

Memphis Center City

VOLUME II, NUMBER 19
MAY 15, 1975

Footprints on the Chickasaw Bluff

This first piece is reprinted from the MEMPHIS DAILY BULLETIN, August 6, 1864.

'On pain of arrest'

Court Square — Since the order prohibiting walking or lounging on the grass, except in the cases of sick and wounded soldiers, Court Square has improved in appearance wonderfully, and is now quite an attractive feature of the city. The grass has been carefully cleared of rubbish and trimmed, and now looks a lively green, instead of the dead hue it so long presented; the trees also have been properly attended to, and the walks carefully scraped and swept, all tending to make as pleasant resort for our citizens as they could desire. Improper characters are excluded on pain of arrest, and no fears need hereafter be entertained of anything transpiring there that will give offense to the most fastidious. The keeper, Mr. Keating, notwithstanding the meagre salary allowed him by the city government, has been hard at work, devoting his entire time to

Photo: Looking east on South Court

Courtesy of the Memphis Public Library and Information Center

Memphis past or present?

From the AMERICAN EAGLE, July 22, 1842

The Presbyterian Church — We could easily find fault with the 'stumpy' architectural proportions of its steeple, but as it is the handsomest in the city, we'll let it pass. In all, it is a neat and comely church, and we doubt not, is as safe an avenue through which to go to Heaven, as the more elegant St. Paul's of London ...

the accomplishment of the foregoing improvements, and well deserves the consideration of the public, of whom he is a faithful, efficient servant. He allows not a moment to go unoccupied, and the results are prominently seen on every hand.

The stand for the use of the Brigade Band, we are informed, is completed, and will probably be placed in the Park to-day; if so, we may expect to hear of the first of the Saturday concerts this evening, and witness a general out turning of our citizens and their families. It is said to be the intention of Mayor Harris to place a guard at each entrance of the Park, during these concerts, who will permit no gentleman to enter not accompanied by ladies, and no persons of doubtful reputation. This arrangement will have the effect of establishing this new amusement in the highest favor with the public, and affording our citizens many pleasant reunions under pleasant auspices.



DEVIL'S HIDEOUT

From the AMERICAN EAGLE, July 22, 1842

The Devil has been busy in Memphis, during our absence, as well as the Churches. Quite a handsome and commodious Theatre has sprung up, and Theatricals seem to be quite the go. We have strolled into the plays an hour or so one or two evenings and have been quite entertained. The Scenery is really good, the orchestra charming, and the playing not a wind behind either. We have seen less creditable establishments of the kind got up in much larger cities.

Mrs. Richardson seems to be as she is, the reigning star. She is a chaste and charming actress, never over-does her parts, and carries herself with ease, grace, dignity and naturally, in all her representations.

It is by far the most genteel establishment, in every particular, that has offered itself to the popular favor. We discovered one prominent defect. A barrel of Cologne perhaps would remedy it. Livery stables and Theatres make a very bad co-partnership.

MARDI-GRAS

Reprinted from the MEMPHIS PUBLIC LEDGER, February 14, 1872.

We have not amusements enough in America. We have not enough holidays. We are too serious, too busy and too grim. There must be some means of escape for the natural passions of the young. If society proceeds in its old serious way — if society cultivates frowns and patronizes growls, is it to be expected that when the passions overflow the results will not be serious? They will take the form of crime. We have no doubt that much of the crime committed in this country may be attributed to the lack of rational amusements. The Mardi-Gras, and such like exhibitions, act like charms on the sullen natures of men, and confer untold benefits on the country. The exhibition yesterday was the beginning of a great good for Memphis and the surrounding country. It is now one of our fixed institutions. Its initiation was splendidly successful. What else could have attracted ten thousand strangers to the city? Next year it will attract twenty thousand.

