



WALTON

RELATIONS & HISTORY

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Walton County Heritage Association

June 2023



WALTON COUNTY HERITAGE ASSOCIATION, INC.

OFFICE LOCATION

Walton County Heritage Museum, (Old Train Depot)

Hours: Open Tuesday – Saturday, 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Postal Address

**Walton County Heritage Association, Inc.
1140 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, Florida 32435
Phone: 850-401-2060**

Website: <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/#>

Email: heritagemuseum@brighthouse.com

DEPARTMENTS

Administration

President: Marie Hinson, hinsonharmony@yahoo.com

Vice President: Carolyn Brown

Treasurer: Sam Carnley

Secretary: Susan Horaist

Public Relations

Vacant

Museum Docent Coordinator

Carolyne Brown

Genealogy Society

President: Wayne Sconiers, waynesconiers@embarqmail.com

Newsletter

Editor: Sam Carnley, kienles810@gmail.com

Assistant Editor and Historian: Bruce Cosson, bac2work1958@yahoo.com

Editorial Advisor: Diane Merkel, ddmerkel@cox.net

Back Issues: <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/GenSoc/newsletters.htm>

Cover Design: Sam Carnley

Newsletter Cover Collage Photos

Clockwise from top left:

1. **Darlington, Florida, early 1900s, Courtesy of Baker Block Museum, photographer unknown. Edited by Sam Carnley.**
2. *Henderson-Mathis turpentine still in Glendale or Gaskin.* 1904. Black & white photoprint, 4 x 6 in. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory. <<https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/42107>>, accessed 28 June 2017 by Sam Carnley.
3. **William Lewis (Luke) Hurst Family, Fleming Creek/Clear Springs area, north Walton County, ca 1894, from “The Heritage of Walton County, Florida,” p. 190.**
4. **Old Paxton High School, “1961-62 Paxtonian” Year Book, photographer unknown. Edited by Sam Carnley**
5. Walton County Heritage Museum, photo and editing by Sam Carnley.
6. Gladys D. Milton (1924-1999), Midwife, Flowersview/Paxton, photo by her daughter, Maria Milton. Also in “**The Heritage of Walton County, Florida,**” p. 249, and the September 2018 Newsletter at <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/GenSoc/NL2018Sep.pdf> Edited by Sam Carnley.
7. Walton County Heritage Museum, with sign painted by Sam Carney
8. Paxton Water Tower, Paxton, Florida, photo and editing by Sam Carnley.
9. Old Freeport School, constructed ca 1908, burned 1943. Photo from “**The Heritage of Walton County, Florida,**” p. 45. **Photographer unknown. Edited by Sam Carnley.**
10. *Floralia Saw Mill Company's engine number 3 - Paxton, Florida.* 1907. Black & white photonegative, 4 x 5 in. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory. Photographer unknown. <<https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/146972>>, accessed 7 September 2019 and edited by Sam Carnley. [Built in 1873 and Originally owned by New York, Ontario and Western Railroad Company as engine number 60; then owned by Southern Iron and Equipment Company as engine number 568 in 1907; then owned by Floralia Saw Mill Company as engine number 3 on March 3, 1907; returned to Southern Iron and Equipment Company and number changed to 915 on March 13, 1913; then owned by Louisiana Saw Mill Company as engine 50 in May, 1913.]

The Walton County Heritage Association, Inc. is a 501 (C) 3 Florida Not for Profit Corporation Recognized by the IRS as a Public Charity Organization for Tax Deductible Donations.

The Walton County Heritage Association was organized for four main purposes:

- To promote the preservation and restoration of buildings and other landmarks of historical interest within Walton County;
- To maintain the Walton County Heritage Museum to preserve the heritage of Walton County for the education and enjoyment of current and future generations by collecting, preserving, and exhibiting artifacts and information from the time of its original inhabitants to the present;
- To foster and enhance the development, education, and sense of history which is unique to Walton County; and
- To secure cooperation and unity of action between individual citizens, businesses, and other groups as may be necessary to fulfill these purposes.

