**MENU**  
DINNERS SERVED  
SANDWICHES

**STEAKS**  
**SHRIMP**



From The Collection Of:

Dr. Jack D. Ellis

552 W. Sun St.

Morehead, KY 40351

-606-784-7473

THEN

The Fer

Dary

Short

De

~~He~~

Re

So

THEN (1960) W. MAIN ST  
BRANHAM AVE. WAS A  
DRIVE IN RESTAURANT.

AT  
ONE OF

SPECIALIZED IN

AND

the

Special Popular

restaurant.

USED 6-07



1930-1940  
OLD PROCEEDS

NIGHT CLUB + TOURIST CAMP  
US GO W

MOREHEAD KY

From The Collection Of:  
Dr. Jack D. Ellis  
552 W. Sun St.  
Morehead, KY 40351  
606-784-7413



# PAT'S POOL ROOM



and  
LUNCH  
COUNTER



Pat McGary

and

Oroille Amburger

and  
Students at

MSC

1950

From The Collection Of:  
Dr. Jack DuEllis

Dr. Jack DuEllis

552 W. Sun St.

Marquette, MI 49851

Mo. Sheng 47470351

606-784-7473

Circa 2000's





MOSE & HARLAN ACREE ABT 1940

Morehead Ky  
W MAIN ST CAFE

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



MAINT MOREHEAD  
DIXIE GRILL - 2000

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



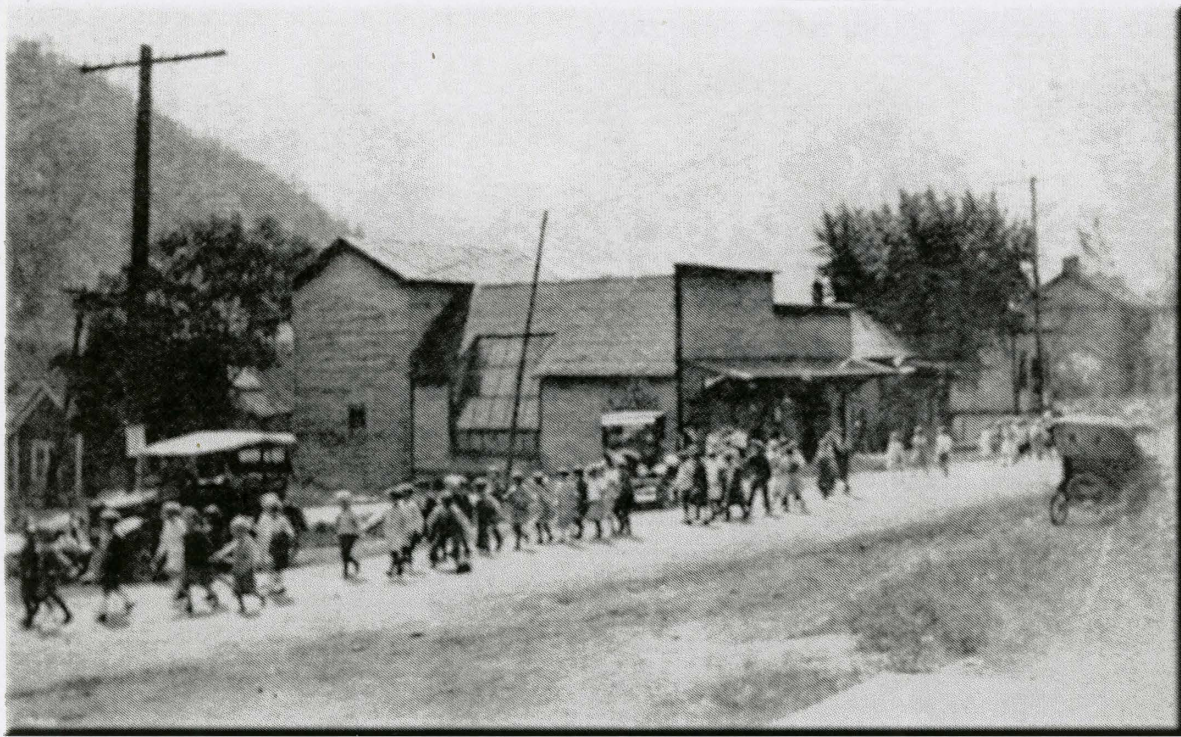


*"The Home of Delicious Food"*

Campus ~~MAIN~~  
main st

1960 / 1958





**The Dixie Restaurant - 1922**  
**Main Street in Morehead**

A favorite place for hungry travelers to stop and enjoy the delicious home cooked meals. This family restaurant also specialized in delicious pies and pastries. It was always a busy spot in town



