

# Joyce Tate Bannister

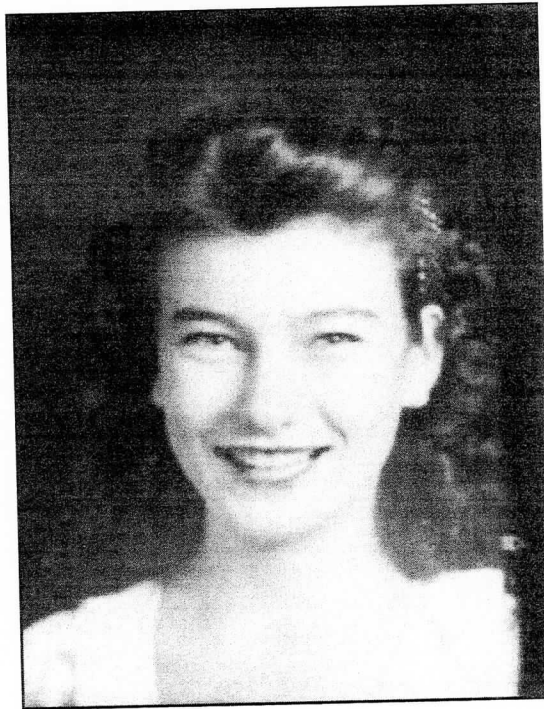
by Valerie Warr

My name is Joyce Tate Bannister. My aunt named me. She said she saw the name in the paper, it was Marthena. Have you ever heard of Marthena? Marthena Joyce. I am a sixth generation Fayette countian. My mother is Stella McEachern Tate. She married John W. Tate in 1928. My dad had gone to Atlanta to work for the Western Union. They set up housekeeping in West End in Atlanta, and I was born in 1929. I was known as a depression baby. My Dad later lost his job, and there were some real rough years. I don't remember those years because there was always lots of love and caring in our home.

I have a brother who is two years younger. His name is Bill Tate. I also have a sister, eight years younger. Her name is Janice Lynch. They both live in the Fayetteville area. My mother is still living on the home place. She was one hundred years old on June 18, 2000. My dad died in 1980.

When I was about five years old my family moved from West End to College Park. This is where my sister Janice was born. My dad lost his job soon after we moved to College Park, and for several years he worked at whatever jobs he could get. Times were hard for a lot of families.

When things began to look so bleak, he said, "Well I know I could feed my family by going back to the farm." My parents had both grown up in Fayette County and my mother had some property on Redwine Road that she inherited from her mother. I remember the moving day was in March 1941. My uncle from



*Joyce Tate Bannister  
Nov. 15, 1944*

Fayetteville came to get us and moved what possessions we had to a little old farmhouse on Redwine Road in Fayette County. It had three rooms. There was no electricity or running water. I had been accustomed to going across the street to school, turning on lights, and running water. Talk about an unhappy camper! I'm sure my parents had real mixed feelings about moving. It took us about all day to move. It was late when we arrived. We had to buy a wood cook stove to cook on, and Daddy hadn't put

that up, so we built an open fire. I'll always remember that night. The fire was so comforting and warm. It was just like Little House on the Prairie. We had moved on Saturday, so we had to get up and go to school on Monday. It was about two or more miles to the bus stop. Mother couldn't go with us to school. We just had to tell the teacher who we were and give our records. I remember Mrs. Lema Peebles was the principal and she was so kind to us. I was in the sixth grade and Billy was in the fourth.

Soon after we got settled, my Mother ordered baby chickens from Sears Roebuck and they delivered them by mail. Can you imagine that? I couldn't believe it. The postman came up and I heard this peep, peep, peep. It was a big box with holes all around it. The little chicks were the sweetest things, but we had to keep the hawks from catching them.

Folks made their own clothes.



*1944 - We always had cats and dogs!  
Joyce Bannister, right, with sister, Janice. Neighbors,  
Lydia and Jane Stinchcomb, foreground.*

Some made their clothes out of chicken feed sacks, but we didn't have any sacks. My mom was a good seamstress, but I always thought that I would rather have store-bought clothes than homemade ones. I soon found out that my homemade ones were a lot prettier and better than the store-bought ones.