The Association depends upon the support of its members and the business community to accomplish its goals. Annual dues are \$25 for individuals, \$40 for families and varying amounts for donors as shown on attached Annual Donor/Member Application for 2023. Donor logos are also shown on the attached Donor page in the monthly newsletter.

Annual Member/Sponsor Application 2023; See attached.

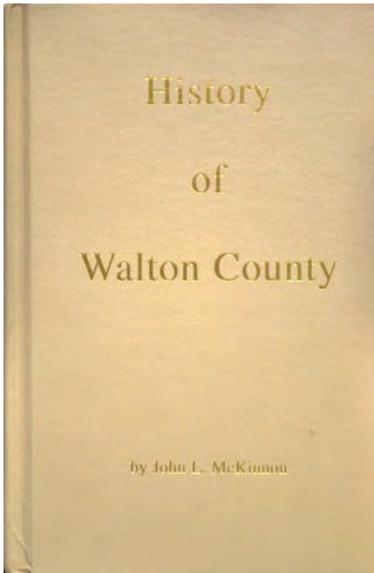
Member Benefits:

- Automatic membership in the **Walton County Heritage Museum** and the **Walton County Genealogy Society**.
- Invitations to Quarterly Members Meetings
- **Discounts** on Special Events
- **The Museum Research Center:** Members get free copies of documents and use of the Genealogy Society computer when the Museum is open.
- **The Museum Gift Shop:** Members receive discounts on books, special publications, postcards, photographs, CDs, DVDs, videos, and gift items.
- Free **subscriptions** to the WCHA Newsletter.

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From the Museum Gift Shop

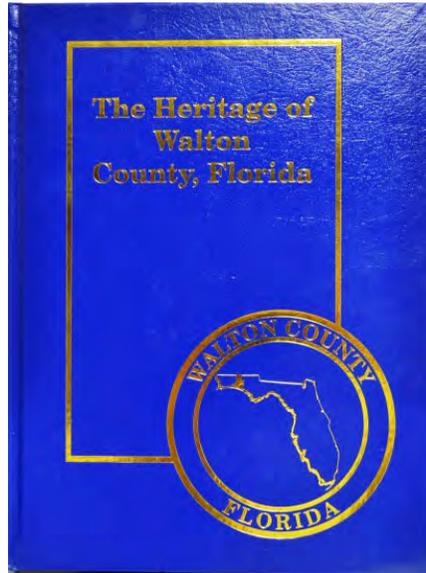
Our most popular books



History of Walton County

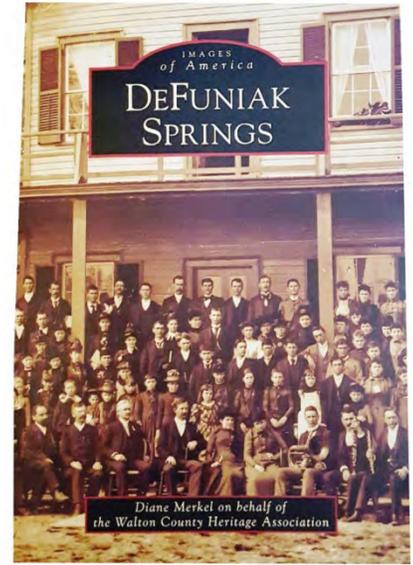
by John L. McKinnon. The Museum has sold out of this book and it is out of print, but it is available at these links;

<https://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/georgiabooks/pdfs/gb0503.pdf>, and <https://www.alibris.com/booksearch?mtype=B&keyword=history+of+walton+county&hs.x=0&hs.y=0>



The Heritage of Walton County, Florida. Item code B13.

Price: (Reduced) \$40.00
 Tax: 2.80
 Shipping: 8.00
 Total by mail **\$50.80**



Images of America, DeFuniak Springs. Item code B06.

By Diane Merkel. Price, including tax, **\$23.53.**

MAIL ORDER FORM

Walton County Heritage Association
 1140 Circle Drive
 DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435

Customer Name: _____

Address: _____

Ph./Email: _____

Qty	Description	Item Code	Price Each*	Amount
	The Heritage of Walton County, Florida	B13	50.80	
	Images of America, DeFuniak Springs.	B06	31.53	

*Price includes tax at 7% and shipping of \$8.00 per item.