# Myrtle's Tea Room Once Popular Morehead Hangout

By Cindy Brown

On the outskirts of Morehead there sat a white one story building with green trees around it. Chevrolet rumble seat cars parked in the back and three tourist cabins on either side of the small building.

On the inside were stools in front of a counter type table and tables in the center of the room. Behind the counters were malt and coke machines. There was a small kitchen in the back of the building with the aroma of frying hamburgers and french fries and apple pies baking floating through the air.

As you entered the building you saw high school and college aged students dancing or sitting at their table. They joked, talked of their dates, how much studying they had to do, and what happened o Morehead's football game (sound familiar?). Whenever a band wasn't playing the "jukebox" was.

Following is an advertisement about Myrtle's Tea Room that appeared in the Morehead Independent Sept. 26, 1929 —

## DAINTY-COOL-REFRESHING

Plan to take your Sunday dinner

### MYRTLE'S TEA ROOM

Special chicken dinner 12-2

Save your Sunday for rest and recreation. Dine with us at noon and lunch with us at night.

### MYRTLE'S TEA ROOM

The dress of the people were the roaring '20s style and the place was Myrtle's Tea Room.

The tea room was a popular hangout for college and high school students as well as the older members in the community sometime (no one quite seems to remember exactly when) in the early 1920s. Myrtle and Sam Caudill started and managed it for about seven years.

Sometime between Jan. 1932 and February 1935 this advertisement about the tea room was carried in the Morehead Independent —

### Myrtle's Tea Room Popular Eatin Place

"Pleasing the people" has resulted in the signal success of Myrtle's Tea Room, the popular rendezvous, located just at the eastern edge of the city of Morehead.

Sam Caudill and his good wife Myrtle, have successfully operated this popular eating place for the past three years, having started with just a small place and added to the building and beautification of the grounds each season until now, it is, no doubt, one of the most popular places to dine along the Midland Trail.

They specialize in good foods, cooked right and served at moderate prices. Delicious steak and chicken dinners are featured, while special attention is given to private parties and club parties. Red Top beer and various soft drinks are served.

Mr. and Mrs. Caudill are not only good hosts but they know how to please the public and are among our

most progressive citizens and believe in keeping step with the march of progress.

"Myrtle had dark skin and black hair and eyes. She had a temperament that pleased the young kids," said George Young, Kentucky history teacher at MSU. He also described her as "fleshy and very affectionate."

Young played for many of the "tea dances" Myrtle had. They usually started at 4 p.m. England's tea time, and ended around 6 p.m. The band was usually led by two professors from then the Morehead State Normal School and students from there or the old high school.

The date of the paper in which this ad ran is unknown —

### Bring your friends to MYRTLE'S TEA ROOM

To dance

Midway between the Boulevard  
and Rodburn

The next dance will be  
Friday, October 30

"Myrtle's Tea Room was the predecessor of the state putting up a student center," according to Young. Business at Myrtle's indicated the students needed a place of entertainment, food and recreation.

Bob Anglin a student at Morehead State Normal School at the time, has been there several times. "It was a gay place to go if you wanted to have a good time," said Anglin. He said in 1933 the county was wet and Myrtle did sell beer.

In talking to the people trying to get information about it, many of the people acted suspicious of me. One said, "You ought to write your story on something else." And one said that it was a "house of ill repute." (I have had the door slammed in my face by a rather eccentric person, who wouldn't talk to

me because of my colored glasses.)

