

**PINE RIDGE, ARKANSAS  
60TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!**

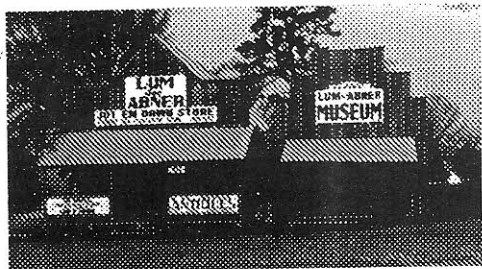


**PLUS: JOT 'EM DOWN STORES, PAST AND PRESENT!**

**APRIL 1996**

## VISIT

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As you are probably aware, from time to time the NLAS has issued "special release" cassette tapes that exist completely independently from those in the official NLAS Tape Library.

At this point, we are making each of our Special Release tapes available once again, to raise funds for the upcoming Convention on June 22. Each of these cassettes is \$4.00, and each comes with extensive liner notes explaining its contents.

✓ • **THE MUSIC OF LUM & ABNER** - This tape collects musical selections that were associated with L&A and their careers over the years. Included are variations on all of their familiar radio and movie themes, songs performed by L&A themselves, and even a few "special" NLAS productions that have to be heard to be understood... and even then they may puzzle you!

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# THE JOT 'EM DOWN JOURNAL

## April 1996

### *In This Issue:*

\*\*\*\*\*

**THE NATIONAL  
LUM AND ABNER SOCIETY**

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*Donnie Pitchford*

**VICE-PRESIDENT**

*Sam Brown*

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

*Tim Hollis*

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**Cover:** The "Jot-M-Down Store" in Pine Ridge, Arkansas, circa 1951. This was one of many L&A-inspired stores that operated throughout the USA; see related story on Page 7 of this issue.

**LUM AND ABNER** is a registered trademark. Used by permission of Chester Lauck, Jr.

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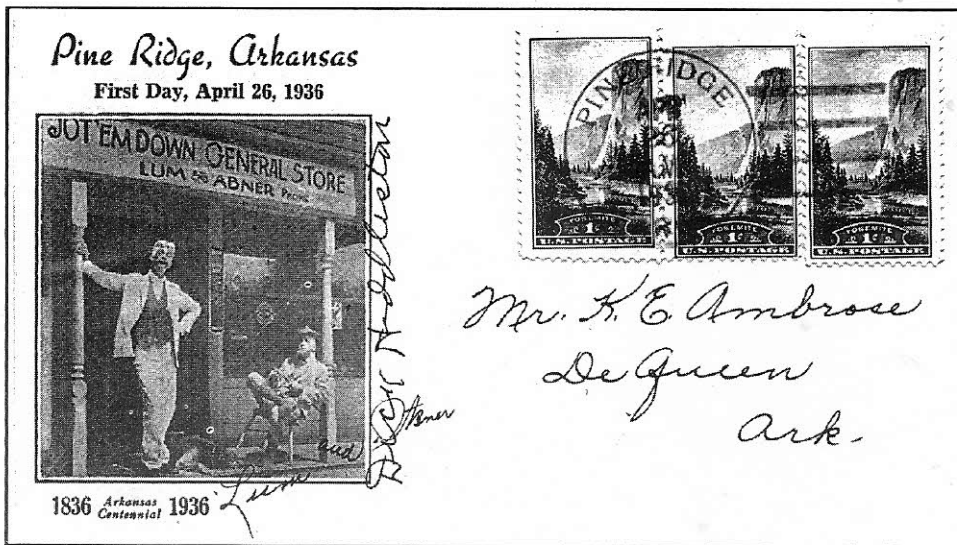
The original newspaper coverage of how Waters, Arkansas, became Pine Ridge.

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Part Two of this series looks at the many incarnations of the Jot 'Em Down Store.

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Here's what we know, so you can be in the know.



**ABOVE:** This commemorative envelope was issued by the Pine Ridge post office on its first day under its new name, April 26, 1936. This particular example was autographed by Dick Huddleston himself.

# “A Town That Is Known By Three Rings On The Phone” **PINE RIDGE, ARKANSAS: 1936-1996**

Sixty years ago this month, on April 26, 1936, the microscopic Arkansas mountain community of Waters officially changed its name to Pine Ridge. On the 50th anniversary of that occasion, we devoted the entire April 1986 issue of *The Jot 'Em Down Journal* to the history of the town, in a comprehensive article by local historian Kathy Stucker. Since that particular issue of the *Journal* has been out-of-print for several years, we are presenting here a condensed version of that historical data, plus new info that has come to light in the intervening ten years.

The area near what would eventually become Waters/Pine Ridge began to be settled in the late 1850's and early 1860's. In order to obtain a Homestead Deed for land, a family had to remain on and cultivate it for five years. A school was established before 1880 in a building shared with the church on a low rise near a creek. In the mid-1880's, a young Mary Roden died and had asked to be buried under the tree near the schoolhouse. It had been her favorite playing spot, and the cemetery that now serves Pine Ridge grew around her grave.