THE CAN-CAN

THE IDA CERITO FEMALE MINSTRELS

Reprinted from the MEMPHIS PUBLIC LEDGER, March 3, 1875

Memphis is metropolitan in its taste; if not in an esthetic point, it is undoubtedly so in the opposite, if the immense audience that attended the Greenlaw Opera House last night is any criterion. The attraction was the Ida Cerito Female Minstrel Troupe, who advertised to present the can-can of the Jardin Mabille in addition to the regular olio performance of the variety halls. The specialty business came next, which was ordinary in point of merit, but everybody went to see the can-can. The dress circle, parquette, aisles, family circle and gallery were filled to overflowing. The audience, represented almost every walk of life, all professions and trades, old age and youth, steady old bald headed veterans and fast young men, married men and single were there. Citizens who never would go to a variety show went to see the can-can at the Opera House. A glance down the parquette disclosed heads resembling skating rinks, not a hair being between them and heaven.

What brought them there? Morbid curiosity, a desire to see something naughty but nice, a display of the "human form divine," as it is often improperly called, when limbs fly high in air, keeping time to devilish music, and the dance, one of abandon and lasciviousness, are the chief attractions. All this is what they expected to see, and they were somewhat disappointed. The can-can was danced as it has often been danced in the variety shows up town and not even with the vulgarity of the displays seen there, or the grossness exhibited to please an audience that could not be called refined. But every pirouette which elevated skirts, and every kick at the chandeliers brought forth a storm of applause as if the poetry of motion, the grace of the ballet, were things not to be compared to a dance of bacchanals. The dancing in the can-can was not sensuous but sensual, appealing not to the higher but the lower instincts.

If a large audience and great enthusiasm are the tests of merit, then the Ida Cerito troupe may be regarded as a success, but if not, not. Men and boys smoked, stamped and yelled as if they were denizens of a pandemonium, and not visitors to a respectable place of amusement.

Our dramatic critic was there also, but as "a looker on in Verona," to see what could be seen in a mixed audience of both high and low life. The performance was of an ordinary character of the variety stripe, not excelling in anything particular and not different from those performances given at our own variety halls. It was odd to see married citizens (who no doubt were off at the lodge or club) shutting one eye as they gazed through opera glasses at the garish footlights, but it was the legitimate drama, and that's what's the matter with men. A published list of those attending would startle the feminine world into fits of virtuous indignation.

The Female Minstrels will appear again tonight.

MEMPHIS BICYCLE COMMUTER DAY

One of the oldest forms of transportation can solve many of our newest transportation problems. On May 16, 1975 a group of Memphians led by Mayor Wyeth Chandler will demonstrate the effectiveness and efficiency of the bicycle.

"Memphis Bicycle Commuter Day," co-sponsored by the City of Memphis and the Downtown Council, begins at 7:00 a.m. with a free continental breakfast at the Bombay Bicycle Club in Overton Square. From there, participants in this open-to-anyone event will bike the 3.9 miles to downtown.

Bicycle commuter day is being staged in connection with the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition "Ride On!" which opened Monday in the lobby of Commerce Square. It is one of a series of events being held in Memphis during National Bicycle Month.

Friday will also be the second day of a two-day Front Street Market featuring bicycles in Confederate Park. The market will be open from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday and Friday.

The parking lot adjoining Bombay will be reserved for bicycles only Friday morning. Those who will be commuting from outlying areas by car are urged to park in the lot east of the square on Madison and bicycle to Bombay for breakfast.

At 8:00 a.m. bicyclists will leave en masse for downtown. The route will begin west on Madison north on Avalon, west on Court, north on McNeil, and west on Jefferson. Parking spaces for bicycles downtown are being made available in the lots of Commerce Square, First National Bank, Lowenstein's and Union Planters National Bank.

ALL ABOUT BIKES

A Front Street Market "All About Bikes" will be held Thursday and Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Confederate Park.

The market is being held in conjunction with "Ride On!" the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition that opened this week in the lobby of Commerce Square.

