



JULY 2012

Issue 56

ROADS LESS TRAVELED (part 2)

By Lindsay H. Valek

Back on the road, it's a five minute drive into the historic district of Blackville. This small town that may appear sleepy and quiet on its face but don't let the exterior fool you. This quintessential town packs a big punch beneath its slow moving surface.

Founded in 1837, Blackville rests on the edge of Barnwell and Orangeburg counties. Originally part of Lord Colleton's grant of land from the King of England, Blackville was established in part due to its proximity to transportation (the railroad) and to good drinking water (Healing Springs). Settled in 1837 by an Irishman, Blackville became a depot for the first railroad completed between Charleston and North Augusta. A number of structures of historical significance populate Blackville including the home of Nathan Blatt, father of Solomon Blatt, a Supreme Court nominee as well as the residence of Samuel Still, former legal counsel to the United States Congress.

Perhaps more interesting than the historic home sites, are the abandoned buildings that sprinkle downtown's landscape. Brick, mortar, curved wrought-iron and leaded glass cast the mind back to a simpler time when perhaps even Blackville's deserted streets bustled with the promise of prosperity. Old nails, railroad ties and bricks litter the streets and are as common place as a cigarette butt in downtown Columbia. Dating to the turn of

the century, relic buildings house massive gates and the remnants of pillars as wide as a compact car. In the center of town stands a historic clock. Its hands move as slowly as the town itself, yet there is a rhythm as they keep time, perhaps reminding residents and visitors that although Blackville sleeps, it sleeps with one eye open.

Today Blackville boasts a Discovery Center featuring hands-on history about the area's relationship between the railroad and agricultural industries, a wildly successful St. Patrick's Day in honor of its Irish settlers and is home to a local Mennonite community which operates Miller's Bread Basket, a popular restaurant and bakery on the main strip. Miller's is a must-see, must-smell and must-eat stop on any visit to Blackville. The Mennonite family's cooking skills easily rival that of Paula Dean featuring items such as crispy and hot fried chicken, creamy and savory green bean casserole and a sinful turtle pie on the menu that should not be passed up no matter how bloated your stomach may appear. By way of confession I ate three pieces of fried chicken and bought two loaves of butter-nut bread. Miller's features baked breads including pumpkin, banana nut and pumpernickel the likes of which I have never set taste buds upon.

Blackville is a testament to the small towns that frequent South Carolina's back-road landscape. It is tranquil yet vibrant, silent yet bustling and can permeate even the hardest of hearts with their sweet confections of turtle pie and turn of the century ironwork. The next time you're staring at the television on a Saturday morning, get moving and *make* the time to travel to Blackville, S.C. You'll be nowhere and yet everywhere at the same time and it will certainly be a trip to remember.

"You become what you think about. Negative thoughts reap negative results. If you think positive thoughts, you will get positive results."

Anon

MEETINGS

- **July 5, Blackville Community Development Corporation**, Town Hall 6:00pm
- **July 10, Barnwell County Council**, Agriculture Building, Barnwell, 6:00pm
- **July 16, Blackville Town Council** Town Hall, 7:30pm
- **July 23, Barnwell-Blackville NAACP**, Barnwell Masonic Lodge, 7:00pm
- **Blackville Civic Club and Blackville Downtown Development Association** meetings are suspended for the summer months.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

July 2, Lou Blake
July 4, Peggy White
July 4, Florence Brown
July 4, Bilaysia Deloach
July 7, Joyce Joyner
July 8, Kin Orr
July 17, Lillian Harrison
July 24, Tiffany Odom
July 27, Annette Joyner
July 27, Bill T. Deloach
July 31, Margaret Ann Gadsen
July 31, David Elmore
July 31, Albert Raysor

BLACKVILLE BRANCH LIBRARY

Monday's @ 2:30pm

July 9, Ruth Patrick Science Education Center
(Reptiles, Amphibians and more)
July 16, Sarah Dippit
(Comedy, puppets and magic)
July 23, Roaming Along in Story and Song
(Folksinger Cathy Benedetto and storyteller Vic McGraner)

“C O C K Y”

(University of South Carolina Mascot)
July 11, 2012 – 2:00pm
Free book and stickers

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

July 12, Roosevelt and Bessie Elmore
July 14, James and Linda Roberts
July 31, Edward and Essie Smalls

SUMMER/FOURTH of JULY SAFETY TIPS

KEEP A FIRST AID KIT HANDY!!

FIREWORK SAFETY

- ⤴ Never give fireworks to small children, and always follow the instructions on the packaging.
- ⤴ Keep a supply of water close-by as a precaution.
- ⤴ Make sure the person lighting fireworks always wears eye protection.
- ⤴ Light only one firework at a time and never attempt to relight "a dud."
- ⤴ Store fireworks in a cool, dry place away from children and pets.
- ⤴ Never throw or point a firework toward people, animals, vehicles, structures or flammable materials.
- ⤴ Stay at least 500 feet away from professional fireworks displays.
- ⤴ Leave any area immediately where untrained amateurs are using fireworks.

SAFE GRILLING

- ⤴ Use gas and charcoal barbecue grills outside only.
- ⤴ Position grills far from siding, deck railings, overhanging branches and house eaves.
- ⤴ Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the grill area.
- ⤴ Never add charcoal starter fluid when coals have already been ignited.
- ⤴ Always follow the manufacturer's instructions when using grills.
- ⤴ Always supervise a barbecue grill when in use.

STRIVE FOR A SAFE JULY 4TH

CONTACT INFORMATION

We can both receive and send information to you electronically blackville@bellsouth.net or vtalston@bellsouth.net, add "NEWSLETTER" in subject line. Comments and suggestions accepted. Thank you. Visit us on the web at townofblackville.com. If you have a story, submit it and it will be considered for publishing.