J. Earl McBrayer went to the tea room when he was a student. He said it was the only place of entertainment in Morehead.

After Myrtle and her husband gave up the tea room, Claude Clayton took it over after finishing college, here.

He said, "We had a little trouble but not much. Once a fellow came in, who was drunk and pulled a pistol on me. I took it away from him." Clayton quit after the 1937 flood.

Parnell Martindale bought the building in 1949 and used it for storage. He moved it to Lee's Hill and it fell down in 1974 or 1975.

That was an unfitting end to a lively place that used to be way back when.





**home of Jerry's**  
**FATBOY**







YOU COULD ORDER FROM YOUR CURB AT  
THACKER'S DRIVE-IN ~~AT~~ MOREHEAD  
~~RT 32~~ <sup>111</sup> ~~STILL IN BUSINESS (NO CURB SERVICE)~~  
~~MOREHEAD KY~~  
~~(1962)~~

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

## MOREHEAD MEMORIES: PEOPLE & PLACES

### REAL KENTUCKY FRIED CHICKEN

BY

JACK D. ELLIS

"The wilderness yielded food for them" (Job 24:15)

This writer vividly recalls his first introduction to Colonel <sup>Saunders</sup> ~~Saunders~~

Kentucky Fried Chicken. It was in 1958 and I had just been hired as a school librarian at Madeira Beach, Florida. One of my colleagues asked me if I had ever eaten Kentucky Fried Chicken. I said I had eaten it all my life. But he said no, he meant the Kentucky Fried Chicken at the Dutch Pantry Restaurant in downtown St. Petersburg. He proceeded to explain that he was a friend of the owner of the Dutch Pantry and he told me about an entourage <sup>led</sup> ~~lead~~ by a Kentucky Colonel dressed in a white suit and wearing a string tie. He was driving a white Cadillac and had stopped at the restaurant and asked the owner if he would allow him to cook up his own special brand of Kentucky Fried Chicken. <sup>It was Harlan</sup> ~~Colonel~~ <sup>a master salesman from Corbin, Ky. that</sup> Saunders said if you like it you can add it to your menu, if you don't, then have a free fried chicken dinner. The dubious Dutchman felt he had nothing to lose and agreed. (This is the way the Colonel marketed his KFC. He even came to Morehead's Eagles Nest but they wouldn't buy it.)



## COLONEL SAUNDERS' SELLS THE DURHAM

The Colonel, his lady and two helpers quickly began unlocking the white Cadillac. They brought in their own pots, pans, grease, flour, and what would later become known around the world as his own "secret blend" of herbs and spices." <sup>after tasting the Colonel's fried chicken in 1941, the restaurant began featuring it on its menu.</sup> Janis and I did try the Colonels Kentucky Fried Chicken, and years later, we would eat Kentucky Fried chicken in Paris, <sup>Frankfort (Germany),</sup> and London. (That's Paris, France and London, England.) However, it was in St. Petersburg, Florida (not Russia) that we ate our first Colonel Saunders KFC. Kentucky, as in KFC, is now spoken in many languages around the world. But we had eaten real Kentucky fried chicken many times before we ever heard of Colonel Saunders.

### FIELD TIME KY FRIED CHICKEN RECIPE

As a child, I remember by grandparents, John and Mary Ellis, raised their own chickens <sup>household</sup> and ~~they were~~ in a large pen with a hen house where there was usually a large brood of peepers. <sup>"baby chicks"</sup> They usually had chickens at various stages of development from spring fryers to old hen and roosters. So they could choose whether they wanted a young tender <sup>meat</sup> ~~fryer~~ chicken or old <sup>or</sup> baking hen or rooster. Also, they raised their own corn and ground it into chicken feed. <sup>old time</sup> To enjoy real Kentucky fried chicken involved a great deal of time, energy and effort.

Fried chicken was usually cooked on Sunday or very special occasions, usually when the preacher came for dinner (that's the noon meal,



supper was at night and you usually ate leftovers.) There was an old axiom in the early church that if the preacher didn't like fried chicken "you doubted his calling."