On display at the market will be such things as plans for proposed bikeways in Memphis, all types of bicycles and accessories, and information about the city's several bike clubs. Sgt. Mike Sims of the Memphis Police Department will be on hand to register bicycles as will Worldwide Cycling Association. Bike dealers will explain how a ten-speed works and how to make simple repairs. Bike packing will be explained and touring equipment will be shown. Safety pamphlets, gift coupons, and the Arkansas State Bike Tours Map are among the materials to be handed out.

One special feature both days will be free 7-Up awarded to those who can successfully maneuver a 38-inch "highwheeler" 20 feet. The unusual bicycle is being used by 7-Up of Memphis to promote the "See the Light, Save a Sight Great American Bike Boogie," a bike race of prominent Memphis leaders and personalities, June 7 in Overton Park. Rosters for the race will also be handed out.

Food will be available each day from the Lollypop Dragon.

words
swords

SPACE-SEEKERS

*Man is searching in space,
Unlocking new frontiers
Of the body and mind;
Man is searching for space
In crowded areas
To give him happiness;
Man is searching within space
To walk the land
Visioning the unlimited sky;
Man is searching the space
Where his soul resides
To clasp the hand of God.*

by D. Ruth Stamm

earthy delights

DOWNTOWN EXHIBITS

National Bank of Commerce (Lobby)
May 12–June 8 – Smithsonian Bicycle Exhibit*

Sterick Building (Lobby)
May – Paintings by Mrs. Mabel Tual*

DOWNTOWN ACTIVITIES

Confederate Park
May 15–16 – “All About Bikes”
Front Street Market*

Bombay Bicycle Club
May 16 (7:00 a.m.)–Memphis Bicycle Day–free breakfast & ride to work

FILM

Southwestern
May 19 – “The Loves of Isadora”
May 24 – “The Grand Illusion”

Brooks Art Gallery
May 18–“Enter Laughing”*

Peabody Library
May 23 – “Our Congressman (Will Rogers),”
“The Big Thumb,” “Idle Eyes”



OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

Mississippi River
May 29–Peabody Center for Senior Citizens host an Older Americans’ outing-boat ride with music & dancing

*Free

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

Peabody Library “Dialogue on Aging”
(2:30 p.m.–3:45 p.m.)

May 16–“Volunteer Opportunities for Older Americans”–Film and discussion by Mrs. Estelle Landers & Mrs. Darlene Smith

May 23–“Home is Where the Heart is–Housing and Older Americans”–Film and discussion by Mrs. Ethel Vinson

May 30–“Story Telling for Grandparents”–Rosemary Martin

Fairgrounds Youth Center

May 22–Peabody Center for Senior Citizens hosts Crafts & Talent Day (10 a.m.–2 p.m.)
Shelby State Community College Auditorium

May 26 – Afternoon of music
(1:30 p.m.–3:00 p.m.)

CIVIC CENTER COMMUNITY CULINARY CLUB

Serving from 11:30 to 1:00
First Presbyterian Church, 166 Poplar Avenue
PRICE: \$1.50 per serving, including drink

MENU FOR MAY 15 – MAY 23

THURSDAY, MAY 15

Fried Chicken, Spanish Rice, Apple Sauce, Rolls

FRIDAY, MAY 16

Meat Loaf, Whipped Potatoes, Congealed Fruit Salad, Rolls

MONDAY, MAY 19

Steak w/onion gravy, Green beans, Buttered carrots, Rolls

TUESDAY, MAY 20

Turkey-Dressing, English Peas, Cranberry Sauce, Rolls

WEDNESDAY, MAY 21

Spaghetti, Cole Slaw, Rolls

THURSDAY, MAY 22

Fried Chicken, Rice w/gravy, Squash or Green Beans, Rolls

FRIDAY, MAY 23

Chili-Mac, Three-Bean Salad, French Bread



166 Poplar
Memphis, Tenn. 38103

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postage paid at
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