Total

Sorry, credit cards not accepted. Please send check or money orders only. Do not mail cash. Please allow two weeks for delivery.



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1140 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, Florida, 32435, Ph. 850-401-2060

Website: <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org>

Email: HeritageMuseum@bighthouse.com

ANNUAL MEMBER/SPONSOR APPLICATION 2023

Name:

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Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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Member/Sponsor Category:

() Individual \$25.00, () Family \$40.00, () Sponsor \$100.00, () Silver Sponsor \$500.00, () Gold Sponsor \$1,000.00, () Platinum Sponsor \$2,000.00, () Additional Gift \$ _____ * Total Enclosed \$ _____ *Gift earmarked for: _____

Our Mission

The Walton County Heritage Association is a nonprofit organization that was organized for four main purposes:

1. To promote the preservation and restoration of buildings and other landmarks of historical interest within Walton County;
2. To maintain the Walton County Heritage Museum to preserve the heritage of Walton County for the education and enjoyment of current and future generations by collecting, preserving, and exhibiting artifacts and information from the time of its original inhabitants to the present;
3. To foster and enhance the development, education, and sense of history which is unique to Walton County; and
4. To secure cooperation and unity of action between individual citizens, businesses, and other groups as may be necessary to fulfill these purposes.

* Additional gift of over \$2,000.00 (any amount in excess of that number) would be greatly appreciated. You may earmark this gift for a specific expense/purchase of gift items for our museum.

- All donor categories are entitled to membership in the museum and Genealogy Society and 10% discount on museum gift shop purchases.
- For all levels of Sponsorship, the Walton County Heritage Association, Inc. will acknowledge sponsors on our website, in our newsletter and on a permanent plaque in the Museum. Sponsorships are on an annual basis from January to December. This is an acknowledgement of your gift only and does NOT constitute advertisement or the promotion of any individual, business or organization by the WCHA.

Please mail your check and this form to:
WALTON COUNTY HERITAGE ASSOCIATION, INC. 1140 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435.
THANK YOU!!!

The Walton County Heritage Association, Inc., is a 501(C)(3) charitable organization as defined by the IRS Code. Gifts may be tax deductible as defined by the Federal Income Tax Regulations. To request a receipt for your tax-deductible membership in the WCHA, or donation, please contact us.

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OUR SPONSORS for 2023

We dedicate this page to our sponsors in recognition of their generous support of our mission.

SPONSORS (\$100-\$499.00)

Rose Rogers, in memory of Doug Rogers (\$200.00)
Craig Bowen (\$100.00)
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Sally Merrifield (\$100.00)
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(None at present time)

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(None at present time)

PLATINUM SPONSORS (\$2,000 and up)

City of DeFuniak Springs



In the past the city has generously supported us with cash donations of \$2,000.00 annually, but due to changing budget priorities, was unable to do so in 2023. We wish to recognize the city's generosity however, for its **in-kind** donation of the RR depot which serves as the Walton County Heritage Association, Inc., Museum and administrative facility. The city provides maintenance and upkeep on the facility, and payment of electrical, water and waste disposal services as well. The value of this facility to us is far in excess of \$2,000.00 annually, for which we are deeply appreciative. Thank you, City of DeFuniak Springs.

Editor's Note

This month's article is a collection of three stories from the book, "The Heritage of Walton County, Florida," (pages 74-76). The first is titled "The Bear Hunt," by Edith Stafford Langley. Second is "Billy Fell Out," by Gene Wesley of Seagrove Beach, Florida. And the third is "The Bloomers Draw Fire," by Bill Steadley Campbell. Although these stories are available for reading in the "Heritage Book," not all our members have access to the book. So, we present the stories in the newsletter for the benefit of those lacking that access. In transcribing the narratives, I made every effort to hold my version as faithful to the originals in the book as possible, with only minimal editing needed.

