

Across The Savannah

The Stoves of My Life

By TOM POLAND
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Early on, my grandmothers cooked on wood-burning stoves and, later, electric ranges. Cooking with electricity. That must have seemed a marvel to them. I never, however, saw them use a kerosene oil stove. In fact, I never heard of a kerosene stove until I stumbled across the rusty remains of this old New Perfection No. 34 four-burner top. It seemed too flimsy to be a wood stove, still something inside said, "That has to be the remains of an old stove."

And it was. Royce Grizzard of McCormick confirmed it was indeed an old kerosene oil stove. My first thought was "sounds dangerous," and my second thought was "must have tainted the food." I have an old kerosene lamp my daughter, Becky, gave me, and when it burns you can smell it from afar. But many a home used a New Perfection Kerosene Stove.

In the 1870s, farm kitchens used kerosene stoves as households shifted from wood or coal to oil fuel. Now it seems folks would have used them solely on screen porches or outside, but the literature says they were used inside as well. Along comes an enterprising fellow, Frank Drury who approached Henry Parsons Crowell about building and selling a "lamp stove." A patent resulted and the Cleveland Foundry Company began building and selling the New Perfection Stove in 1888.

Around 1922, more than one had made its way down South. At the time, Americans were using over 3,000,000 Perfection kitchen stoves and ranges. Some marketing helped. "If your husband can afford a riding plow, you can afford an oil stove."

Well, maybe not. Wood I saw, kerosene, I didn't. My maternal grandmom cooked on a wood stove



I recently stumbled across the rusty remains of this old New Perfection No. 34 four-burner top. (Photos by Tom Poland).

when I was a boy. My memories fade but seems it had metal plates you could remove with a detachable handle. I recall, too, her handsome, heavy cast iron black skillets. I have several of Mom's skillets and a cast iron cornbread pan. Treasures all, they're every bit as effective today as they were in the old days.

Seeing the remnant of that vin-

tage kerosene stove set me to thinking and I took inventory of the stoves of my life. Mom first had an antique white stove with those coiled burners that sooner or later would warp and sit cockeyed. When she turned one on it would go from a dull gray to a cherry-red glow. Later she and dad bought one of those stoves that fit in an island, stainless steel it was, but its burners were also coils. They placed burner covers with sunflowers over them.

When I bought my house it had an electric stove. As I moved pots around, I'd discover a burner wasn't heating at all. The contacts were loose. So, I bought a glass-top four burner Maytag. Works great but you've got to keep the glass spic and span.

My memory fails me yet again. For the life of me, I cannot remember what my maternal grandmother cooked on her wood stove, but I remember this. It seemed primitive, like I had gone back to the 1800s or farther back to pioneer days. It was hot but standing near it on a winter day felt wonderful. From what I've heard, managing the temperature of a wood stove took skill.

Folks thought they had it pretty good when kerosene stoves came along. Just imagine what they'd thought about microwaves. Now turn your imagination to high and wonder what our descendants will cook on in 2122, if there's such a thing as 2122 or cooking. Seems George Jetson's wife, Jane, that perky redhead, used a Dial-A-Meal that popped out a meal-in-a-pill. Maybe that's where we're headed. Fine. All y'all future connoisseurs have at it. I'm fine with my gas grill and Maytag glass-top, but know this: wood's as good as ever. Sure, pit-cooked barbecue is old-fashioned, but its aroma and taste are just a tad shy of culinary heaven.

Artisan event cancelled

All Lincoln Artisans January events have been cancelled. The next board meeting will be held Wed., March 3, 6 p.m., in the Development Authority Board Room.

Festival entries wanted

The American Legion Post 194 and Classic South Quilt Guild is looking for entries for their upcoming quilt, craft and sewing festival scheduled for June 12-13. If you have quilts, sewing crafts, or toys, novelty items, ceramics, paintings, jewelry, etc., please contact Linda Buesching at 706-359-1572 or Al Ewing at 661-666-3749 for more information on entering your items.