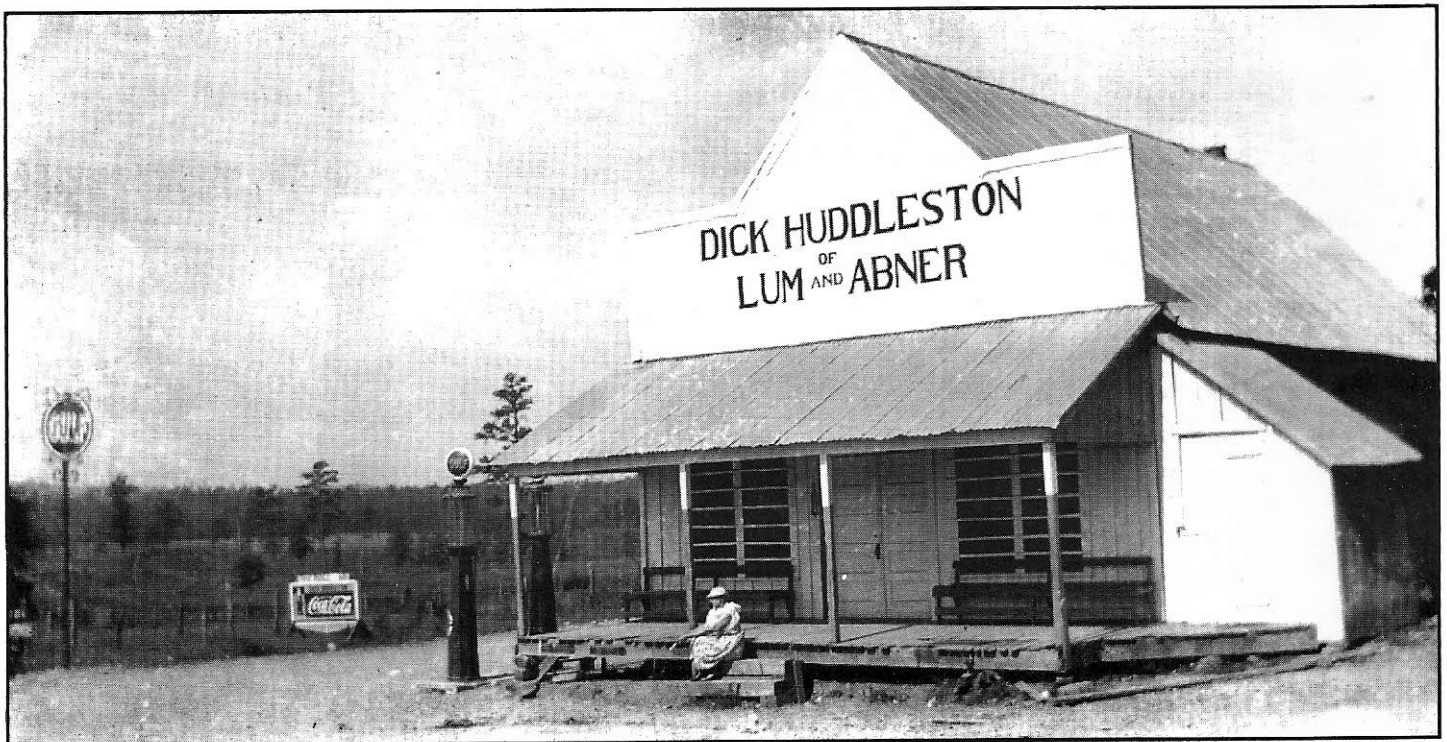
The history of the town really begins around 1884, when Henry M. Waters arrived in the community, operating a small sawmill and cotton gin. It is believed that he also opened the first small general store there. In 1886 he applied for and was given the community's first postmaster position. Since the area had never had a name up to that time, he named the post office after himself! Although Henry Waters had left the area by 1887, and never took title to any land in the community, the town was to

bear his name for the next 50 years.

In 1900, current postmaster Ansel J. “Ace” Risenhoover built a new post office, a shotgun building, facing south about a half mile east of the original Henry Waters building. Risenhoover got homestead title to the land in 1907, and the post office remained in that building for most of the next 75 years. The 1900 census listed the residents of Waters as two ministers, two physicians, one merchant, and one teacher, with everyone else farmers.

The one merchant in that 1900 census was A.A. McKenzie. McKenzie and his father had first operated their sales business from a peddler's wagon, and they made periodic buying trips from their new home in Waters back to the family home in Missouri. While A.A. was gone on these trips, his parents sold merchandise out of the front room of their home near Risenhoover's post office. In 1904, A.A. built his small general merchandise store facing the post office, and his home behind the store.

In 1909, S.I. Wood and J.R. “Dick” Huddleston went into partnership, opening a much larger general store facing east toward both the McKenzie Store and the post office. With the construction of these businesses, the site of the fledgling community was moved to its present-day site, away from the original location where the church, schoolhouse, and cemetery were located. Soon, the remote mountain town was booming. A grist mill and blacksmith shop operated behind the Wood & Huddleston Store; A.A. McKenzie also opened a grist mill and blacksmith shop



*Dick Huddleston's store in Pine Ridge as it looked during its heyday.*

behind his own store. (McKenzie's blacksmith was John Miller of Cherry Hill.)