### FIRST YOU HAD TO CATCH THE CHICKENS

In order to have a real Kentucky fried chicken dinner in those days, <sup>catch the chicken. which was no easy task and some time you would run down before you caught the chicken.</sup> you had to ~~get up with the chickens~~ (early). Next, you had to build a fire <sup>(Sometimes you caught the chicken the night before and kept it fresh for breakfast under a doorknob. The next morning you would build a fire</sup> in the old wood burning kitchen stove, and boil a large pan of water. Next

~~you had to catch the chicken. That was no easy task. Sometimes you would~~

~~run down before the chicken.~~ Also, sometimes you could not catch the

chicken you wanted and you had to take whatever you could catch. After

catching the chicken, you had to kill it. That was sometimes very difficult.

There were two ways to kill a chicken. One way was to take it by the head

and wring its neck. The other method was with a sharp axe, using the guillotine method and sever the head. This writer preferred <sup>that</sup> this method.

~~After severing the head the chicken flopped around until all the blood drained out.~~

### NEXT: SOAK, PLUCK, SINGE, CUT UP & FRY

Then you soaked the chicken in boiling water and plucked all its <sup>next</sup> feathers off. Then you singed the remaining pin feathers by lighting a newspaper and burning them off. Then the chicken was cut up and fried.

The old-fashioned real Kentucky fried chicken was then fried in an iron <sup>in home rendered lard</sup> skillet until it was golden brown.



Is it no wonder that Colonel Saunders became world famous for eliminating all of these steps, and Kentucky became a <sup>household</sup> ~~common~~ word used around the world in many languages. The next time you enjoy Kentucky

Fried chicken, thank the Colonel *x that you didn't have to catch the chicken, and go through all of those steps. Now what do you think about the good old days?*



**MOREHEAD MEMORIES: PEOPLE AND PLACES**  
**PARNEY'S PARADE OF PROGRESS**

**BY**

**JACK D. ELLIS**

*"Be not slothful in business." (Romans 12:11)*

*is parade of progress in this world began*  
Parnell Martindale ~~was born~~ in Granada, Mississippi, January 16, 1909, and ~~did~~ ended

in Morehead, Kentucky, September 29, 1976. He came from a large family who knew what it was to work hard in the cotton fields and knew how hard it was to earn a dollar. They also believed in the importance of education. Young Parnell grew up with those values impressed upon him, but he also grew up to be a big, strong, healthy young man with a flair for football.

*A MOREHEAD COLLEGE FOOTBALL STAR IS BORN*  
His older sister, Pearl, wanted to study for the ministry and she enrolled in the

Methodist supported Kentucky Wesleyan College located at that time in Winchester.

(Later moved to Owensboro) Parney followed his sister to Kentucky Wesleyan with the

idea of playing football. But before he enrolled, he got a job pumping gas at a service

station on Winchester Road. (That was before self-service). By chance, Morehead

College Coach Downing stopped to get gasoline and Parnell was the one pumping his

gas. Young Martindale was a big husky lad and when Coach Downing found out he was

planning to enroll and play football at Kentucky Wesleyan, he said, "why don't you just

come on up the pike and enroll at Morehead?" The next week Coach Downing came back

to Winchester and loaded Parney and his belongings into his car and brought him to

Morehead. The move was a good one for Morehead College and the community of

Morehead.



The husky young man from Mississippi soon established himself on the gridiron as a force to be reckoned with. ~~It~~<sup>was</sup> Morehead State College's first game of the season <sup>used</sup> on October 10, 1931, and they were at home against Concord College. There was a record crowd in old Jayne Memorial Stadium cheering the Eagles on to what they hoped to be a victory.

After a scoreless deadlock and an endless exchange of punts in the first half, the news reports said, "Martindale, a giant Morehead tackle intercepted a Concord pass early in the third quarter and galloped thirty seven yards before being caught from behind on the two yard <sup>line</sup> ~~line~~. Claude Clayton plunged off tackle through a hole opened up by Martindale for the only score of the game." (Morehead won 6-0.) It was said that Martindale was the most consistent player in the game and was all over the field. (Remember, this was the days of the iron men when you played the full 60 minutes on offense and defense.) On November 14 that year, Morehead played arch rival Eastern to a 0-0 tie in Jayne Stadium. He was called Morehead's "giant tackle" and a "terror on the field." But he was a gentle giant off the field, with a soft voice and gentle disposition.

