



Volume 16

Number 4

September-October 2004

PREZ SEZ

I am happy to report that we came in well under budget for our spring picnic this year. This was due in part to the fact that the Pelham Civic Center hired The Culinard as their new caterer and their charge for our meal per person was substantially lower than we paid in previous years. Another reason was that we did better on “no shows”—only 10 this year, half the number from last year. We also had seven show up whose names were not on the reservation list, so that reduced the number of uneaten meals to three.

It has been several years since the cost of our picnic has come in below budget. Thanks to everyone for your cooperation.

We were privileged to have had Louis Long, vice president of technical support at Southern Nuclear, as our featured speaker in July. He made a very interesting presentation on the latest nuclear power plant design concepts. He also touched on plant security and plant performance at Hatch, Farley and Vogtle.

We have had some outstanding and entertaining speakers during the last few years, but I personally enjoy most those meetings at which we have one of

our company executives speak to our group. They always seem to present topics of interest. It also gives us a chance to keep up with what is going on in our company and meet our company managers.

As I recall, up until five or six years ago, we almost always had SCS’s president as our speaker at our first meeting of the year. It’s my hope that we can restart that custom at our coming January meeting.

Having written all this, I believe Fred has an excellent speaker lined up for our next meeting. Hope to see you there.

— Sid Varagona

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE BARBER VINTAGE MOTORSPORTS MUSEUM

Our speaker for the September meeting will be Ms. Suzanne Totten, events coordinator for the Barber Vintage Motorsports Museum. Ms. Totten is originally from Haleyville, AL. She graduated from the University of North Alabama in Florence and came to Birmingham in 2000 to work for the Barber Companies. She moved to the new Museum when it opened in September, 2003. She is married to John Totten.

Below is a brief history of the Museum prepared for us by SCS Retirees member Jack Goertz. Also note the tour of the Museum for SCS Retirees on September 17, 2004.

— Fred Ehrensperger

About the Museum

Museum Founder George Barber owned and managed Barber Dairies until 1998, when the company was purchased by Dean Foods. Today the Barber Companies are involved in real estate development throughout the Southeast.

Mr. Barber has always been an automobile enthusiast who raced, modified, and maintained Porsches in the 1960s. Along the way, he accumulated over 60 first place wins. In 1989, he

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began collecting and restoring classic sports cars in the maintenance building of the Barber Dairies on 5th Avenue South in Birmingham. Dave Hooper, who ran Barber's delivery fleet, helped Mr Barber in the restoration of these cars.

Dave suggested that Mr. Barber consider collecting motorcycles, and the collection was begun with a trio of Honda V-Fours. Dave donated several of his vintage motorcycles, including a rare 1952 Victoria Bergmeister, to the fledgling collection. Mr. Barber marveled at the detail and beauty of these old bikes and was hooked!

"Cars have beautiful paint, but you can't easily see the engine, the suspension, or what makes them function. With motorcycles, you can see the engineering, the balance, and to me they are much more exciting," says Mr. Barber. "And we never could have built the best collection of Chevys or Fords—too many good collections have already been established—but I think we have the best motorcycle collection in the United States. At the moment, we're in the top six in the world, and hopefully we can become the world's best motorcycle collection!"

In 1994, the Barber Vintage Motorsports Museum was established as a 501c(3) nonprofit foundation. It was opened to the public on March 14, 1995, in the old maintenance buildings of the Barber Dairy. The original museum building was closed at the end of October 2002, and re-opened in September 2003, in a state-of-the-art building at its current location on Barber Motorsports Parkway, off Rex Lake Road near Leeds, AL.

Today, the collection owns more than 850 vintage and modern motorcycles as well as a substantial collection of Lotus and other race cars. The collection will never be complete; more vehicles are added to the collection every month. The Barber Vintage Motorsports Museum is no longer associated with Barber Dairies.

Adjacent to the Museum is the Barber Motorsports Track, one of the premier road-racing courses in the US. The track is 2.38 miles in length and is used by both sports cars and motorcycles. It is the home track for the Porsche Driving Experience. The Museum offers a great view of the track through its glass walls.

Barber Vintage Motorsports Museum Tour

The SCS Retirees are invited to a guided tour of the Barber Vintage Motorsports Museum on Friday, September 17, 2004. Meet in the lobby of the Museum at 10:15 a.m. There is a \$10/person admission charge to the Museum.

Directions to the Museum: Take I-20 east from Birmingham to Exit 140 (west Leeds exit). Turn on US-78 toward Leeds. Take the first right turn (just before the Chevron Station) onto Rex Lake Road. Go approximately 1 mile until you see the sign for Barber Motorsports Park on the right. Turn onto the Park road and follow it to the Museum. There is ample free parking at the Museum.