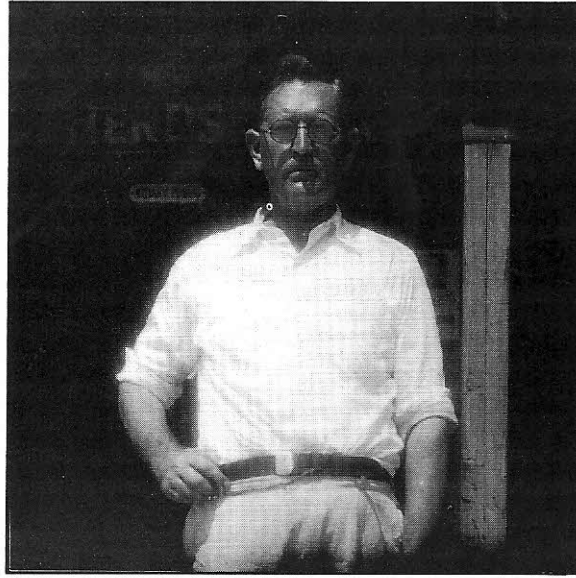
In 1912, the Wood & Huddleston general store burned to the ground. It was rebuilt during that same year, but now Dick Huddleston was the sole owner. Around that time, Huddleston became the fifth postmaster of Waters, and ran the post office out of his store, but he soon became too busy to keep the position, and the post office returned to the Risenhoover building. (On the *Lum and Abner* radio broadcasts, the Pine Ridge post office was always located in Dick's store, but as you can see this was more fiction than fact.)

Many people were born, grew up, and died within the boundaries of Waters without ever having ventured outside the community. This was largely due to the difficulty of travel in those days, especially in the rugged hill country. To carry a heavy load to Mena, 22 miles to the west, it required two teams of horses to cross the "Seven Devils," a series of steep hills east of Mena, so friends would travel at the same time, hitching both teams to one wagon when needed.

Former Waters resident Roy Simpson described the scene that took place whenever Dick Huddleston found it necessary to send to Mena for merchandise: "The front wagon would be John Goodner's, with horses going as fast as his urging and yelling could get them to go. With reins slashing and the old man bouncing and yelling on the spring seat of the wagon, everyone knew that Dick was sending for supplies. Such things as calico, canvas for cotton sacks, sugar, flour, caps lined with fur, pocket knives, axes, cotton hoes, and all the numerous articles a country store carried would be brought out, but John Goodner would have to make a number of 'whooping it up' predawn exits from the village to have it all in."

Around this time, Waters began receiving frequent visits from a couple of young Mena businessmen. Chester Lauck worked for the Union Bank (of which his father was president), while Norris "Tuffy" Goff was associated with his father's wholesale grocery business. Both men became acquainted with Dick Huddleston and the other townsfolk, and would often spend more time there than their business really required, sitting around the Huddleston and McKenzie stores and listening to the old-timers swap yarns and argue. The stores were especially active on Saturdays, when up to 200 people from the surrounding farms would be in town. Dick Huddleston held a prize drawing each week, and the gifts were often pieces of carnival glass.

When, through various channels of luck and happenstance (described in past issues of the *Journal*), Lauck and Goff went on network radio as Lum and Abner in 1931, it was Waters that they had in mind when creating a setting for their show. Dick Huddleston was portrayed by Goff as an actual



*Dick Huddleston, 1932*

character on the program, and especially in the early days a concentrated attempt was made to depict the fictitious Pine Ridge as a real-life western Arkansas mountain community. (Lauck and Goff made up the name "Pine Ridge" for their locale because it gave a better impression of a mountain community than the somewhat swampy-sounding "Waters" would have.) The characters on *Lum and Abner* were loosely based on the residents of the community.

Five years after *Lum and Abner* made its radio debut, the show had become so famous that Dick Huddleston came up with the idea of changing Waters' name to Pine Ridge, to capitalize on the radio program's popularity. Waters had never

been incorporated as a town, so the actual change had to be accomplished through the United States Post Office, switching the name of the Waters post office to Pine Ridge. (Trivia: On the radio programs, Pine Ridge was incorporated as a town in late 1935, with Abner sworn in as the first mayor, but this never happened in real life.) The name was officially changed on April 26, 1936, in an elaborate ceremony on the steps of the state capitol in Little Rock (see this issue's "Lum and Abner In The News" feature).

After Pine Ridge, Arkansas, became a reality, Dick Huddleston wasted no effort in promoting it. Organizing the Pine Ridge Silver Cornet Band late in 1936, Huddleston was booked into theaters throughout the midwest. His stage act was later known as the Pine Ridge Follies, and employed many talented local peo-



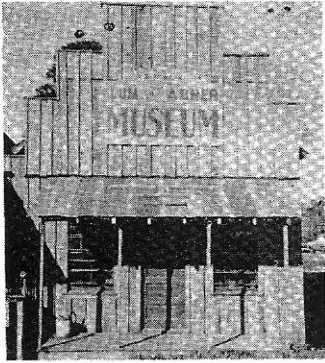
*L to R: Norris Goff, Dick Huddleston, William Horlick (of Horlick's Malted Milk), and Chet Lauck meet to discuss changing Waters to Pine Ridge, 1936.*

ple. One regular cast member of the group was Edward Lasker Goble, who made a career out of being the real-life model for Cedric Weehunt. He played Cedric with the Pine Ridge Follies until he was drafted during World War II.