Sit, Sew classes

The American Legion is hosting additional classes: "Sit & Sew" classes, meet monthly on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday morning, from 11:00 a.m to 4:00 p.m.

"Quilting Classes" are monthly, on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday, 7-9:30 p.m. Call Linda Buesching/Instructor at (706) 359-1572.

Sewing and quilting stations are appropriated spaced and masks are required.

All levels of quilting welcome. The cost is a "donation" to the American Legion.

Divorce care group

Are you divorced or separated? Need Godly guidance with others who are struggling also? Faith Community Church is starting a Divorce-Care group starting on Sept. 2 that will meet for 13 weeks. It will be on Wednesday nights from 7-8 p.m. Childcare is available. Please email Lee.haskins7@gmail.com for more information or see church's website.

Ellis fund set up

The Coach Ellis Dedication Fund has been set up at Farmers State Bank for those wishing to make a contribution to help with funding the sign and plaque recently approved for the track and field at Lincoln County High School and to initiate a scholarship fund in his honor. Those wishing to contribute can drop a check off at FSB or mail to P.O. Box 99, Lincolnton, GA 30817. Make the check payable to the Coach Ellis Dedication Fund.

Planning, zoning meetings

The City of Lincolnton Planning & Zoning Board meetings for 2021 are scheduled as follows: March 30, April 27, May 25, June 29, July 27, Aug. 31, Sept. 28, Oct. 26, Nov. 30, Dec. 28. These meetings will be held in City Hall at 5:30 p.m. each month if there is an agenda.

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Radford graduates from VSU

Ida Radford of Lincolnton, Georgia, has earned the Education Specialist in Instructional Technology from Valdosta State University.

Radford was among nearly 900 students who completed their degree requirements during Fall Semester 2020.

"I am incredibly proud of our graduates for having the dedication to over-

William Leroy earns Faculty Honors at GIT

William Leroy of Lincolnton, earned the distinction of Faculty Honors for Fall 2020 at the Georgia Institute of Technology. This designation is awarded to undergraduate students who have earned a 4.0 academic average for the semester.

One of the nation's leading research universities, the Georgia Institute of Technology is in the business of Creating the Next: the next idea, the next technology, and the next legion of agile minds well-equipped to imagine and engineer our future.

Nearly 40,000 undergraduate and graduate students are enrolled, and Georgia Tech is ranked in the nation's top 10 public universities by U.S. News & World Report.

For more information, visit gat.edu.

come countless obstacles, including this ongoing global health crisis, and to finish strong and reach this significant milestone," said Dr. Richard A. Carvajal, president of VSU. "I am similarly so proud of the world-class faculty and staff who supported these students through life-changing teaching, mentoring, advising, research, community engagement opportunities, and much more on their journey to this special day."

Established in 1906, Valdosta State University is a premier comprehensive university that offers both the extensive academic, cultural, and social opportunities of a major university and the small classes and close, personal attention of smaller institutions.

VSU boasts more than 100 degree, certificate, and endorsement programs on campus and online for undergraduate and graduate students, as well as a full menu of extracurricular activities, from national championship athletic and academic teams to honors organizations, sororities and fraternities, intramural sports, educational and service clubs, a symphony orchestra, art and theatre, research opportunities, and more.

VSU is committed to creating a campus culture focused on individual student success, providing students with expanded transformational and experiential learning opportunities, and increasing regional impact by serving as a resource and innovative leader for South Georgia.

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Construction class treated to 'thank you' pizza
Coach Roy Johnson treated students in Dwayne Connors construction class to Papa's Pizza for building a wall that tennis players will use for practicing their forehand and backhand stroke. Students and faculty enjoying the treat were (l-r) parapro Mrs. Harding, Reggie Reid, Andre Freeman, and (front) Jackson Bryant.

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