<sup>BORROWED 50 DOLLARS OPENED OWN CAMPUS STORE</sup>  
At Morehead College, Parnell not only distinguished himself on the gridiron, but was elected to serve on the student council. He also soon became established on campus as the man who operated his own general store in his room in Thompson Hall. The bookstore only sold books and since there was a need for students to purchase other things, Parney borrowed \$50 from Dan Caudill, local banker, and went to the Union Wholesale Warehouse and bought candy, chewing gum, cigarettes, toothpaste, razor



blades and many other things students needed and some things they didn't need. Parney operated an unofficial commissary on campus. Later, he branched out and sold jackets with MSTC and other clothing items. He learned early the secret to success in business was find a need and fill it and buy low and sell high. Those lessons would carry him to much success in his future business life.

LIZ AND PARNEY FORM A "TEAM" IN COLLEGE  
While a student at MSTC he met Elizabeth Robertson, a beautiful and popular student from Greenup County. They were married while in college and the custom in those days was that the friends of the groom would go to the home of the newly weds and if they were not treated with refreshments, they would throw the groom in the nearest stream or pond. Therefore, Parney's football friends drug him out <sup>one</sup> that night and threw him in the fish pond that used to be in front of Button Auditorium. Parney took it all in good spirits. Parney and Elizabeth had no children and they became a team in business and in life. Parney always called her Elizabeth, not "Liz," and she always called him Parnell not "Parney." But everyone else in Morehead knew them as Liz and Parney.

Many Moreheadians have a favorite Parney and Liz story because they were both eccentric and most of the time did things their way. Since this writer grew up in Morehead <sup>and</sup> my Janis Ruth lived all of her life (until she married me) across the street from Parney and Liz (corner of Nichols Place and East Second Street) there were always many Parney and Liz stories in her family as well as mine.

In 1934 the young couple began their first business endeavor. It was the Amos 'a Andy Hamburger Shop," and was billed as "A Good Place to Eat and Drink and Every



Customer's a Booster" (of MSTC). Their phone number was 185 and they delivered <sup>provided</sup> ~~service~~.

The concept of delivering food was new and the business was successful. The Amos 'n Andy was located where the City parking lot is now located on Main Street. In an interview with Liz a year before she died, she shared with this writer (and Janis Ruth), "I bought hamburger down the street for 15 cents per pound and brought it to the restaurant, mixed it with dried light bread and got 15 hamburgers out of pound. Then when they were placed on a bun with a slice of pickle, we sold them for 10 cents." (She did not share the part about mixing it with bread but everyone who ever ate one of their hamburgers knew that was the case.) They had <sup>discovered the first</sup> ~~the~~ original hamburger helper.

As business improved, they employed a young cook by the name of <sup>Geneva</sup> ~~Suneva~~ Reeder and they added soup and chili to the menu. Mrs. Reeder recalled one incident at the Amos 'n Andy: "One day she and Liz were cooking a pot of soup in the kitchen and a mouse ran around the wall above the stove. Liz throw a spoon at it and knocked it into the full pot of bowling chili. Parney was working out front and they yelled for him <sup>and</sup> ~~told~~ him what had happened. Parney said, "Dip it out." But they went against <sup>his</sup> ~~their~~ order and poured it out back in the alley.

Although Parney was a tough football player on the field - off the field he was a mild mannered man. Liz said she recalled him getting upset only one time when Howard Hanson, a local tough guy was drunk and obnoxious in the Amos and Andy. She recalled Parney physically throwing him out the front door while she held the door open.