The postwar world brought many changes to Pine Ridge. With the dawning of the automobile age, the community began making most of its living off the tourists who came to see Lum and Abner's town for themselves. But this fame was not to last. After *Lum and Abner* left the airwaves in 1954, the real-life Pine Ridge slowly but surely withered. The Huddleston Store remained in business, but the paving and rerouting of Highway 88 in 1958 caused the removal of the old McKenzie Store (by then being used as a home) and other buildings in the path. The Risenhoover post office building was moved further back from the road, and several other buildings were demolished at the time.

When Dick Huddleston died on July 18, 1963, it looked like the story of Pine Ridge would come to an end. Dick's only child, Ethel, and her husband, Homer Graham, attempted to keep his old store open, but local business was now extinct, and very few tourists were familiar with *Lum and Abner* during this TV era. In the autumn of 1968, Ralph and Dorothy McClure of Fresno, California, came to Pine Ridge to visit some cousins. They found the sagging old wooden store, still bearing its sign reading DICK HUDDLESTON STORE - MADE FAMOUS BY LUM AND ABNER. Determined that such a unique piece of

**OPEN HOUSE**



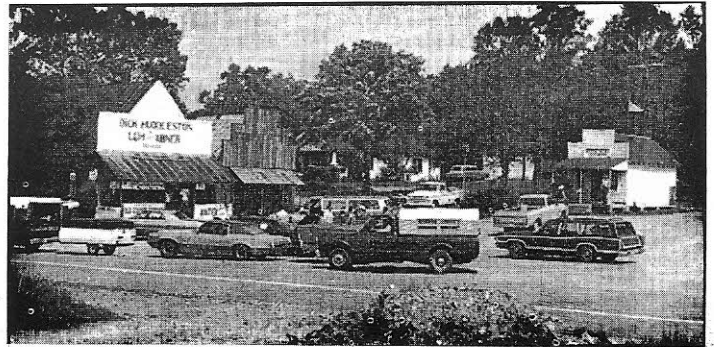
**LUM & ABNER MUSEUM**  
PINE RIDGE, ARKANSAS  
**SATURDAY, APRIL 1st**  
the Dick Huddleston Antique Store  
Will Also Be Open  
**CLOSED MONDAYS**

*Newspaper ad for the grand opening of the L&A Museum, April 1972.*

Americana should not be allowed to fade into oblivion, they approached Ethel Huddleston Graham about buying the structure and the old Huddleston home.

The "rebirth" of Pine Ridge began when the McClures reopened the restored Dick Huddleston Store on April 1, 1969. What was left of the original merchandise and fixtures were displayed in the back of the building, and Chet Lauck himself (by now retired and living in Hot Springs) donated many pieces of original *Lum and Abner* memorabilia. As the nostalgia boom hit in the early 1970's and visitors increased, it became obvious that more room was needed for exhibit space. At Christmas 1971, Ethel Graham presented the McClures with a special surprise present: the original A.A. McKenzie store building, which since 1958 had been used as a hay barn. The structure was moved next to the Huddleston store, and opened as the Lum and Abner Museum on April 1, 1972.

Dorothy McClure's son, Lon Stucker, and his wife Kathy came to Pine Ridge in 1979 to assume the management duties of the store and museum. Under their direction, in 1983 the post office

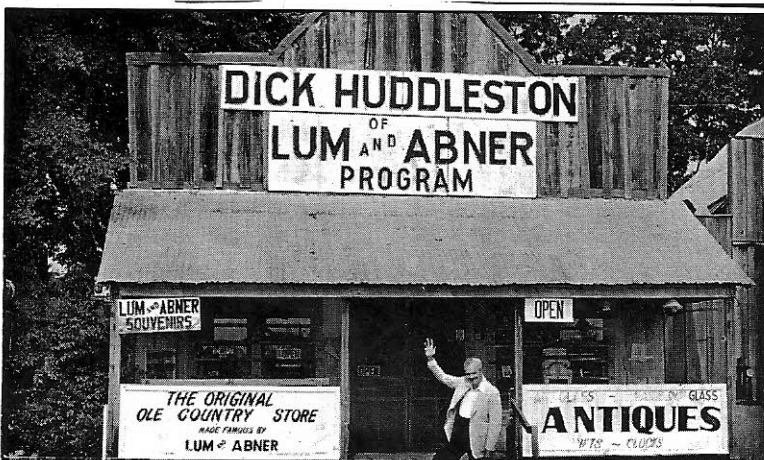


*Crowds pack into Pine Ridge around the time of the Museum's opening; notice that the museum sign had not yet been placed on the front of the McKenzie Store.*

was again moved out of the 1900 Risenhoover building and back into the Huddleston store, where it had been on the radio programs all along. The Stuckers set about to preserve Pine Ridge for future generations, and managed in 1984 to get the two old store buildings placed on the National Register of Historic Places, in time for the post office's 100th anniversary (and Pine Ridge's 50th) in 1986.

