

FEATURE AT SIX

Flowers a first love for owner of new floral shop

By Josh Shephard

It is not often a person establishes a business because of a love of beauty, but Lou Edith Lykins, the only child of Wayne and Nora Lykins of Morgan County, said it was the beauty of Carlisle that first lured her to set up a floral shop in the old Abraham building.

Born August 7, 1932, Lykins lived most of her life in Oil Springs of Johnson County. Since the age of five, she has been in love with flowers and arrangements. As a child, she always loved to pick wild flowers and kept vases full of them, picking from among the Spring blooms of dogwood and red buds until the last golden rod would out and die.

However, she did not follow her love into business until she was widowed in the winter of 1971. She married Arnie Lykins of Salersville, a pipe fitter working by contract. During the time, she never worked outside the home. The responsibility of working the shop and raising one boy and four girls kept her busy enough, she said.

However, in 1971, Lykins' husband suffered a heart attack on the way to work, and she found herself in a difficult position.

"Social Security and well-

with money she had saved, she started Postleburg Floral, which she owned and operated for several years. Later, Lykins sold out and bought the Salersville Flower Shop from Anna Patrick.

Four of her children have gone through school already and her youngest, Christy, is in her junior year at Morehead State.

In 1971, Lykins began her formal floral training at Williams Floral in Paintsville, but she left the business temporarily when she was offered a job with the Addison Brothers company as a lease hand.

With the Addison Brothers, Lykins worked all over eastern Kentucky and West Virginia, and it was then she began to notice the beauty of small towns.

Having worked all her life in small communities, it was interesting to her to see how older buildings were gradually being replaced by modern ones, a change she thought harmed the quaintness of small communities.

When the Addison Brothers sold out to Ashland Oil and Age Coal Company out of California she returned to her first love — flowers.

"Gays and Christy were still very young, and I wanted to get into a business where I could have them with me," she said.

Her ambition as a florist led her to purchase a flower shop in Lexington on Alexandria Drive, The Garden Side Florist.

Business was very good there and she prospered, but she became disenchanted with commuting every day from Fleming County. It was more of an effort than she bargained for, so she sold out again.

For a while, she had no store of her own. Instead she apportioned her work week to cover three different floral shops, Atkinson's Florist in Morehead, Linda's Flower Shop in Salersville and Small's Greenhouse in Carlisle.

It was during this period in her life she began to develop a fondness for Nicholas

County, though the idea of a business here would come later.

She worked for a short time with Small's and then cut her duties with the other two florist shops.

But, she said, the friendliness of the people here and the countryside never had a chance to leave her. It was too firmly established and the old buildings, preserved and unchanged for so many years appealed to her.

"I enjoyed walking around the street and just looking over the old shops. But what I must love in Carlisle is the courthouse. I marveled at old time design. There are very few like it anymore," she said.

"I have never seen as beautiful a building, laid out with the rolling lawn for a yard and even the old gun there. It's likeness is something only a Hallmark Greeting Card could do justice. I hope it never changes."

Though her florist business is not the only one in town, Lykins said she is not too much in the competitive spirit with Small's Greenhouse.

"There is something special in this town to support our two florists," she said. "I hope, if my shop takes off, to move here in a couple of years. But really, all I want to do is work a little and drift along the street from time to time and gaze at this town."



The Carlisle Mercury Josh Shephard Photo
Lou Edith Lykins takes a moment from fixing up the old Abraham Building while her daughter, Gay Harmon, paints new floorboards.

State auditor recommends monitoring special districts

Nicholas counties paid a total of \$210,496 in special district taxes in 1987, according to Revenue Cabinet files.

Special taxing districts of the county include: fire protection, library, board of health and hospital.

The oldest of these special taxes is the fire protection tax, established locally in the 1960s.

The most recent is the hospital taxing district, approved by the county's voters in November 1976.

Current special taxing district rates are \$100 of assessed property value of health, 2 cents; library, 2 cents; and hospital, 16.6 cents.

The hospital taxing district was approved to enable financing of improvements and construction at Nicholas County Hospital.

Money from this tax is used to pay for \$2,205,000 in bonds sold by the county to finance the project.

The last of the bonds sold for the hospital project will be retired in 2002.

State Auditor Bob Bahbage has recommended that special taxing districts be as accountable as county governments

for the public funds they receive and spend.

Bahbage made his remarks before the recent meeting of the legislator's Interim Joint Committee on Counties and Special Districts.

There are 1,348 special districts in the state, with 570 of those exercising taxing authority.

The special districts include a wide range of services providing entities ranging from airport boards to water districts.

Fire protection districts are the largest single group. Library and public health districts are the next largest group.

Special districts collected a total of \$40.6 million in 1987. That figure equals 49 percent of the funds collected for county services.

Bahbage said legislators should be asked to question about special taxing districts' accountability were brought to

his attention by legislators, organization leaders and citizen calls.

The state auditor told the committee that he had met with representatives of 11 organizations representing officials connected with special districts.

He said his review found one large district with an annual budget of \$1 million lacking audits for four years.

State law requires an annual audit of special taxing districts.

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Sub-zero

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Plant operators have not had to bypass any of the more crucial pipelines and systems and sludge flow has been maintained.

Kelley's estimates the cost of damage at \$2,000,000. There was little to no effect on Carlisle for the problem the sewer plant has suffered in the cold, aside from a few frozen drain pipes in individual homes, Kelley said.

Though most of the problems in the plant have been minimized, Kelley said it is not quite up to normal capacity.

"There is a buildup of sludge care and with the chain broken, processing the sludge had slowed considerably. But it's a waiting game now to see if the thaw continues and we get a new chain in to get the plant back to normal working order," Kelley said.

The new oxidation ditch sewer system should be more resistant to cold temperatures because all the equipment in not deeper underground than the trickling filter system, and every part of the system has back-ups in case of emergencies, Kelley said.

Work on the plant is 4 percent complete, Kelley said.

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