

Has lived 75 of her 100 years in Rockcastle

Mrs. Cynthia Cox's life spans century

Twenty-five year old Miss Cynthia Brewer of Wooten (a community between Hyden and Hazard) in Leslie County came to Mt. Vernon in 1925 to teach home economics at Langdon Girls Boarding School. The school was on Williams Street in Mt. Vernon where Jeff and Twila Burdette now live and next door to where Mrs. Cox still lives. During the five years she spent teaching at Langdon, Cynthia met and married a young local bank teller, Vernon Cox.

Immediately following their marriage, the Coxes spent four years in Santa Fe, New Mexico where they worked, she as a dietitian, and he as a manual trainer in a Presbyterian girls' boarding school, whose student included mainly Native Americans.

In 1934, when they returned to Mt. Vernon, Langdon was in the process of closing its doors to merge with the new high school, and so they bought from the Presbyterian Board, the "model cottage" next door to Langdon, where Mrs. Cox still has residence. The cottage, built around the turn of the century, was once the parsonage for the Presbyterian Church. When Mrs. Cox taught home economics there, the building was used by the school as a training center for teaching girls practical lessons in home management. Groups of six eighth grade girls spent six weeks living in the cottage. Each week, they assumed the roles of a different family member - mother, father, siblings. The girls shopped, planned meals and budgets, cooked, and cleaned.

The cottage, from time to time, served as a clinic for tonics/tonicisms. The nursing staff at Langdon assisted Dr. Pennington (from London) in surgery as well as in supervising the convalescence. Mrs. Cox's tonic/surgery took place there and resulted in a life-threatening hemorrhage which nurses were finally able to control. Later, during the Depression, Mr. and Mrs. Cox worked as supervisors for the NYA, a government supported program for youths. Mr. Cox built a little succo building on the back side of their property to use as a shop to teach the boys woodworking skills. It later was made into a dwelling. Among other things, the boys made chairs and tables for classrooms. It was during this time that the youths built the stone wall around the little city park at the corner of Main Street and Richmond Street.

Mrs. Cox taught the girls to sew and the clothes they made were provided to those who needed them. Her classes were taught in the vacated Langdon classroom. After their NYA employment, Mr. and Mrs. Cox both worked for Ralph Griffin, a local furniture dealer. Mr. Cox also worked some for C.C. Cox Hardware, and Mrs. Cox was employed for several years at the Mt. Vernon Locker Plant located where Jim's Used Furniture Store is now.

In the late 1930s, Mr. Cox made his wife a loom, patterned after the ones at Berea's Church Hill Weavers. She taught herself how to use it from books and "bluffing her way through" she said. At first, she wove rugs for herself and friends. Later, in 1962 when Mr. Lair opened a craft shop at Renfro Valley, she sold him some of her weavings. Her business steadily grew to include placemats and table runners as well as rugs. Following a severe fall which resulted in injury to her back, Mrs. Cox was unable to supply her regular customers who liked to buy her handmade items, especially for gifts.

According to Mrs. Cox, her husband, who was nicknamed Swifley as a young paperboy by a Judge Brown who was always ready for his paper before it arrived, was quite a designer. He designed and together they crafted almost all of their furniture including chests, buffets, chairs, tables, beds, and cabinets.

They preferred to use either walnut or cherry wood. Their acorn bed was designed after Mr. Cox observed an acorn and reproduced it as exactly as possible. Their cabinets are designed with glass panels in the doors. Despite the fact that Mr. Cox was afflicted with a crippling and very painful arthritis, he was self-suffi-

cient until about four years before his death. Among his other numerous interests and hobbies were drawing, oil painting and gardening.

The skill and artistic ability of these two impressed most of those who took the time to know them, but also of significance in the lives of this couple was their obvious delight in and appreciation of the natural beauty of the earth. Simple things most people overlook or take for granted were noticed by the Coxes. Shiny and new store-bought things do not decorate the Cox house, but rather bouquets of bittersweet or dried flowers from the garden, handmade baskets, and hand-rubbed rocks found in the backyard or a piece of driftwood - things that because they cannot be bought in a department store, might

have their beauty and value overlooked.

Appropriately, because they both loved and appreciated good woods, Mrs. Cox chose a solid walnut casket for Mr. Cox when he died and placed upon it a beautiful flowering houseplant they had been awaiting bloom shortly before his death.

Also touching to those who knew them as a couple was the mutual devotion, respect and admiration they seemed to share.

Mrs. Cox will be celebrating her 100th birthday this May 16. Her mailing address is: Mrs. Cynthia Cox, Williams Street, Mt. Vernon, Ky. 40456.

Revised and reprinted from a 1980 article written for the Mt. Vernon Signal by Nancy Mullins.



Vernon and Cynthia Cox

Second Section Thursday, May 4, 2000

Cedar Rapids Dolphins

The Cedar Rapids Dolphins will meet on Sunday, May 7th at 3 p.m. at the clubhouse to register, pay fees and get suit sizes.