MOREHEAD MEMORIES: PEOPLE AND PLACES  
PARNEY'S PARADE OF PROGRESS, II

BY

JACK D. ELLIS

*"A man heapeth riches and knoweth not who shall gather them." (Proverbs 39:6)*

About 1939, neighbor Lindsay Caudill left his house one morning and looked across the street at the Martindale residency. To his amazement there were three goats tethered in Parney's yard. Since he knew Parney had been back down to his home in Mississippi, he stopped at the Amos 'n Andy and asked about the goats. Parney said he brought them back from Mississippi in the back of his Cadillac. The only problem was keeping them from eating the upholstery in the car, and he was <sup>planning</sup> going to use them to keep <sup>his</sup> ~~the~~ grass mowed.

BUSINESS EXPANDS

Parney and Liz soon expanded the Amos 'n Andy Restaurant. He rented a poolroom and bowling <sup>alley</sup> ~~ally~~ from Dan Caudill. It was the first bowling ally in Morehead and local boys were hired as pin setters. Bowling was a popular pastime and several leagues were formed. Also, an all star bowling team competed against surrounding towns. But the Martindales soon sold the Amos 'n Andy, the poolroom and bowling ally and went into the furniture business.

In 1939, Parney bought land from Cap Burdeck and built a new building on main Street next door to the Battson Building. Walter Carr recalled it was the first business building in Morehead with <sup>terazzo</sup> ~~telozzo~~ floors. It was there the Martindales went into the furniture, hardware and appliance business. But WW II loomed upon the horizon and Parney was classified 4-F, unfit for military service, <sup>so</sup> ~~so~~ he went to Dayton, Ohio, to work



in the Frigidaire Factory which was then manufacturing airplane parts. He worked there

with Sherman and Mary Arnett while Elizabeth kept the business going in Morehead. *While Parney was in Dodge, a section of his furniture store was used as a U.S.O for the sailors that were stationed in Morehead.*

When the war ended, Parney returned to his business.

### FROM APPLIANCES TO HORSE COLLARS

Following WW II, there was a shortage of steel based appliances. Parney was always looking for merchandise to sell. One soft summer Saturday night Parney and some of the local loafers were sitting in front of his store before closing. A large one-ton ~~ton~~ truck with a heaping load of horse collars stopped at the stop light in front of this store. Parney ran out and engaged the man in conversation. It seemed the stranger, on his way to Virginia, had bought a truck load of horse collars at an Army cavalry surplus center <sup>at</sup> Fort Campbell. Parney negotiated with the stranger and bought the whole truck load of horse collars for 25 cents each and stored them in his barn near where he later built his home. Everyone in Morehead was laughing at Parney and his horse collars. However, Parney had the last laugh. It was some 15 years later, horse collars used to frame mirrors became the rage in home decorations throughout the land. This writer lived in Florida during part of that time when horse collar mirrors became a "fad." They were priced between 25-50 dollars, and Parney had the last laugh. He laughed all the way to the bank.

George Hill who worked for Parney for eight years before going into business for himself at the local Western Auto recalled, it was at a time electricity was being installed throughout rural Rowan County. Parney would literally follow the red REA trucks throughout rural Rowan County and as soon as electricity was turned on at a house, he



would sell them electrical appliances. It was usually without any money down and they paid what they could when they could.

He sold Hot Point and Philco appliances, furniture, toys, hardware, hand tools, *fiesta* *dishes,* lawn mowers and about anything you needed. If he didn't have it he would get it for you. (A lesson he learned in college.) He would literally stop you on the street in front of his store and say softly, "We need your help, please buy something."

*SOLD AND RENTED FURNITURE AND APPLIANCES - SHIRT BOTTLES*  
This writer and his wife were still in college when we were married. Our first refrigerator was a Hot Point purchased *from Parney* ~~for them~~ as a wedding present *from* by my Dad. He paid ~~Parney~~ weekly payments (\$5.00 per week) until it was paid off. *A year later when* ~~When~~ our first child was only a few weeks old, Janis was pushing her in a stroller in front of Parney's store. She stopped to admire a playpen displayed in the window. Parney saw her looking at it and when she got home, it was on our front porch. She called Parney and he said she wouldn't need that for another six or eight months and he said you don't make payments until you start using it. One year later we made the first payments and he didn't even have a record of selling it to us or the purchase price. He just took our word for it.