The story of Pine Ridge was best summed up by Roy Simpson, who taught school in Waters during the early years. He once remarked that the various villages scattered about the Ouachita Mountains each had their individual characteristics: "You might call it local culture... Though the changes that occurred during the 1920's, 1930's, and 1940's have blurred the distinguishing differences, there are still traces, and at times more than traces, left. It must be remembered that Pine Ridge had its peculiar rural flavor long before Lum and Abner had an imaginary store, and that changes came there just as they did to the rest of the Ouachitas." Anyone who has visited Pine Ridge will enthusiastically agree that it has a true flavor that is all its own!

-Tim Hollis and Kathy Stucker



*Chet Lauck makes one of his frequent visits to the revitalized Huddleston store, circa 1973.*

# Lum and Abner® In The News

## REPRINTS OF PAST LUM AND ABNER® ARTICLES

### SUCCESSION OF TRIUMPHS FOR LUM & ABNER

(Originally published in THE ARKANSAS GAZETTE, April 27, 1936)

Chester Lauck and Norris Goff were a pair of busy young men yesterday. The main item on their program for the day was their fifth anniversary broadcast as Lum & Abner from the steps of the capitol. That was the real reason for their coming here from Chicago, but it turned out to be only one of several assignments.

They began their day with a job of work that would have gotten any average person down. It was the selecting of a queen for Clark County's centennial celebration. They were asked to gaze at four Clark County beauties and name one of them as the most beautiful.

The task did not get them down, but they had to call to a third person to help them. After wrestling with such a problem at the outset they found the rest of the day's program easy. They took it in stride.

A crowd that ran into the thousands and covered the broad walk in front of the capitol and much of the turf on each side heard the afternoon program.

The broadcast apparently was a thorough success. No flaw of any nature was discernable at the point of operations. It was carried out of Little Rock over a coast-to-coast network of the National Broadcasting Company and into homes all over the nation.

#### Centennial Shares In The Celebration

It provided excellent publicity for the great state of Arkansas and for its centennial celebration. You can be sure that that episode in the state's history was not ignored. The Arkansas Centennial Commission helped sponsor the anniversary broadcast.

Harvey Couch, chairman of the Centennial Executive Committee, was one of the most inter-



*Douglas Hotchkins of the Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce presents a 5th anniversary cake to (L to R) Cling "Grandpappy Spears" Wilhite, Chet Lauck, Dick Huddleston, Ed "Cedric" Goble, and Norris Goff, April 26, 1936.*

ested members of the audience. Previously he had paid his respects to the Mena boys at their quarters in the Albert Pick hotel.

Mr. Couch presented corsages of David O. Dodd centennial roses to Mrs. Lauck and Mrs. Goff and congratulated their husbands on their contribution to Arkansas's fame. In response, Lum and Abner assured him that they stood ready at all times to aid the centennial program in any way possible.

Everybody who took part in the broadcast seemed to be having a good time. Governor Futrell and Lum & Abner, or Chet and Tuffy as

t h e i r  
i n t i m a t e  
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b y  
a n y



*Chet Lauck, Elizabeth Goff, Harriet Lauck, and Norris Goff are welcomed to Little Rock by Governor J.M. Futrell.*

means. Will S. McLafferty, who was Chet's law partner before the boys took up their radio work in a serious way, spoke as representative of Mena and told of that town's pride in the achievements of its favorite sons.

#### 'Originals' of Their Characters Present

Dick Huddleston, who figures in the Lum & Abner serial, spoke twice. The second time he was called to the microphone to accept from Governor Futrell a new charter for his home town, which used to be called Waters but now is Pine Ridge. Both times Mr. Huddleston "ad-libbed" his remarks. The others read theirs from the script that had been worked out in advance.

Two other "originals" of characters that Lum & Abner portray were on hand. One was Ed L. Goble, who furnished the inspiration for the character of Cedric Weehunt. The other was Uncle Cling Wilhite, who is Grandpappy Spears in the radio story.

It was a red letter day in Uncle Cling's life, all right. He was visiting Little Rock for the first time. In fact, it was one of the few times he had left Waters.. beg pardon, Pine Ridge.. in all his 79 years.

Just before the broadcast closed Uncle Cling

was conducted to the microphone and asked to say hello to the NBC and all its clients and beneficiaries. He did so with gusto.

People made quite a fuss over Uncle Cling, trying to do nice things for him. After the broadcast, while a sort of informal reception was going on in the governor's outer office, Mrs. Futrell took him into the private office and sat him down at the governor's desk. Grandpappy, as most of the people called him, got quite a kick out of that.

### High School Band Plays Theme Song

The Little Rock High School band and the KTHS dance orchestra from Hot Springs furnished the music for the program. The band played the Lum & Abner theme music at the beginning and close of the program. It also played *Arkansas*. The orchestra knocked off *Arkansas Traveler* and two or three other pieces. The band also gave a concert of nearly an hour's duration before the broadcast.

The theme song is *Eleanor*, written by a Cleveland composer. When Lum & Abner first went on the air they used *Arkansas Traveler*. Then they learned that another act had priority rights to that tune and they switched to a Victor Herbert melody, but they were not satisfied.

One day in Cleveland four years ago, they went into a music store and asked to hear some records. They explained who they were and that they were in search of a theme tune.