Our coach for the 2000 summer is Jessica Albright.

Get ready for a great swim season.

For further information call Lisa Clontz at 758-4825 or Linda Clontz at 256-9364

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TOPS
(Take off Pounds Sensibly)
TOPS meets Thursday at 6 p.m. at Broadhead Christian Church basement on Main St. in Broadhead. For more info, call 1-800-932-TOPS or locally 758-4047.

Bookmobile Schedule
Mon., May 8th: Calloway, Red Hill, Livingston and Lamoer.
Tues., May 9th: Pine Hill, Maple Grove, Climax and Three Links.
Wed., May 10th: Spiro, Level Green and Willitsville.

Kiwanis Club
The Rockcastle Kiwanis meets Thursday at noon at the Kastle Inn Restaurant. All visitors are welcome.

Marine Corps League
Bluegrass Chapter 1012 of the Marine Corps League meets every fourth Thursday of the month at the Ridge Club at the Bluegrass Army Depot. For more info, call Jack Dittmer at 369-7310 or Nathan Seals at 256-0741.

JobStart
Can't find a job? Need new skills? JobStart, a job skills training program, can help. For more info, call Jennifer at 256-9612.

VA Rep Here
VA representative will be at the Rockcastle County Courthouse the first and third Mondays of each month behind County Judge/Executive's office from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

New TOPS Chapter
TOPS, a non-organizational, no diet to follow, no dietary products to pay, \$20 annual membership fee. Brindle Ridge Vol. Fire Dept. in Conway. 256-2490 or 256-3633. 1-800-932-8677.

DAR Meeting
Rockcastle Chapter DAR meeting will be May 9th at 7 p.m. at Rockcastle Steak House, topic: DAR Schools and Literacy, speaker to be announced.

Retirement Dinner
Parker Seal Retirement Dinner will be at Dinner Bell in Berea May 9th at 11:00.

National Day of Prayer
National Day of Prayer meeting on Thursday, May 4th at 12 noon on Front steps of courthouse. Community Prayer Walk May 6th for our country, meet at the middle school parking lot at 9 a.m. for prayer and sacraments. Please join us. Sponsored by Rockcastle Ministerial Association.

Domestic Violence Coordinating Council
The Domestic Violence Coordinating Council will meet at 3 p.m. on Thursday, May 11 at Community

Based Services, Protection and Permanency, located in the South Building on West Main Street in Mt. Vernon. New members are welcome to join this effort to decrease all forms of domestic violence. We welcome representatives from court, law enforcement, counseling, education, social services, advocacy groups, and any others whose work includes domestic violence issues.

R.A.A.P. Meeting
Rockcastle Adoption Agency for Pets Inc. meets the first Sunday of each month at 2 p.m. Help build an animal shelter in Rockcastle County. Call Terry at 758-9202 or Vickie 256-5183 for directions.

Fish Fry
Everyone welcome to Broadhead Vol. Fire Dept. Fish Fry, Sat., May 6th from 6 to 8 p.m. Carry-outs available at 3 p.m. Adults \$3, children \$2.50. Carryouts \$5. Fish, cole slaw, hush puppies, baked potato, drink & dessert.

RCHS SBDM
The May RCHS SBDM Council meeting will be held on Monday, May 15th at 6 p.m.

Board Meeting
The Rockcastle County Board of Education will meet in regular session Tuesday, May 9th at 7 p.m. at the Administrative Offices. Public is welcome.

Census Testing
Census testing will be held at the following places: May 6th, 12th, 20th, 27th at 10 a.m. at Rockcastle Courthouse; May 2nd, 10th, 18th, 23rd, 31st at 1:30 p.m. at the USDA Bldg.; May 4th, 9th, 17th, 25th, 30th at 6 p.m. at Broadhead City Hall; May 11th, 24th at 5 p.m. at Brindle Ridge Vol. Fire Dept. For more info, call 1-888-325-7733 or 523-2280.

Project Graduation
Committee will meet Tues. May 9th at 6 p.m. in the RCHS library. Everyone welcome. Parents must attending 2 events or meetings to qualify to attending Project Graduation night.

Class of 1998
20 year reunion will be held June 17th at RCMS beginning at 6 p.m. Letters have been sent. If you did not receive one call 256-5484, 256-4655 or 758-9062. We need addresses for Mike Mann, Leo Ann Putnam, Sharon Miller, Sallie Clark and Mike Cummins.

RCMS PTG
RCMS PTG final 1999-2000 Parents/Teacher Group meeting will be held May 8th at 5 p.m. Everyone welcome.

Computer Class
Computer Class beginning Tues. May 9th starting at 5:30 a.m. CAP. For more info, call 256-3307.

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		99 BUICK LASARRE CUSTOM Loaded	\$21,990*	98 CHEVY CAMARO 4 Door	\$4,990*
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