— Jack Goertz

Want to keep up with what's happening?

Got a computer?

Visit the SCS Retiree Website

<http://www.scsretirees.com>

TREASURER'S REPORT

There has been very little "treasurer type" activity by the SCS Retirees this period. Since the last report we have received one dues check for \$12.00 and had interest income of \$48.30 from the APCO Credit Union.

We had expenses of \$63.47 for the July meeting arrangements, \$179.40 for maintenance of our Web Site, and \$50.00 for memorials for Helen Brothers and Frances Saia.

As of this writing we have had a total income of \$2,487.10 and total expense of \$694.27 for this year, or, a net gain for the year of \$1,792.83.

As you know the company sponsors the July meeting for all company retirees and their spouse so they have paid the tab from Pelham Civic Center of \$3,732.00. Many, many thanks to Southern Company Services.

— Henry Garrett

**SCS RETIREE LEADERSHIP
FOR 2004**

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE REPORT

Dan Riley went to the doctor seemingly with a digestive problem but found that he had had one heart attack and was having another. After tests were run, they found blocked arteries and on May 25, put a stent in. Dan is back at his normal activities and doing well.

Bob Higginbotham has myeloma, a condition where there is a high level of protein in the blood and effects bone density. His wife, Avis, has Parkinson's. They are living with their daughter and son-in-law in Texas. Their address is 10008 Austral Circle, Austin, TX 78739-1719.

Abe Lincoln, who is suffering with Alzheimer's, fell and broke his hip. He underwent surgery on August 13 and is recovering in the hospital. He is expected to move to a nursing facility where he will undergo therapy for the hip replacement.

Please keep me advised of illness or death of our members as you become aware of them. My telephone number is 822-7562 or you can email me at nellking@charter.net.

— Nell King

BIRTHDAYS

SEPTEMBER: 1-James Welch, 2-Jane Freeman, 4-Paul Lynch, 8-Alfred Mikell, 10-Rod Wildman, 11-Bob Patrick and Bill Ponder, 12-Fred Ehrensperger and Sue Hassell, 13-Carol Yeager, 15-Philip Douglas, 17-Mike Zyne, 19-Claradel Holcombe 7-Dewey Yeager, 26-Liz Winter and 30-Martha Dorrance and Jerry Vandegrift. OCTOBER: 7-Lillie Mae Hargett, 9-Doris Douglas, 12-Janice Thies, 19-Bonnie Russell, 27-Grace Kyser 7-William Harrison and 28-Monroe Smith and Bill Wright.

— Jay Dorrance

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Dora Brandt reports that meeting attendance on Monday, July 12, was 58 members and guests.

Officers	
President	Sid Varagona 942-5047
Vice President	J. D. Naramore 629-7075
Secretary	Pat Moore 979-3353
Treasurer	Henry Garrett 853-6079
Directors	
Buddy Coggin	785-5992
Jack Goertz	991-7766
Don Jackson	680-9125
Elliene Jackson	680-9125
Al Mikell	967-0515
Larry Wallace	491-3097
Warren Glover (ex-officio)	822-5753
Committee Chairpersons	
Arrangements	Dora Brandt 956-0502
Audit	Wayne Walton 822-1875
Fellowship	
Finance	Tom Steele 836-1904
Membership	Gene Kachelhofer 991-8604
Newsletter	Dan & Myrna Wise 942-2336
Nominating	Charles Hickman 823-4597
Program	Fred Ehrensperger 655-2725
Sunshine	Nell King 822-7562

OBITUARIES

In Memoriam

Walter "Glen" Jones, 66, of Birmingham, Alabama passed away on Tuesday, June 22, 2004. He retired from SCS Fossil/Hydro (Mech) Department in July 1994 with 29 years service. He is survived by his wife, Alice; his mother; a brother and a sister. Funeral services were held on Friday, June 25, at Ridout's Trussville Chapel with burial at Cedar Hill Cemetery in Bessemer, Alabama.

Frances S. Saia, 79, of Homewood, Alabama, passed away on Saturday, July 3, 2004. She retired from SCS in September 1986 with 30 years service. She is survived by a brother and two sisters. A funeral service was held on Thursday, July 9, at 10 am at Elmwood Chapel with burial in Elmwood Cemetery in Birmingham, Alabama.

Condolences

Our very sincere and heartfelt sympathy is extended to retiree Michael Zyne and his family in the death of Mike's brother, John P. Zyne of Birmingham, who died on Saturday, June 26, 2004 at the age of 90.