You know what happened on December 7, 1941. I remember it was on a Sunday. My uncle came that afternoon to tell us that Pearl Harbor had been bombed. We did not know it; we didn't have a battery-operated radio. The next day when we went to school, all classes went into the auditorium to hear President Roosevelt speak to the nation. It still makes goose bumps go all over me. I was in the seventh grade. I went to seventh through eleventh grades in the old high school that burned, where the present Board of Education is built. I graduated in 1946, so most of my high school days were during World War II.

Everybody had family and friends in the war. My uncle was in the North African Invasion and later Italy. Later we got a radio, but there was no television. We could hear about the war and knew it was terrible, but it was not like seeing the news on television today.

Everybody had somebody they were waiting to hear from all the time. I remember walking to school after we moved to Fayetteville. In 1943 my dad traded the farm on Redwine Road for a farm on Grady Avenue in Fayetteville. The Spring Hill Elementary School and the Fayette Middle School are built on part of the ninety-eight acre farm. The street to the school was lined with beautiful trees and houses. It was unpaved. The Blalock house was right on the corner where the county complex is now. In most all of the windows or doors of the homes there would be flags with stars representing those who were away in service. I remember the Burch house - it's still standing - it had



*Joyce Bannister with her Mother and Daddy, John and Stella Tate, and sister, Janice, and brother, Bill in 1950's*

six stars. Walking down that street everyday, it was a different world. It was peaceful except for the war rationing. We didn't get but one or two pairs of shoes a year. Sugar, gas, tires, stockings and a lot of other things were rationed.

During the war it was hard to get teachers. A very special teacher to me was Frances Corry.

She boarded in the big house across from Arby's. Most all the teachers boarded with Mrs. Wise. Frances Corry came in '41. She was the Librarian, and taught English and literature. They couldn't get a physics teacher, so she taught physics for a while. All the students just loved her. Before she came, we didn't have a school paper, and we didn't have a student government.

Our school paper was called "Hi Time." I was circulation manager my senior year. We ran the paper off on a mimeograph machine. Many have never heard of a mimeograph machine. I have several copies I have saved and in one there is a good article about when President Roosevelt died in 1945. I don't know who wrote it, it might have been Jim Minter. We didn't have much to work with, but we had good brains and a teacher to encourage us.

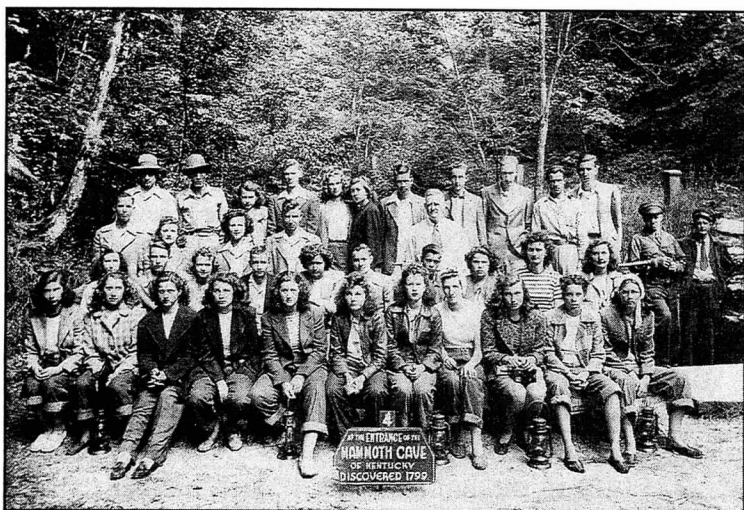
The Fayette County Alma Mater was written by Frances Corry. When we began to play basketball, we did not have an Alma Mater. She said, "Every school has an Alma Mater." So she got a bunch of the students together and we wrote the one that is sung today. She then said, "We've got to have a glee club," so she started the glee club.