With the ending of WW II, million of GIs were going to college under the GI Bill which paid for their tuition, books and provided a monthly stipend to the veterans. Morehead State Teachers College was one of those institutions that provided housing for ~~those~~ married GIs, but no furniture. During that time, Parney went into the furniture rental business. Many of those GIs went to college on Parney's furniture at a monthly rental rate. It worked well for the students and Parney. Hundreds of students rented



furniture or bought furniture from Parney and paid what they could when <sup>they</sup> they could, <sup>and</sup> and  
~~Some~~ of those students recalled it took them years to pay for their furniture.

In the days when soft drinks came in glass bottles and required a 5 cent deposit on each bottle, Parney was known to drive throughout Rowan County on Sunday morning and pick up pop bottles. He would store them in his barn along with the horse collars. He eventually collected a barn full of bottles, enough to pay for a new Cadillac.

~~If you walked by his store, he might come out and say softly, we need your help,~~  
*Parney was aggressive in his marketing techniques.*  
won't you buy something. He was even known to conduct auctions in front of his store and on the street. Paul Jackson remembered driving by one time and had to stop at the stop light. Parney was outside with a hacksaw in his hand asking people passing by how much will you give me for this? He yelled at Paul, how much? Paul said, fifty cents and Parney said, "sold."

Although Parney had a reputation for being frugal, Walter Carr said that many times he would approach Mr. Martindale on community fund drives and he always pulled out his check book and said, "How much?" Parney was an avid Morehead College football fan and Walter would drive Parney's Cadillac to their road games. Parney always paid for their tickets and their meals usually at the best restaurants. On one road trip to Eastern in the annual battle for the "hog rifle," they arrived at the game without tickets and the stadium was sold out. There were scalpers selling tickets and Walter was trying to get Parney to buy tickets from one of the scalpers, but Parney suggested they wait until after the kick-off and the price would come down.

*Parney was considered "tight" with his money. He loved frog legs and would pay top dollar for them. Bobby Morrison, local fisherman, said he could always count on Parney to buy his catch of frog legs and he paid more than Frank Goughlin who ran a business across the street.*



Parney loved children and was the subject of a song about him. County Attorney Willie Roberts, one of four boys in his family, recalled them singing a parody of the song, "Here comes Peter Cottontail hopping down the bunny trail." The children changed the words to say, "Here comes Parney Martindale, hopping down the Midland Trail, hippity-hopping on his merry way."

The Martindales later built a larger furniture store on East Main Street and built a new home near the University. For several years after Parney moved into his new home, he left some bare light bulbs hanging down. Since the house was still considered not yet finished, even though he lived there, it was not added to the tax rolls until it was finished.

The University later purchased the land and his home <sup>is now the home of the Rowan County President.</sup> while the County purchased his furniture store and it is now the new Rowan County Courthouse. But, as is the case so many times, <sup>wealth</sup> ~~wealthy~~ acquired by one person in this world is often left to strangers to <sup>spend</sup> ~~enjoy~~. <sup>That was the case with the Martindale fortune.</sup>



1-10-03

**MOREHEAD MEMORIES: PEOPLE AND PLACES  
EARLY EATERIES**

**BY**

**JACK D. ELLIS**

" *Given to hospitality* " (Romans 13:14)

Since it was first formed, Rowan as been famous for its food. Beginning in the late 1800s with Judge Carey's hotel and dinning room on First Street, Mrs. Carey's culinary skills were known far and wide. Her mouth-watering cornbread, biscuits and pork chops kept customers coming back. Even the old Gault House, more famous for its feud history, was known for its food and drink. But in this writer's opinion, the Eagles Nest was perhaps the most widely known for its excellent food, atmosphere and service.

MYRTLE'S TEA ROOM OPENED IN MOREHEAD

There was another well known Rowan restaurant that opened in 1925. It was called Myrtle's Tea Room and was located on U.S. 60 East midway between the Boulevard and Rodburn. Owned and operated by one-armed Sam Caudill. That's how you distinguished him from three other local Sam Caudills. His wife, Myrtle Caudill, was known as "Tea Room Myrtle" to distinguish her from two other Myrtle Caudills distinguished by their husbands' names: "Myrtle C.P." Caudill and "Myrtle Lindsey" Caudill. "Tea Room Myrtle" Tolliver Caudill had three children, Elivra, Frances and Sam, Jr.