The saleswoman said, "Why I think I have just what you want here." She played *Eleanor* and the deal was closed. "That's exactly the sort of music we had in mind," said Lum & Abner. "No use to search any farther." It has been their musical trademark ever since.

Charles Lyon, who came down from Chicago with Chet and Tuffy, did the announcing.

### Governor Concedes This a Great State

The privilege of telling the world about the Arkansas centennial was given to Governor Futrell and he made the most of it as soon as he was introduced by Mr. Lyon as "the chief officer of this great state of Arkansas."

The governor said, "I sincerely agree with

you, Arkansas is a great state. Those of us who live here have known that fact for a long time and we want the rest of the world to know that this is our 100th year of statehood, and we are proud of it. And right at this point I want to extend my personal invitation to all you people out there in the radio audience to come and visit Arkansas this year. Any year will do, but especially this year."

"It seems to me a singularly happy circumstance that we can combine three important features in the activities of this one Sunday. First, we are celebrating the change in name of a little town out here from Waters to Pine Ridge. Another reason for our being here at this particular time is that just five years ago our state sent



*Dick Huddleston (left) receives the charter officially changing the name of Waters to Pine Ridge from Governor Futrell, as Chet Lauck & Norris Goff look on.*

these young fellows, Chester Lauck and Norris Goff, out to try their luck at making a name for themselves on the radio.

"All of us, I believe, are convinced that in these five years they have turned into a national institution and we are just about the proudest folks in creation today for being able to say, 'Welcome home, you two youngsters. You're a credit to Arkansas and we're all glad to have you with us.'"

### Lum and Abner Voice Appreciation

He spoke a while longer on these same lines and then called Chester Lauck to take over.

Lauck said it seemed as though he and his partner had never before felt so much a part of

Arkansas as they did at that particular time. He told of their pleasure in being able to make the trip home. Then, stepping into character as Lum, he continued.

"Yes sir, hit's mighty thoughty of all you fokes to come over here and hold this celebrate fer us. Me an' Abner want you all to know that we're deeply tetchd and we hope that none of you will ever be dissapinted in us."

A yell of delight went up as he began that kind of talk, and the laughter continued when Goff spoke his Abner lines into that mike.

Speaking first as Norris Goff he said, "I couldn't begin to tell you how much of a kick I am getting out of this, because I don't know that many words." Then, as Abner he went on:

"Well, dog bite my cats, if that wouldn't beat the bugs a-fightin'. Goff, you never was no hand at all at out-loud talkin' an' you ort to knowed better'n to try it in the first place. Now take me fer incidence. Hit don't dash me none to git up in front of a gatherin' thissaway. I could stand here an' look you right square in the eye all day."

### Birthday Cake From Hot Springs

After the act went off the air, the birthday cake with five candles sent by station KTHS, on which the boys made their debut, was presented. Douglass Hotchkins, secretary of the Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce, made the presentation.

From the scene of the broadcast Lum and Abner went to the governor's office, but they made slow progress because of the autograph seekers.

The next event was a theater party at the Arkansas Theater, arranged by the Independent Theater Owners of Arkansas. It was primarily for the radio team's old friends from Mena. The boys put their various characters on parade, and there were several motion pictures. The four girls who competed in the Clark County beauty contest also were introduced on the stage.

Lum and Abner left with their wives and the announcer on a Missouri Pacific train at 10 last night. They will do their regular broadcast from Chicago at 6 tonight. Their business representative, Jack Ryan, will leave for Chicago this morning.





This is the second installment of our ongoing series examining the various roadside business enterprises that have attempted to capitalize on Lum and Abner's fame through the years. In this chapter, we look at the ever-popular Jot 'Em Down Stores (some authorized, some not) that have opened their squeaking screen doors to the public.

First, a little background. When *Lum and Abner* made its radio debut in 1931, the two principal characters did not own a general store. Lum was the town's Justice of the Peace and Abner was the constable, and the setting of the show was their small jointly-occupied office. On occasion, the two old gentlemen would visit their friend Dick Huddleston in his store, where they recreated the real-life gatherings of such rural types in small communities all over the country. When the program began being sponsored by the Ford Motor Company in 1933, L&A left their office to run the Pine Ridge Motor Company and sell the sponsor's products.

It was sometime between June and September 1933 that, for some reason or another, Lum and Abner went into the general

store business themselves. (Oh, to find a script or recording from that period!) They were actually following the lead of at least a couple of earlier comedy shows that had used country stores as their settings, *The Stebbins Boys* and *Smackout*. When L&A opened their store, according to Chet Lauck they ran a contest for their listeners to choose a name for it. Since the store was to be

operated on a basis of "strictly credit, no cash" (ostensibly so Abner could not make mistakes giving change), the story goes that several listeners suggested the name "Jot It Down Store," based on the custom of storekeepers "jotting it down" on the books. Chet & Tuffy were faced with the prospect of dividing the prize among the several identical entries, but then some other listener came up with the different twist "Jot Em Down Store." They decided to award the prize to this lone person rather than trying to placate several! (Lauck admitted that if they had known the



*The A.A. McKenzie store in Pine Ridge, Arkansas, masquerading as the Jot 'Em Down Store, about 1935.*

store was going to end up being the main focus of the show, they would have given the selection of a name for it more careful consideration... but he rightly pointed out that for some reason "Jot

'Em Down" is easier to roll off the tongue than "Jot It Down.")