She coached a lot of the plays. We didn't have TV and movies; school and church activities were primarily what the town did. Everybody looked forward to the Junior Senior plays. The year I was a senior, Frances Corry and Christine Harkness coached the senior play. I was in it along with others. After

school we would have practice in the auditorium. After each scene the curtain would be pulled. One day back stage all of us in the play decided we'd just crawl out the window and go to town, leaving our teachers sitting out in the auditorium waiting for the curtain to be pulled for the next scene. Meanwhile, we were all traipsing to the drug store. We all went in and got some ice cream. Well, I guess they figured it out pretty quick, because Misses Corry and Harkness marched in and said that there will not be a senior play this year. You know they could look real mean and serious, and we thought "Oh, we've done it now." We all began to cry and plead, and they were laughing on the other side of their face. I guess that was about the worst thing we ever did. It was a very simple kind of living.

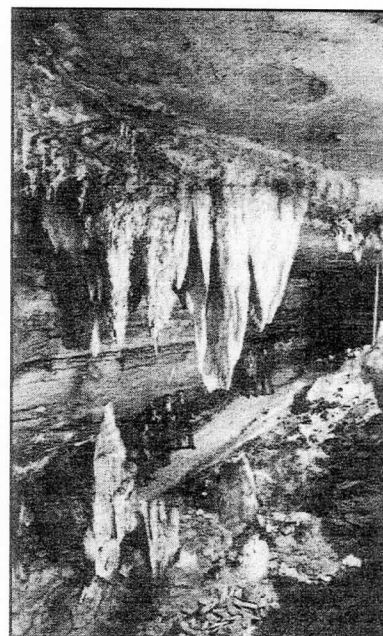
For lunch, there was no fancy cafeterias. You certainly couldn't go get pizza or a hamburger. You ate what they fixed in the lunchroom, which was a lot of peas and cornbread, or turnip greens.

Christine Harkness taught math, and she was the girl's basketball coach. We did not have a coach for the boys and Dr. R. H. Arnall bought Beadles' Drug Store on the square and agreed to coach the boy's basketball team. I loved basketball and so did my brother. The gym was a big old thing and it had one big old potbelly stove. Talk about cold! I read where Jim Minter was talking about the gym and said they went under the seats to change clothes because they didn't have dressing rooms. It was very rustic or whatever you want to call it, but we played basketball and we loved it!



*Joyce Bannister's Senior Class on their class trip to Mammoth Cave, Kentucky.*

Each year the Junior-Senior Prom was the highlight. We usually had it at the Post House - the American Legion. We had punch and cookies for refreshments and the girls would walk around the Post House with a boy. Sometimes you would hold his hand if you liked him, and sometimes you didn't. The girls had a prom card where the boys listed their names.



*Postcard from Mammoth Cave.*

Other activities were wiener roasts at church and sometimes the Sunday school class would do things. We would always have a 'possum hunt. Dwight Kirby who lived on Sandy Creek Road had the best 'possums. We would usually go to his farm around Halloween or early fall. He had big old barns and scary shacks that we decorated at Halloween.

Sometimes the town kids would go to one another's house and sit around talking. Frances Corry knew that these kids needed something to do, so she talked with some of the parents. Soon we started having what was called "Rec. Hall." It wasn't that we wrecked something, but we had it in the gym on Saturday nights. We had a record player and played Glen Miller, and Tommy Dorsey records and danced the jitterbug. We'd have refreshments. There were always parents there to chaperon. The music of those war years was very special even to this day.

Our class went to Mammoth Cave, Kentucky for our class trip. Can you imagine riding that far on a school bus? We didn't have any chartered busses. For many it was the first time to travel out of state. We spent the first night in Chattanooga, Tennessee, which we thought was fabulous. There was just thirty-three in our class.

When I was fifteen I got a job at the telephone exchange in town. It was located in a house next



door to the Methodist Church. My paycheck was about ten dollars a week. I worked Friday night, half the day Saturday, and Sunday afternoon. They employed many of the schoolgirls to say, "Number please." If there was a fire, we had a volunteer fire department and only one fire truck, which usually wouldn't start. When there was a fire to report, people would call the telephone operator, and you would ring Mrs. Lois Seawright at the drug store. She would send someone to the courthouse to pull on the chain to dong, dong, dong on the clock. Everyone would come running to learn where the fire was and get the old truck started.