— Jay Dorrance

**THE SPOTLIGHT SHINES ON
CORINNE AND BOB HART**

Corinne Donnelly Hart, wife of Bob Hart for 57 years, is a native of Birmingham and a graduate of the now defunct Jones Valley High School. Corinne was an honor student, a thespian and played the clarinet in the school band. A former band director told Bob that his marching band was comprised of "tooters" and "toters." Corinne claims to have been a "tooter," but Bob says she was a "toter." Following graduation, Corinne took a special course in calculators, which were state-of-the-art office equipment in the 1940s. This training led to a four year career at the First National Bank of Birmingham.

Bob was discharged from the Army in October 1946, and he and Corinne were married in January 1947, culminating a courtship that began in high school. In March 1947, they moved to Tuscaloosa where Bob enrolled in the college of engineering at the University of Alabama. Although it was Bob who received a degree in electrical engineering in 1949, Corinne claims a part of the degree because of the technical knowledge she acquired by typing his reports and papers.

Bob began employment at Alabama Power Company in July 1949. A nine month assignment at the General Electric Company took them to Schenectady, New York, in 1954. Bob participated in advanced studies of power systems engineering, studied hard and traveled extensively. Meanwhile, Corinne became familiar with current children's TV programs with their young son Gary and learned to drive in the snow. After this assignment, Bob returned to work in the engineering department at Alabama Power Company. Bob transferred to the research and development department at Southern Company Services in June 1977. His responsibilities required extensive travel, and Corinne was able to accompany him on many trips. September 1986 brought a totally new experience; early retirement. After over 37 years of challenging assignments, Bob said he was ready for retirement.

Retirement allowed time for travel, leisure activities and family, and, as a result, has been an enjoyable experience for Corinne and Bob. They have visited most of the states in the United States and have made four trips to Europe. Corinne is a World War II history buff, and one of her most memorable trips was to the American cemetery on the Normandy beaches in France. For many years the Harts have enjoyed time with family and friends at their home on Lay Lake. The place is special because most of the construction was done by the family, and a "memory scrapbook" is filled with recollections of fun times when the children and grandchildren were growing up. Also, a spotted bass, which represents her proficiency at fishing, is mounted on a wall.

Corinne and Bob have two children, Gary and Lisa. Of course, Corinne and Bob take great pride in

their three granddaughters. Today they are grown young ladies who are excelling in their own right. Perhaps the grandparents, who are avid Crimson Tide supporters, have had some influence in the fact that the two oldest granddaughters are students at the University of Alabama. The youngest granddaughter is a junior at Hoover High School; she is also probably destined to attend the University of Alabama.

In December 1997, Corinne suffered a heart attack, and a quick trip to St. Vincent's allowed the blockage to be cleared by angioplasty, thus avoiding open heart surgery. Recovery from the heart attack has been very good, and Corinne maintains her always cheerful attitude, which reflects her true Irish heritage. She is an avid reader, especially enjoying historical books. The Harts have been active members at Shades Mountain Baptist Church for 33 years. Over the years, they have been leaders in numerous community activities. They are loyal attendees at SCS Retirees meetings, and Bob has served in several leadership roles in the organization.

— Charles E. Hickman

SYMBOLS OF GRATITUDE

Many years ago, I recall seeing a newspaper advertisement showing a young boy, his hands on a table as he looked at four particular objects evenly spaced in front of him: a pencil, a key, a ballot and a Bible. A caption underneath the picture read, "Half the world is trying to destroy these four symbols and what they represent." These simple objects represent our privileges and freedoms as Americans.

The pencil symbolizes work and ambition. Of course, today the computer has superseded the pencil. Nevertheless, the two are the same in essence, even if technically different. Success in any age is impossible without the ability to write. We can't communicate without words to translate our thoughts, and pencils, in whatever form, are the tools of the trade.

Fortunately, pencils are equipped with erasers. No one is perfect. Mistakes happen. However, in all our fumbblings, we can be thankful that there is a purpose to our striving and that ideas, though written on paper, translate into real-life deeds and achievements. A pencil can be a very ordinary sort of tool. Without it, however, we are lost. With it, we can write our name on the pages of time. With gratitude, we recognize the Mayflower Compact, which the Pilgrims signed, as representing in writing our American privileges and freedoms.

Similarly, what extraordinary things the ballot permits! It gives us our right to choose and decide. We can be for or against anything, but we have a choice. Not everyone in the world has that right. We should not take it for granted but, instead, be grateful for it. After all, freedom of choice is why our country was founded and why the Pilgrims wanted to settle in America.