Sam Carnley

The Bear Hunt

By
Edith Stafford Langley

Jock Brannon came back into his cabin from observing weather conditions." "Mary, it's cold enough to dress out a deer or a bear today, so I'm going over to Mark McLean's. He's low on meat too. His family said that a bear made some good eating that they killed last fall." Jock continued to talk about the hunt until breakfast was over.

"Better put me some of that venison and a big sweet potato in my hunting bag. Don't know just what time we'll get lucky," said Jock. "Well, you all be careful," said Mary. "A wounded bear is a vicious animal and be sure to ask Sarah when our next quilting party will be."

The three children kissed their father, and as the first gray light of dawn came, Jock and his two trusted dogs, Tige and Towser, were on their way. He rode his horse to the McLean home, and from there they walked into the forest west of his home. But they stopped for a while to talk about plans for the hunt.

"I saw a Mama Bear's tracks and her young's yesterday. They had killed and eaten the greater part of a big fawn. This happened about a quarter of a mile up this creek," said Mark. "Do you want to look for deer or bear?"

"It doesn't make any difference to me," said Jock, "which ever one we find first, I'd like to get it skinned and salted before dark, wouldn't you? Mary kinder wanted a bear rug like your wife has," Jock added.

"Well, you take your dogs and go up the east side of the creek, and I'll go along the west," said Mark. "If either of us finds something, we will blow three times on our gun barrel. Does that suit you?"

The dogs kept pacing and whining, for they were anxious to be on the hunt. Now, as the men parted, the dogs bounded away into the woods, but the hunters encouraged them to hunt quietly and at close range.

After an hour of walking, Tige and Towser began trailing and sending out sharp little barks, and in minutes, they came to a wild bee tree that had just been robbed by some bears. The bees were still buzzing angrily. Jock stopped and made sure his gun was ready to shoot. When he looked ahead again, he saw through the trees a huge bear up on his hind legs, charging at Tige and Towser. He wanted to blow three blasts on his gun but it was loaded.

The dogs were barking furiously and darting about to escape the strong paws of the bear, while they attempted to attack their adversary.

The big beast stood in front of a small cave so that nothing could get at him from the back. Poor Tige took the first mighty blow from the bear's left paw. Jock grimaced as his dog spun through the air and landed near his feet. Bloody claw marks showed on his chest. Jock aimed at the bear's heart, but the raging animal leaned to pelt Towser, who had sunk his teeth in the bear's right leg. His shot only wounded the left shoulder, and in a second Towser was knocked senseless to the ground, then the animal in all its fury was on Jock.

The man attempted to blow on his gun barrel again but the bear was too fast. Tige bit and barked to help his master but the beast kept tossing the dog through the air. In the meantime, Jock was bleeding from several serious bites from the bears mouth to his face, neck and shoulder, so he deliberately put his left arm in the bear's mouth to keep its deadly teeth from the more vital parts of his body.

Then Jock was pawed to the ground, but this gave him a chance to get his big knife out with his right hand. Jock began to stab the furious beast to sink that blade each time, for he was a desperate man.

At first, the vicious creature seemed not to notice the deep wounds, but Jock knew if he could endure and keep it up, the bear would soon go down. He began to feel sick and weak as the animal's hot blood filled his face and eyes, but he also felt the bear releasing his left arm, and then the great beast fell half on him and half on the ground.

Jock could not get up for his left arm was broken in several places, and was bleeding badly. He tried in desperation to move the bear with his right arm, but his efforts were useless. Tige limped over and began licking the blood from the face of the prostrate man. Jock saw the dog's left front leg was broken and the claw marks looked awful, but he said "Tige, old fellow, go get help if you can. "Hurry!" Tige wagged his tail and limped away.

Jock lay quietly wondering. He thought about Mary and his three children. He wondered about Towser – if he were dead.

When Jock waked up to consciousness, he was resting in a good soft bed at his friend's home. Mary and Dr. Bragg were with him and he was thankful.

“Don't try to move or talk now,” the Dr. said. “But I want to hear all about it another day. That is the biggest papa bear that has been killed in this area, and did you know that a mama bear and her last year's cubs were in the cave? Well, it'll keep until another day. You need rest and plenty of bear stew. Yes, Mary already has that big bear skin curing for a rug.”