I remember one Friday night in particular. I was working in December of 1946 when the Winecuff Hotel caught on fire. It was two or three o'clock in the morning and they called asking if we had any ambulances that we could send. They said it was a bad fire and they needed all the help possible. The only thing Fayetteville had was Redwine's Funeral Home, and I called them.

One thing I have thought of many times - if my dad had stayed in College Park a little longer in 1941, times would have changed and there would have been lots of jobs because everybody went off to war. What would my life have been? I probably would not have

**FAYETTE COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL**  
**Graduation Exercises**  
 Monday Evening, May 27, 1946  
 8:30 P. M.

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Prayers—"Aide March" ..... Verdi  
 Invocation ..... Rev. Lomas T. Watkins  
 Exhortation ..... C. B. Harris  
 Recitation Address ..... Rev. James Leroy Steele  
 Solo—"In The Garden of Tomorrow"  
 "The World is Waiting For The Sunrise" ..... Senior Class  
 Voluntary ..... Carroll Books  
 Delivery of Diplomas and Awards ..... Miss Elizabeth Redwine  
 Alma Mater ..... Senior Class  
 Benediction—"Aide March" ..... Verdi

**FIRST HONOR ROLL**

Carroll Books, Valedictorian ..... C. B. Harris, Salutatorian  
 Ann Cox, Historian

**SECOND HONOR ROLL**

Eva Mae Smith	Carolyn Turner
Billy Parr	Joyce Tate
Edith Cobb	Louise Lee
Helen Peak	Pearlie Matthews
Carol Walker	Frances Stinchcomb
Mae Hill	Travis Hardy
	Hopine Davis

graduated from Fayette County. It probably would have been Russell High or some other school. After high school I went to business school. Not many in my class went to college. We did not have scholarships, and money for school was not there. In 1947 I went to work for the Georgia Baptist Convention as a secretary. I worked there for forty-one years. It was great place to work and very fulfilling.

**The Senior Class**  
 OF  
**Fayette County High School**  
 PRESENTS  
**"BOLTS AND NUTS"**  
 By Jay Tobler

APRIL 22, 1946 ..... 8:30 P. M.

SCENE: A Health Resort Somewhere in Missouri.  
 TIME: Late Spring.

**C H A R A C T E R S**

Hester Bolt—Rebecca's niece	Helen Harper
Louie Spink—The Man who winks	Louise Lee
Rebecca Bolt—Manager of the Bolt Sanatorium for Mental Hygiene	Joyce Tate
Morris Grubb—The Cook, a Melancholic	Carol Walker
Twink Starr—Rebecca's friend, with delusions of Grandeur	C. B. Harris
Dr. Hippocrates Joy—A Psychiatrist	Henri Cooper
Henry Barber—Punter, afraid of lunatics	Carroll Books
Phineas Phinetti—A Lawyer with a humanity complex	Alb. Hatch
Miss Prudence Fisk—A Patient with Clayeyprobitis	Anna Cox
Customer Clippy—A Patient afraid of cats	J. C. Newman
Mrs. Gertrude Glump—A Patient who frays collimation	Wilda Gray
Willow Glump—Her darling child	Myrta Owen
Jack Gordon—A young inmate	Travis Hardy

**SYNOPSIS OF ACTS**

ACT I: Living room of the Bolt mansion, about eleven o'clock, of a late spring morning.

ACT II: The same as ACT I. Several hours later.

ACT III: The same as in previous acts, a few moments later.

Stage Manager, Edith Cobb.  
 Coached by Misses Frances Curry and Christine Matthews.

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In 1971 I married Ernie Bannister of Tate, Georgia. We lived in Smyrna for seventeen years. We anticipated moving back to Fayetteville upon retirement. My dad wanted us to build a home on the farmland on Grady Avenue, but

Fayetteville was growing and changing. Before my dad died in 1980, he walked down in the woods back of our home place to show us where he thought was a good place for us to build. It was a beautiful spot, but the more Ernie and I saw just how the traffic was getting, we decided to locate in Woolsey. Down in Woolsey I've renewed a lot of friendships. Among them was Addie Oakley, whose sister, Jean, I knew in school. She was so pretty and won all the beauty contests. As you go through life there are people you come in contact with and you realize they are special. You gain so much from others, and in the process you give to others too!