While all of this was going on on the radio, of course, out in the real Arkansas community of Waters, Lauck & Goff's good friend Dick Huddleston really was running a large general store. Ever since the show's earliest days, tourists had been coming to Waters to meet the real-life Huddleston; now that L&A were in the store business themselves, what were the tourists going to see in Waters that would represent the fictional Jot 'Em Down Store? Luckily, Waters contained another, smaller store operated by one A.A. McKenzie. It stood across the street from the Huddleston store, just as the Jot 'Em Down Store did on the radio. That made it easy... before long, the McKenzie Store bore a large "Jot 'Em Down Store" sign on its facade, becoming the first in a long line of mercantile establishments to do so.

The original McKenzie Jot 'Em Down Store did not last long, as A.A. McKenzie died in 1935 and the store was closed soon after. It was eventually converted into a residence, and later a barn, before finding a new life as the Lum and Abner Museum in 1972. Meanwhile, was there to be another Jot 'Em Down Store in Pine Ridge to take its place? The answer was... well, sort of.

Around 1947, a new grocery store and service station was built in Pine Ridge. In the only known example of this particular spelling, it was named the "Jot-M-Down Store." Early photographs of it show that it advertised serving the famous Lumburgers that were invented on the radio show in late 1946. It also seems to have gone through affiliation with a number of different oil companies for its gasoline business. Early shots show the store bearing a Gulf Oil sign, while ones from just a few years later show an Esso sign. By 1960, the Jot-M-Down Store was affiliated with Conoco. This was advantageous, because remember that by that time, Chet Lauck himself was working for Conoco in a promotional capacity! Chet arranged for Conoco to provide a large billboard for the Jot-M-Down Store. According



*By virtue of his connection with Conoco, Chet Lauck got solo credit on this 1961 billboard for Pine Ridge's "Jot-M-Down" store.*

to Pine Ridge historian Kathy Stucker, this business operated until the early 1970's, when it finally closed and burned to the ground. Today, an automotive garage occupies the site, but no traces of the Jot-M-Down Store remain.

During the heyday of radio, the name "Jot 'Em Down Store" almost became a generic term for any rural grocery, and ones bearing the title sprang up countrywide. A September 1937 newspaper clipping made an interesting announcement: "This week, Lum and Abner, the famous rustic comedians, were asked by Mr. & Mrs. LaVirne Cox of Moline, Illinois, for permission to open what will be the 100th real grocery store in America bearing the name coined by the comics."

One of those original 1930's Jot 'Em Down Stores that still operates today is in Fayette County, Kentucky. NLAS member Loren Cox Jr., who lives in the vicinity, tracked down the story behind this particular rendition of the store for us. It seems that sometime around 1937, Lauck and Goff happened to be in the Lexington region, probably investigating the race horse farms so



*One of the earliest photos of the Pine Ridge Jot-M-Down Store, circa 1947.*



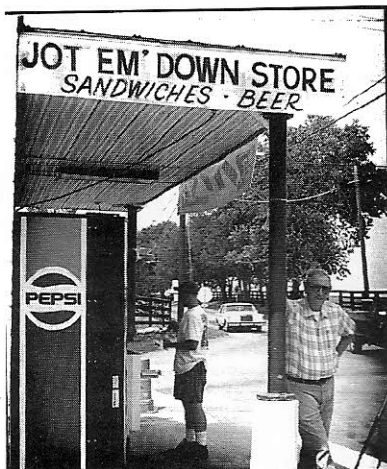
*L.C. Terrell and his brother pose as Lum and Abner inside their Lexington, Kentucky, Jot 'Em Down Store, about 1937.*



*During one of his travels for Conoco, Chet Lauck posed in front of this "Jot 'Em Down Store" in a rather seedy-looking section of Nashville, Tennessee, circa 1960.*

common around there. (Chet, especially, was quite prominent in the horse racing world.) One particular general store belonging to one L.C. Terrell and his brother was located right in the middle of horse farm country, and the Terrell brothers were dedicated Lum and Abner fans. They even got into the act themselves, posing as L&A for photos in their store! So well-known was their admiration for the show that when Lauck & Goff heard about it, they decided to drop in on the Terrell store and see it for themselves. Impressed with the loyalty of these two fans, Chet and Tuffy hustled into Lexington, where they had a large JOT 'EM DOWN STORE sign painted, and returned to hang the sign on the newly-renamed Jot 'Em Down Store of Fayette County!