The business was located in a white one-story building between where the Laughlin Fieldhouse and the MSU Academic Athletic Center are now located. Inside were stools in front of a lunch counter with tables and chairs around the center of the room. Behind the counter was a milkshake machine and a Coke dispenser. The aroma of french fries and pies



*the business*  
filled the air. ~~They~~ attracted travelers on the Midland Trail because they had three rental cabins. But it also appealed to the recently established Morehead State Normal School students and young people, as well as the dining public.

There was an ordinance prohibiting dancing in Morehead, but since the Tea Room was outside the city limits, dancing was permitted. It was a popular place for high school or college age students where they could come and have a hamburger, Coke or a beer. There was a juke box for music and sometimes even a live band. The dress was the roaring twenties styles, dancing was either the Charleston or the Bunny Hop.

ADVERTISED AS A POPULAR PLACE TO EAT  
The following advertisement appeared in the **Morehead Independent** newspaper  
October 10, 1929:

"Bring your friends to  
Myrtle's Tea Room  
Midway between the Boulevard and Rodburn  
The next dance is Friday, October 30."

On January 20, 1932, the following advertisement appeared in the **Morehead Independent**:

"Pleasing the people has resulted in the single success of Myrtle's Tea Room, the popular rendezvous located at the eastern edge of the city of Morehead. It is there Sam Caudill and his good wife, Myrtle, have successfully operated their popular eating place for years. Although it started as a small place they have added to the building and beautification of the grounds each season. It is now no doubt one of the most popular places to dine along the Midland Trail."

"The Tea Room specializes in good food cooked right and served at moderate prices. Delicious steaks and chicken dinners are featured, while special attention is given to private parties and club parties. Red Top Beer and various soft drinks served."



"Mr. & Mrs. Caudill are not only good hosts but they know how to please the public and are among our most progressive citizens and believe in keeping <sup>step</sup> with the march of progress."

Sam and Myrtle believed in advertising and in a later issue of the **Morehead Independent** would almost make it appear they had air conditioning 20 years before it was invented, when in reality all they offered were shade trees and an oscillating fan. The ad said:

"Dainty-cool-refreshing place to take your Sunday dinner at Myrtle's Tea Room. Special chicken and dumpling dinner 12 - 2.  
Save your Sunday for rest and recreation  
Dine with us at noon and night  
Myrtle's Tea Room."

LIVE MUSIC LIVELY ENTERTAINMENT

Myrtle Tolliver Caudill was an attractive woman with olive complexion and black hair and eyes. She had a pleasant personality that pleased the young people. According to George Young, Breckinridge and MSU History Professor, "Myrtle was fleshy and very affectionate." The venerable Mr. Young, piano player extrodinaire, often played for many of the tea dances. <sup>They</sup> ~~There~~ were usually held between 4-6 p.m., England's tea time. They sometimes had a live band from the Morehead State Normal School and students there from Morehead High School.

According to Professor Young, "Myrtle's Tea Room was the predecessor of a college student center." The business at the Tea Room indicated there was a need for a place for student entertainment, recreation and food. It was the classic every generation statement,



"There's nothing to do in this town." J. Earl McBrayer went to the Tea Room when he was a student saying it was the only place for entertainment in town.

Bob Anglin, a student at Morehead State Normal School, said he had been there many times and it was a good place to go for a good time. This writer, ~~when~~ *when I* in the mid-1930s would go with my dad to deliver milk early in the morning at Myrtle's Tea Room and I recall ~~that~~ *I never saw* from the look of the place there had been a wild party there the night before. *any tea bags lying around, but I do remember empty beer and whiskey bottles.*

Sam and Myrtle sold the Tea Room to Claude Clayton who operated it until the July 4th, 1939 flood washed him out. He never re-opened. Later the building was purchased by Parnell Martindale who used it to store furniture. It was not a very glamorous end to a place with such a lively history.