The key is symbolic of our safety, individuality and privacy, yet it opens opportunity. Some time ago, one of the slogans of General Motors was, "This is your key to the future." How we loved that sign of status and possession—to be the owner of our own car! Ownership is a powerful privilege, bought by hard work, which gives us freedom from want and the ability to shape our future. How grateful we should be for the principle of property rights and the benefits it brings!

The fourth symbol of significance in the drawing was the Holy Bible. For most of us, the Volume of Sacred Law has been our guide to belief in something meaningful and relevant. Reverence is one of the virtues of a great person. Our respect for God and one another is derived from Holy Scripture. "Love the Lord your God...and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27) is a sound maxim for strong moral and ethical relationships in life.

Much of the inspiration for charitable contributions originates in the Bible. Along with so much else, the Bible offers a clear direction whereby we can seek the best in others, the world and ourselves.

Read through the list of the Bible's champions, and then measure yourself against any of them.

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They were persons of conviction. They believed in something worthwhile and had the faith and courage to pursue it. So, this symbol, too, represents gratitude, in this case for the biblical inheritance that inspires us today as it inspired the Pilgrims three centuries ago.

Therefore, first consider the pencil, key, ballot and Bible. Then “bless the Lord your God for the good land He has given you.” (Deuteronomy 8:10)

— Donald C. Kerr
retired Presbyterian minister
Scottish Rite Journal, November 2002

PATRIOTISM OF PEACE AS WELL AS HEROISM OF WAR

Ed. Note: This was written by Clayton Olooto, a seventh grade student from Parkway Middle School in St. Louis County, Missouri.

Eighteen months ago, I witnessed an event that changed my life forever. History classes attempt to teach us about peace, war, patriotism and heroism. But no history book can teach what I learned firsthand that day as I watched the death of thousands of innocent people on national TV and witnessed how ordinary people responded to extraordinary events. September 11, 2001, taught me that heroes are made by their response to events out of their control. I also learned that you don't have to be directly involved in the event to be a hero. Not only were the workers in the World Trade Center, the firefighters and police officers heroes, but also the millions of people, here and around the world, who did what they could to help by donations of time, money and resources.

I was reminded about the meaning of patriotism that day as I listened to replays of phone calls from passengers on United Flight 93. They were ordinary yet extraordinary people who were going about their everyday lives until they became inadvertently involved in this tragedy. As these passengers were learning of the events in both Washington and New York through telephone calls to loved ones, they realized that they and only they had the power and responsibility to stop the terrorists on their plane.

They knew that if they didn't act quickly, then the plane they were flying on might be used as a weapon against America. These innocent Americans knowingly gave up their lives for their country. It wasn't their job; it wasn't an oath they had taken. It was patriotism, a love for one's country, which prompted them to act.

America stands for the best of all things that people can hope for, dream of and achieve. The U.S. Constitution and its Amendments are not just words on paper; for every American, the values expressed in these documents are experienced every day. Slowly the outrage, fear and anger that the world felt after the events of 9/11 are being forgotten. Incredibly, anti-Americanism has increased over the last year. Already forgotten is the fact that the United States showed restraint and didn't retaliate as it could have, returning violence with violence. That America didn't strike back is a sign of its strength.

Unlike millions of people around the world, Americans are free. We are able to form and express our opinions. The government, judicial system and police protect us in our rights. Church is separated from state, and freedom of religion is a reality. We can carry the book of our faith wherever we go and read it whenever we want. Our money proclaims “IN GOD WE TRUST.” Our Presidents take their oath of office on a Bible, and we still pledge allegiance to one nation “under God.” At public events, we stand as one, remove our hats, place our hands over our hearts and proudly sing our national anthem. The greatest symbol of patriotism, known the world over, is the American flag. Our flag is displayed at home, at school, and on our cars. We fly it proudly from land, sea and even the moon. In times of national mourning, we show our grief and support by flying our flag at half-staff.

I do not know what the future holds for me and other Americans, but if history is any indicator, the future of the United States of America is secure in peace and war because of its patriots. We, as a nation, are not perfect, but we work to improve our country's inadequacies. America continues to move forward, and I will be a part of that advance. But

before we can heal and move on, we have to ensure that terrorists cannot destroy us or our way of life. America has a responsibility to its citizens and to the peoples of other countries to stop future terrorist attacks. In the name of justice, action must be taken. That is certain. Terrorist groups cannot inflict violence without expecting reprisal. But whoever is ultimately found to be responsible for terrorist attacks, we would not blame an entire ethnic or religious group.

