STORES

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neighbor's solution to scarce reliable transportation and bare road infrastructure.

"They were indispensable," Barren County's historian Sam Terry says.

But needs began dwindling gradually, as transportation and economic improvements bolstered access to town throughout the latter part of the 20th century, and the younger generations in particular left their rural communities. Cars and better infrastructure like paved roads and bridges had opened up access to jobs outside the farm, goods at a cheaper price, and school districts consolidated closer to town as one-room schools shuttered in the outskirts.

Farming had become mechanized and centralized, making it widely infeasible for families to sustain themselves on the small farms — which had been the region's economic linchpin. Meanwhile, whereas many stores had served as vital post offices closer to 1900, Rural Free Delivery spread regionally in the first part of the 20th century, bringing mail to people's doorsteps.

The closures picked up through the '60s, and by the '70s, numerous vacancies punctuated the region. Big box retailers and grocers began their advance on the region with a monopolistic purchasing power that surviving stores could not match. And, aging proprietors were passing away, often without anyone willing or able to continue the widely outdated business model as the increasingly diversified job market drew people to town.

By the '80s, these stores were all but gone from most of southcentral Kentucky.

Today, a tiny handful persist. Holding a magnifying glass to local needs, each adapts in its own way to changes in geography and community.

Most have shifted more toward down-home cookin' with ingredients from surrounding farms. In more rural counties like Allen and Hart, where the stores were prevalent longer, isolation from corporate competition still allows several to survive by selling tools, hardware and services required by farmers and other manual laborers.

What unites our communities, though, is a hold of memories cherished and mourned — of familiar faces, shared struggles and joys in a way of life — carried from one rustic, weathered building to the next.

LOGAN COUNTY

In the early 1800s, the limits of horse-and-ox travel, coupled with rudimentary dirt traces, hampered country communities' access to the markets, newspapers and other amenities of established towns like Russellville.

The stores became more common in Logan County after the railroads of the 1860s turned into economic lifelines, according to county historian Mark Griffin.



BOB BALLANCE

Ballance General Merchandise proprietor Henry Wilkins Ballance Sr. and his wife Bernice Simmons Ballance have their picture taken in 1886.

Communities like Olmstead and Red Oak — today known as Oakville — grew around the coal and water stops along the railway.

The Louisville & Nashville Railroad — as well as Owensboro & Nashville Railroad — ushered in customers and a wider range of merchandise, according to Griffin.

"It got everything that you needed," recalls lifelong Logan Countian Bob Ballance, whose grandfather owned and operated Ballance General Merchandise on Franklin Road beginning in 1886.

Country stores were known for their variety, and in the '40s, the Ballances sold everything from work garments to mule collars to shotgun shells. Beef sold in the store came from cattle his family slaughtered nearby. Customers bought or sold chicken, and creamers brought milk. Bob Ballance's grandfather was often outside filling gas tanks from beneath the roofed pumping station — something which became a staple at country stores.

Driving a semi-trailer and tank wagon trucks, Ballance saw them every 4-5 miles as he sold gasoline to the stores across Logan and Simpson counties in the mid-'50s.

And then, they started petering out, he says. His uncle sold the family shop to move, and it closed in the '60s along with many other of the county's stores. They waned in the '70s, and most disappeared by the '80s, Griffin says.

He knows just one survivor: Keysburg Country Store & Family Restaurant, in Olmstead near the Tennessee state line.

Asked what was lost, Ballance recalls his grandfather's pot-bellied stove and pool table, and the meat-slicer for meals eaten together.

"The community," he says.

"It was the community area."

"Everybody came ... for one reason or another."

— To be continued next Sunday.



BOYCE GENERAL STORE

Roger and Joe Hughes sit in front of Boyce General Store for a picture in 1939 and 2012.



BRIE GOLLIHER

Boyce General Store in days past.

POLICE NEWS

Barren man accused of assaulting, robbing roommate

The Daily News

A Barren County man was arrested Monday after his roommate accused him of robbing and assaulting him.

The Barren County Sheriff's Office said it received a report Oct. 30 about a robbery at a residence on Carden Road.

Deputies made contact with the victim, who said that Christopher Parker, 25, of Glasgow, was responsible, the sheriff's office said.

Detectives located Parker on Monday, and Parker admitted during questioning to assaulting the man and stealing cash and other items from him, the sheriff's office said.

According to an arrest citation, the victim was hospitalized with multiple facial injuries when police first made contact with him.

Parker reportedly said that he took a jacket, cell phone and $12 during a fight with his roommate, who Parker claimed owed him money, the citation said.

Parker was charged with first-degree robbery and second-degree assault, and remains in Barren County Corrections Center under a $15,000 cash bond.

TWO DEAD IN ALLEN HOUSE FIRE

A house fire early Monday morning claimed the lives of two people in Scottsville.

According to the Allen County-Scottsville Crime Task Force, emergency personnel were dispatched around 2:48 a.m. to 54 Turkey Foot Lane in Scottsville.

The fire resulted in the deaths of Martha J. Hammerson and Bruce A. Hammerson, according to the task force.

No foul play is suspected, and the circumstances surrounding the fire and the deaths of the two people remain under investigation, which is being conducted by the task force and the Scottsville Fire Dept.

BG

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Khadim on the other counts in the jury's mind.

"I think there is a very real risk of a jury putting both of these defendants in the same basket," Burton said Thursday. "Most of the evidence would not be admissible if Mr. Khadim were to be on trial by himself."

Warren County Commonwealth's Attorney Kori Beck Bumgarner argued that Fadil and Khadim can be tried together because it is alleged that the two participated in the same act or series of acts constituting the criminal offenses charged against them.

Bumgarner said that she was prepared to prove that Fadil met with Lee on the night of the homicide and that the two traveled to Shanty Hollow, where Lee was killed with a hammer.

Fadil then drove back to the home he shared with Khadim and then traveled with the body to Morgantown Road, where the Jeep with the body inside was allegedly staged to appear as if it had been in an accident, Bumgarner said.

Cell phone tower data for Fadil, Khadim and Lee help to establish the prosecution's contention that Fadil and Khadim acted together. according to Bumgarner.

"These three phones appear to travel back out to the scene of the murder at Shanty Hollow and are co-located, all three together," Bumgarner said.

In ruling against the motion for separate trials, Cohron said that he did not see any prejudicial effect arising out of having Fadil and Khadim tried together.

During the hearing, Cohron asked if a plea offer had been extended to either defendant in the case, and Bumgarner said an offer had been made known to Fadil recommending a total sentence of 30 years in prison in exchange for a guilty plea to murder and the other counts.

Questioned by Cohron, Fadil said he was aware of the offer and that he had declined it.

GREENWOOD

Continued from 1A

national management partner, the focus will be on investing in the property, enhancing operations, attracting new retailers, supporting existing tenants, and creating an even better experience for shoppers and visitors."

Greenwood Mall opened in 1979 and contains more than 850,000 square feet of shopping space.

It opened following the closure of the Bowling Green Mall, which stood at the corner of Nashville Road and Campbell Lane in the building now home to Western Kentucky University's Innovation Campus.

Spinoso will handle leasing for stores at the mall going forward, and will focus on improvements to the property, operations and community engagement, according to the release.

"Greenwood Mall has been an important part of Bowling Green for generations, and we believe its best days are still ahead," Spinoso head Carmen Spinoso stated in the release. " ... We look forward to working with the new ownership and the Bowling Green community to build on what is already here and create something everyone can be proud of."

Spinoso has worked with numerous shopping malls across the United States, including the Jefferson Mall in Louisville.