“Billy Fell Out!”

By

Gene Wesley of Seagrove Beach, Florida

It was during the middle of the summer that I had another interesting experience with Billy Hughes and his brother Gene. The Hughes boys and my wife are first cousins and we all had lots of fun sharing water and beach activities every summer.

On this particular weekend Billy and Gene stopped by our house on Saturday afternoon on their way to the Ebro dog races to ask if I would take them fishing the next morning. They explained that their mama was at Grayton Beach for the weekend and was especially hungry for some red snappers. Since I require very little encouragement to go fishing anytime, and since the weather was perfect for offshore bottom fishing, I unhesitatingly agreed to go with them on their boat the next morning.

Their boat was used primarily for water skiing so I was to bring life jackets, buoys, anchor and line, along with the ice bait and fishing tackle. Their plan was to win big at the races and return early for a good night's sleep. The first of the plan worked well as they won several bets, including a couple of quinellas, but after the race track with pockets full of new money, they decided to stop at the “Y” bar in Panama City Beach to celebrate their winnings.

About 1:00 AM Gene remembered the fishing trip and asked Billy to go outside and check the weather. Billy saw some distant hot air lightning out in the Gulf and reported back to Gene that it appeared a storm was coming in – so the party continued until closing time.

When I arrived at their house at sun up, they estimated they had been in bed about one hour. It is needless to say they were not much help in getting the gear loaded

and the boat launched, but they did stumble around trying, and after downing a cold beer, Gene actually was able to talk a little bit.

The trip out to the snapper reef was uneventful. The Gulf was reasonably calm with a long swell that made the boat slowly rise and fall as we trolled offshore. The wind was blowing gently from the south and was pleasantly cool, but the sun was rising rapidly and promising a hot morning ahead.

When we arrived at the spot I had chosen to fish, Billy ran a bottom rig down and immediately got a bite. When he reeled up a nice red snapper, I prepared to get the boat anchored correctly so we could all fish without the boat drifting off.

I was hurriedly cutting bait and getting my tackle ready in anticipation of catching a good mess of fish and I failed to notice the Hughes brothers had suddenly gotten really quiet. When my fish baits hit the bottom, I felt a strong bite and reeled up two fine snappers that weighed about two pounds each.

As I hauled the fish into the boat I hollered, "Pair of snappers on the stern," and excitedly got my hooks cleared and rebaited to go down again when I first noticed Gene was sitting down with his rod resting on the gunwales of the boat. He yawned and seemed to be trying to get a deep breath. His face was pale and beads of sweat glistened on his forehead.

The sea was making the anchored boat move slowly up and down when Gene suddenly thrust his rod toward Billy and said "Here, hold this." He then hung his head over the side and threw up all kinds of stuff he had partaken at the "Y" bar. When Billy saw Gene's predicament he handed Gene's rod to me, rapidly reeled in his line, and placing his rod in the boat, he hung his head over the other side and started throwing up his toenails.

It made me kind of sad that the boys were seasick, but I knew they were not seriously ill, so I kept fishing. By the time I had my twelfth snapper in the boat, Gene made his first plea to go home. Since everything was going great for me, I rejected his suggestion completely. I scolded him about even thinking about going in when we were in the process of being successful in accomplishing the purpose of the trip, which was to catch his mama a mess of snappers. I reprimanded him even further because he was not helping catch the fish, which I had arbitrarily decided at that moment that a "mess" must number twenty-five.

Under the circumstances the Hughes boys would surely have forcefully taken charge and put me down, but in their present state I had no fear of reprisal. By the time I put snapper #21 in the box, Billy was praying I would catch a pair of fish on each of my next two downs. When number twenty-five went in the box, the Hughes brothers were already hauling in the anchor.

Once the boat started moving toward the beach my seasick friends made a remarkable recovery. They both joined me in drinking a cold beer and were good-natured when I teased them about the past couple of hours.

The wind had picked up considerably from the southwest making a fast chop on the surface of the Gulf, which is ideal for trolling for King mackerel. Gene was driving the boat and I was sitting in the forward seat beside him when Billy put out a mackerel lure and took a seat on the gunwale of the boat directly behind Gene.