NLAS member Cox reports that the original sign commissioned by Lauck and Goff was still being stored in the Terrells' garage as late as 1991, but it has now disappeared. Cox gives this first-hand report on the store as it is today, owned by L.C. Terrell's son Robert:



*Owner Robert Terrell and the Kentucky store today.*

"The store today is much as it was in the 1930's, selling grocery items and with booths where customers can eat sandwiches or just talk and loaf. Unlike the fictional JED Store, beer and soft drinks are sold. The 1990's are in evidence with a computer on Mr. Terrell's desk, a television set for the lunchers and loafers, and a video game. In the back of the store is a display of Lum and Abner photographs, gifts from Chet & Tuffy. On the wall are several horse pictures, a photo of Man O'War

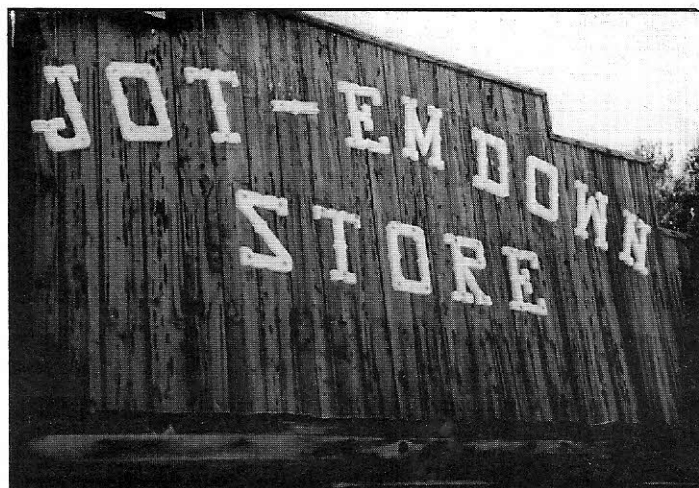
hanging over the cash register. One of the horses pictured is Jot 'Em Down, which a trainer named for the store in the early 1970's. I found business brisk the afternoon I visited, a lot of farm hands coming in. The Texaco gas pumps, once in front, are long gone."

It would probably be impossible to ever compile a complete listing of all the Jot 'Em Down Stores that Lauck and Goff authorized. If the newspaper was correct and there were already 100 of them in 1937, there is no telling how many more opened over the years. When the NLAS was founded in 1984, someone reported to us that a Jot 'Em Down Store was currently in operation in Olancha, California, but we never were able to get in touch with them directly. In 1962, a representative from a proposed amusement park in Tuscaloosa, Alabama (Mimosa Park) contacted Chet Lauck and received permission to use the Jot 'Em Down Store name on the general store that was to be located in the frontier-themed attraction; we do not know if Mimosa Park or its store ever made it to reality. For many years, Bill Bragg of the National Museum of Communications in Irving, Texas, maintained a Jot 'Em Down Store as the souvenir shop of

his museum; when the facility was moved several years ago, the replica had to be dismantled.

In our next installment, we will look at what happened when Chet and Tuffy themselves decided that a national chain of Jot 'Em Down Stores might be a worthwhile business investment in 1966. Until that time, if any of our members remember seeing local Jot 'Em Down Stores through the years, please let us know where they were so we can at least acknowledge their existence. We will also be giving updated information on still-operating Lum's Restaurants that have been reported since our February issue's article on that defunct chain. The story of *Lum and Abner* is quite often much like a jigsaw puzzle with many of the pieces missing, so any help we can get is always appreciated!

- Tim Hollis



*Years ago, someone sent this photo to the Lum & Abner Museum in Pine Ridge. The location is unknown. Anyone know where it was taken?*

# Whatever You Do, Don't Miss The 12th Annual National Lum and Abner® Society CONVENTION

## June 22, 1996 • Mena, Arkansas

**Scheduled  
Guest  
(at press time):**



**Jean Vander Pyl**  
(*Wilma Flintstone*)

The time is drawing near for this year's Convention in Mena, Arkansas, and (much as last year) we are quite unsure as to just who our guest speakers for the event are going to be. Therefore, at this time all we can tell you is what we are working toward at this point.

Last year, we were scheduled to have versatile radio actress JEAN VANDER PYL with us, but some last-minute commitments prevented her attending. She is rescheduled for this year, providing that nothing unforeseen comes up before that time. As we said before, Ms. VanderPyl worked in commercials on *Lum and Abner* between 1938 and 1940, as well as many other radio series since then. She is most famous today as the one and only voice of cartoon character Wilma Flintstone, and is in great demand among animation history buffs, so that is one reason why her NLAS Convention appearances often have to be rescheduled. Let's hope for the best this year!



Also scheduled are two of Chet Lauck's associates from his post-radio career in the world of advertising. BEN COMBS, a Little Rock ad executive, is a longtime friend of the family and the motivating force behind some of Chet's television work in the late 1960's and early 1970's.

HARLAN HOBBS' association with L&A goes back even further, as he was one of the organizers of the 1936 ceremony that changed the name of Waters, Arkansas, to Pine Ridge. He also performed publicity duties for the first L&A movie, *Dreaming Out Loud*, in 1940. Both of these men are planning to be with us, and we certainly look forward to hearing what they have to say!

Of course, we will also be observing the 60th anniversary of Pine Ridge's name change, and the 100th anniversary of Chet & Tuffy's hometown of Mena. Hopefully by the time our June issue is published we will have our schedule closer to being finalized.

If you have not made your room reservation yet, it is highly advisable that you do so now. All of the Convention activities take place at the Best Western Lime Tree Inn in Mena, so the number to call there to reserve your room is (501) 394-6350. Don't delay; do it today! (Sounds like an L&A Alka-Seltzer commercial, doesn't it?)