

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

# Buntin remembers four dealerships.

By Jessie H. Dunham  
of the Carlisle Mercury Staff

At one time, not too long ago, there were four dealerships in Carlisle. Buntin's Garage (Hyde, Dodge, Chrysler, Harper, George Ford), Gardner's Buick and Tompkins' Buick.

Of the four founding fathers of these establishments, only Tompkins, H. C. Gardner and W. R. Webb Buntin, a silver haired gentleman, who is 92, still has a keen wit, hearty laugh and slim physique.

As a resident, with his wife, Phyllis, at 422 North Elm Street, he is working every day, driving his truck on whatever errand needs to be done.

Buntin was one of five children born to Anne Adams and Robert Buntin on High Street in Maysville, this reporter included, April 15, 1895.

The youngest born, William "Buntin" Buntin, was his only brother. His sisters were Anne Lee, a doctor, and Mary and Ada, both housewives.

When questioned about Buntin's occupation, a twinkling light in Buntin's eye he laughs and says, "I played." Baseball was what he had played, and Buntin said, "It was good at it."

"He was really good to hit the ball when they (the team) needed it. He played on leagues in Boone County.

Their father did general work, mostly in the tobacco business. Buntin and his brother and sisters did not venture far from Maysville. George, however, in Carlisle, was like going to another town for the Buntin children. In fact, he said when his father took him to town, the car hit him anywhere but in front of the Carlisle Drug, he was lost.

He used to ride his horse up to Dorsey Drive. Lumber Yard, and water the horse in the creek. "That's as far as I got," he said.

The family lived across the street from "old man Jim Barlow." Buntin remembers one day, "old man" did not get in the apple tree in the Barlow yard. "I'd go up, being a typical child, and get his foot caught in the fork of the tree. There he hung, upside down. He said 'Me' got him down, and was starting to whip him when Buntin, the Barlow's daughter came out, and talked her out of it. Needless to say, he thought Buntin was awfully nice."

If he could find wheels, he said he could make a wagon, or in the wintertime, using old pieces of tin, fashion a sled that would pull twice those kids.

"The old winning hole" was not part of Buntin's childhood memories, as his parents would not allow the children to go swimming. There was no beach then, and their parents were not going to take any chances. Buntin did not go swimming until he was a grown man.

"The Buntin Bunch" did enjoy playing baseball. They would buy a rubber ball for a penny and half a dime for a nickel or a dime. They would wind the twice around the ball, and use it all over, so it wouldn't come unground. They used a stick for a bat. They did not use a public, because, he said with that twinkle in his eyes again, the girls would be able to hit as well as the boys.

Buntin's formal education ended after the fourth grade. He remembers going to school in the Masonic building on Locust Street, which was used after the old city school burned and which the new building was being built on School Avenue.

He said, "You really learned to hit then."

Across the street, where Drs. Riggs & Sparks office are, was a bakery.

Buntin served with the Army's 150th Brigade in World War I as a training officer. His superior officer thought he was doing such a fine job that whenever a transfer came up, he denied it. He said he didn't like that, but thought later, he did miss the real tranquility of the Army.

Upon discharge from the Army, a married relative who lived in Cincinnati, helped Buntin get a job at H.E. Automotive. When the relative died, he moved back to Carlisle. He worked for several years for Lane Martin in his Buick dealership.

Of Buicks in those days, he said, "Gee, they were big old cranes." He recalls an incident involving the town house, Lee Norton. He said Norton "would make him madder than anybody."

Norton came in that day, and started teasing him, and Buntin got mad. He threw all his tools out on the street. Someone said, "That's smart, now you've got to go pick them all up." Buntin laughed, recalling the incident. It got him that Norton could get his goat so often.

For a time, he worked for the county, being the mechanical repair on their equipment. He also worked for a time at Harper's Garage.

In 1919 he married Edna Owen Johnson of Maysville. They had four children, W.R. Buntin Jr., Johnson, Edgardine, Ann Evans Buntin Kaulin, Orlando, Florida, Bill Buntin, Lexington, and George Mae Buntin Clark, wife of Clarence Cook, Carlisle.

Throughout George's life, many people have thought he read names in Georgia. This reporter included. When asked why he was given a boy's name, Buntin said they were sure it was his boy going to a boy, so sure in fact, that a boy's name was all they had thought of. Plus the fact that Grandfather Johnson, who was a doctor, was in poor health, and they felt they had to have a child named after him as a tribute, and whether it be a boy or a girl.

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Merchandise that worked for him were Ray Hunt, Home's Home, Homer Harris and Don The Street. Buntin remembers Mrs. Nancy Alexander being one of his first customers. She bought a four cylinder Plymouth, and gave it the pet name, "Miss a Mighty Crank" because it was really hard to start.

In 1948, when Buntin was 77, he turned over the reins of the business to Junior. He had been part of the daily life of the garage since his childhood. His father said, "He stayed around a lot when most kids were not playing."

He remembers one incident involving Junior, that was not so pleasant. One day Junior was playing with a chain hoist which was tied back to the wall. He unhooked it, and it went flying, right into his father's forehead. Buntin can still laugh, remembering what Junior did next. He ran for his life.

The dealership received several awards for its sales over the years.

for Warwick Motors, a Plymouth Dodge dealer in Paris.

He had in those days, a person drove up in front of "my place," got out, and I drove for me around a lot. When I got back, I told that person what I thought was wrong with the car, and how much it would take to fix it. He said, then, when they came back to pick it up, it was fixed for that price, or "they didn't see me anything." There was no "something else is wrong, and it's going to cost more." He would be his word.

He said competition in a small town "tends to work a little harder and be a little more honest."

A salesman for Goodman Buick, now in Lexington talked Buntin into selling cars.

He remembers taking a man to buy a car from the dealership on Main Street in Lexington that Goodman bought out, and getting a little piece of money out of it.

He said "Back in those days, you had to work before you could work. Money was hard to come by, and it was slow going building up a business."

On occasion, your eyes may get red or bloodshot. Most often this is caused by an irritation of the conjunctiva, the membrane that lines the eyelids and covers the exposed surface of the eyeball.

Bloodshot eyes may be caused by infection, air pollution, allergies, contact, excess alcohol intake, lack of sleep, and overexposure to sunlight. Contact lens wearers sometimes get red eyes from lenses that fit improperly, or from overwearing their lenses.

Simple ways to prevent or clear up bloodshot eyes include: wearing glasses on windy days to prevent foreign substances from getting into the eyes; wearing sunglasses when appropriate; removing eye makeup carefully; drink plenty and going to bed earlier. If you suspect an infection, seek medical diagnosis and treatment.

If bloodshot eyes seem to be caused by overwearing your contact lenses, stop wearing them for a few days. Even if the redness disappears, make an appointment to see your eye doctor. It is safer to make sure that the lenses fit properly so that the redness does not recur.

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## Eye Openers

By Dr. Robert F. Pretzsch, Optometrist

### RED EYES

On occasion, your eyes may get red or bloodshot. Most often this is caused by an irritation of the conjunctiva, the membrane that lines the eyelids and covers the exposed surface of the eyeball.

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W.R. (Webb) Buntin

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