For myself, I'll always remember the final United Flight 93 telephone calls saying "I love you." I'll remember those people falling to their deaths from the top of burning skyscrapers. I'll remember the hundreds of firefighters who were buried under tons of rubble and died. I'll think of the children who will grow up never knowing their mothers or fathers. And I'll give thanks that I live in a country where I am free to have a choice. I will love my country, even with its faults, and work to improve it for my children. I will show more compassion and address the issues of diversity, coexistence, reconciliation, conflict prevention, peace, understanding and tolerance. I will have faith that we, as a people, can defend America and will proudly serve it. The events of 9/11 have made us a better nation, and it's up to us as citizens to keep America strong and free.

— *Scottish Rite Journal*
November 2003

MY LEAF COLLECTION

Fall is a golden time, both in the annual cycle of seasons and in the broader cycle of our lives. I grew up in Nebraska in those Eisenhower-bright days before we discovered that just about everything we enjoyed was somehow environmentally wicked.

The family home was nearly a century old when I arrived at a point where I began to notice such things as leaves and the changing of the seasons. Large oak, elm and maple trees surrounded the house, providing shade in the heat of summer, places to climb in the spring, haunting silhouettes in

mid-winter and, best of all, a carpet of bright, Technicolor leaves each fall.

Fall in the Missouri River Valley was something very special. Fall and that brief period we called Indian Summer made the rest of the year worth living. Days were warm; nights were crisp. The trees traded green for a full palette of almost neon colors, and the countryside seemed afire with golds, yellows, reds, oranges and more.

Of course, the leaves fell, leaving the ground covered in a crazy quilt of color several inches thick. My father pointed to the rakes and his two sons headed for the front yard to accumulate large piles of leaves. Some of those piles were for jumping into—at which point they had to be reassembled. Eventually, they were all for burning.

The result was not just smoke. It was incense that I can still detect around the edges of memory. It hung in the air, a smoke-rich haze, for days. Kicking our way to school (uphill, both ways, with 12 feet of snow in the appropriate season), the leaves crackled and crunched under our small shoes.

The scent of burning leaves was a sure guarantee that Halloween was on us. Life was rich then.

At school, we learned all about leaves. We even collected them and made scrapbooks out of them. I know this because one turned up recently when [I was] going through the old house. We did this nearly every year throughout grade school. It was much like the film we saw every year about the Monarch butterfly, complete with some really controversial footage about reproduction. Anyway, we learned that leaves are basically food-making machines. By photosynthesis, they turn water, carbon dioxide and sunlight into glucose. The leaves used a green pigment, chlorophyll, to aid in the process. We also learned to spell all those words.

Then fall came, and when the school day was over, we'd walk home in the gathering dusk of late afternoon, the leaves crunching below, the smoky haze of burning leaves so rich in the air you could almost reach out and touch it. And we didn't care about learning how to spell photosynthesis or chlorophyll. The leaves were simply part of the

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magic of fall, and when you're five or six years old, that was enough. I know, in our enlightened age, it's a wicked thought, but I'm really tempted to find a pile of leaves someplace and set a match to it, just to smell the aroma that surrounded the hilltop of my childhood one more time as I embrace the fall of my life!

My leaf collection extends far beyond the simple scrapbooks of those long-distant grade-school days. At this time in my life, as the sun is well past the meridian, I find myself looking wistfully at the mental scrapbooks of my life and the "leaves" on each page. Some are places I've been, others are friends I've known and folks I've worked with.

I feel sorry for those whose lifetime collection is colorless and small. They've missed something worth having, and the fall of their lives is less golden.

For me, the fall of life really is a golden time, a Nebraska Indian Summer, full of bright leaves of memory crunching happily under my feet and that

distinctive windblown incense that marks both the ending and the beginning of things.

— W.H. "Skip" Boyer
Scottish Rite Journal
November 2003

A LIFE LESSON

Let [us] never forget that life and the world are what we make them by our social character... We are members of a civil community. The life of that community depends upon its moral condition. Public spirit, intelligence, temperance, and kindness will make it a happy community and give it prosperity and continuance. Selfishness, dishonesty, intemperance, and corruption will make it miserable and bring about dissolution and ruin.

— Albert Pike
Morals and Dogma, 1871

SCS RETIREES

P.O. BOX 2625

BIRMINGHAM, AL 35202

*Our next meeting will be Monday,
September 13 in Inverness 42, Room
130 at 1 pm.*

Board meeting will be at 11 am.

*You are invited to join us for lunch
at noon in the Inverness 42 Cafeteria.*