At this point I think it is important to mention that Gene Hughes is a little hard of hearing. His family has always insisted that he use his disability as a crutch claiming that he hears only what he wants to hear. He also has a great sense of humor and with a dry wit is a good joke teller. He was in the process of telling me one of the humorous anecdotes of their evening before as he drove the boat about a mile offshore.

My attention was toward Gene, but I could see Billy adjusting the drag on his reel when a wave larger than usual broke at the side of the boat sending it off course. It was an unexpected change of direction and Billy, sitting precariously on the rail, tumbled overboard.

Gene quickly adjusted the plane of the boat as Billy emerged from the Gulf, holding his reel out of the water and treading water with his other hand. I quickly told Gene “Billy fell out” but he was intent on telling his story and didn’t hear me. By that time Billy was frantically waving his rod and shouting obscenities, and I was repeating myself and pointing at Billy. The boat had traveled a good hundred yards when Gene looked back and said “HEY, Billy fell out!”

I said “That’s what I was trying to tell you.” “Well,” Gene said dryly, adding “I guess we’d better go back and pick him up.” Without changing speed Gene turned the boat around and headed back toward Billy, who by this time, looked as though he thought he might have to swim in, but he was still holding his reel out of the water.

The best I can recall when Billy finally got back in the boat he had some choice words for his brother – and me. Gene’s explanation that he didn’t hear Billy yell when he went over-board did not soothe Billy’s feelings very much, but everybody was forgiven everything when Miss Lovey Dell Hughes, their mother, gave us her big smile of approval upon looking at her box full of iced red snappers.

“The Bloomers Draw Fire”

By

Bill Steadley Campbell

In the early days of the history of our fair city of DeFuniak Springs, Fla., the City Fathers conducted the business of our town on the basis of their sometimes “Puritanical” beliefs, and based their decisions on what they felt would strengthen the morality of the community.

In the late 1800s, Amelia Jenks Bloomer, of Homer, NY, became well known nationally as promoter of “Women’s Rights,” and introduced a “sensible costume” for women engaged in sports. The pants for the outfit were gathered at the knees (whatever that meant), and they were worn with or without skirts. Optional pants were sometimes made ankle length with a gathered bottom hem. These pants became known as “BLOOMERS.”

By the year 1910, we have evidence that these outfits had been introduced into our community, and it is suspected that the fashionable wear was perhaps worn by New Yorkers who came regularly to the Chautauqua Festivities. Since the co-ed Palmer College had begun in 1907, it is possible that the coaches of the girls’ teams at Palmer could have first introduced the bloomers for the activities of the teams.

Let it be understood that these outfits were no “Itsy, Bitsy, Teeny, Weeney Yellow Polka-dot Bikini” outfits. However, if Mother Teresa had walked down the front street in a “Bikini,” I doubt if there would have been much more consternation expressed than was shown about the appearance of a female on the streets wearing “Bloomers.”

The practice of appearing anywhere in public in such dress was offensive to many of our citizens. They felt that “Bloomers” were a contaminating influence on the morality of our town.

Consequently, when on March 27th, 1910, a communication came before the Town Council requesting that the Council prohibit men and women from playing baseball together and prohibiting the girls from wearing “Bloomers,” prompt action was necessary.

A game between the sexes had already been scheduled, and in order to maintain the peace, the Council, on motion of Mr. M. T. King, voted to allow the game which had been arranged and instructed Mayor W. W. Flournoy to prepare an ordinance regarding such matters to be ready for the next meeting.

Any of you who may have heard of Col. Flournoy would understand that he could put the heat on the Bloomers with his ordinance. Accordingly, on April 10th,

1910, an ordinance was adopted prohibiting men and women playing baseball, basketball, and football jointly together, and prohibiting women wearing “Bloomers” on the streets and parks of the Town.

I failed to check if this ordinance had been repealed, but I expect that if some of the old timers could come back and see the outfits that are presently worn by our jogging enthusiasts, they would request the Council to please repeal the 1910 ordinance, and pass one requiring that BLOOMERS be worn while jogging or walking around the Lake.