

# Floras retire after 70 years of police, nursing

By Josh Shepherd  
of the Carlisle Mercury Staff

CARLISLE — It was a sweltering 84 degrees in Nicholas County. The humidity was so high that a gauzy veil had obscured the distant hills on the other side of Lake Carnice. Ellis and Betty Flora, however, relaxed in lawn chairs as a cool breeze came rolling in off the lake banks at the end of Columbus Road. But even if there were no breeze, it is doubtful the Floras would be much affected by the heat.

Compared to the stress of Ellis' career as a Kentucky State Trooper and Betty Flora's 40-year service as an emergency room nurse, a hot, humid summer day would have been a breeze.

Ellis Flora retired from duty with the Kentucky State Police force in 1981 at the mandatory retirement age of 55. He had given well over 20 years of service.

He was born and raised in Nicholas County on his family's farm on U.S. 68. His uncle's farm, part of it at least, made up a section of Lake Carnice when none of it was underwater.

It was about 1955, roughly, when he began active duty in the KSP. There isn't much he doesn't remember vividly.

"In those days, it was pretty much an unspoken rule that state policemen were mostly native to the area they served. While we weren't allowed to serve our home county, some of us were assigned a region we were at least familiar with," Flora said.

There was good reason for police to be assigned familiar territory, Flora said. As a trooper who had grown up in a farming community, Flora said he felt less awkward, more able to perform his job because he could relate easily with the people, Flora said.

One significant change Flora noted in the years he involved himself with the KSP was the nature of the relationship between Troopers and agents for the FBI.

When he began, Flora said, it seemed federal agents and state police worked much more closely together on cases. In fact, state officers trained under the same conditions as the FBI. In a physical capacity, there was little difference between them, he said.

"Their jurisdiction was wider, but there was more of a collaboration between us. Nowadays, though, it seems federal agents are more secret about their activities. They had their cases, we had ours," Flora said.

Technologically, the pace of change in the KSP grew rapidly. Advances too numerous to mention in technology and sophistication of crime investigation. By the time he retired from assignment in the narcotics department, his equipment had come ahead by light years, he said.

During his term, he was stationed in Pikeville, at the London KSP post, and served Corbin, Mt. Vernon. In all that time, he found the best way to handle his job was not the equipment, but the men who wore the uniform that he handled everything.

In those days, there was a lot of bootlegging. There was never a time that there wasn't an element of risk involved with the job. Flora's fortunate marriage until just a few months before he graduated. I understand they don't operate under very similar circumstances today," he said.

At the end of the three-year program, she transferred to several local hospitals across eastern Kentucky, changing her work place whenever her husband's work transferred him.

She worked in Laurel County, Clay County, Rock-

castle County before locating herself at her longest post at the King's Daughter Memorial Hospital in Frankfort.

Smaller rural hospitals, Flora said, gave her a more personal connection with the patients and where she feels the true quality of bedside nursing was practiced.

"I learned to give personal care to the patients I'm treating. I like working and helping people, knowing that I was helping them in a really crucial way," she said.

However, as her career progressed, due to circumstances with HIV virus in particular, she saw nursing care become more and more depersonalized. In emergency room work especially,

she felt a touch of the personal to be necessary for patients. But precautions against the HIV virus forced nurses to depersonalize the process.

"We had to start wearing gloves, gowns and masks all the time because one never knew he risk. Emergency room work was stressful. You never quite knew what would come through on any given day. I saw everything from car accident victims to gunshot wounds."

"It never became routine and it was something you never could get quite used to. For the forty years that I put into my job, I found it very personally rewarding. But the profession is suffering now due to a shortage of full time

doctors and nurses. As I grew older and the system grew more complicated, it was a good time for me to retire," she said.

Betty Flora does miss the rewards of her profession, although after only a few short months, she hasn't yet come to regret retiring.

Ellis and Betty Flora now divide their time between their Lake Carnice Cottage and their home in Frankfort. He is an avid collector of old clocks and she spends a good deal of time in crafts, fashioning Santa Claus figures out of pecan shells. They tend and herb garden and spend a lot of energy on some well-derived rest, whatever the temperature is outside.

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Ellis and Betty Flora

The Officers and Members of American Legion Post 17, Carlisle, take this opportunity to thank the following for making the 1992 Blackberry Festival a huge Success.

- ✓The Carlisle Mercury for coverage during the festival.
- ✓Kentucky Utilities and Stanley Caswell.
- ✓Nicholas County and Carlisle Fire Departments.
- ✓Ronnie McDonald and the Nicholas County Ambulance Service.
- ✓Participants and Judges in the Blackberry Festival Queen Contest.
- ✓Carlisle Police Department and Kentucky State Police.
- ✓Dick's Auto Shine and Dick Garrett.
- ✓Nicholas County Judge and Fiscal Court for the use of the Courthouse yard.
- ✓Carlisle-Nicholas County Tourism, Inc.
- ✓Jam Session participants.
- ✓Clayne D. 201st Engineer BN, National Guards.
- ✓Layne Gray, J.W. Ecton, Gary Gaunce, Jimmy Shaw, Lyle Anderson, Stanley Caswell, James Murrell, Robert Cooper, Delbert Vaughn, and Dennis Hall for the use of their convertibles in the parades.
- ✓First National Bank, Deposit Bank, Jockey International, Foodtown, IGA, Garrett's Restaurant, A1 Sanitation, and the City of Carlisle for assistance in the fireworks display.
- ✓The following individuals:
  - Ronnie Clark
  - Joe Jennings
  - Billy D. Crawford
  - Phillip McDonald
  - Jim Galbraith (M.C.)
- ✓All the people who attended the festivities.
- ✓We apologize for anyone inadvertently left off this listing.



Jessica Shannon with goat Pepper dressed up for the Bicentennial Committee's train trip to Carlisle from Paris.



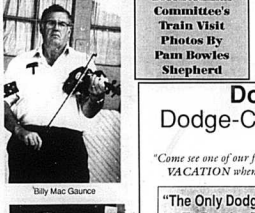
Members of the American Legion Post No. 17 presented a 21 gun salute during the Bicentennial Committee's train visit.



The Nicholas County Boy Scouts presented the American and Boy's Scout flag Saturday morning on the arrival of the train. Pictured from left to right: William Earlywine, Mike Barbie, Robert Reed, and Carl Kelly.



George Court, Dorothy Neal, Ruth Haller, and Mildred Gifford dressed in old costumes Saturday to greet the guests from the train ride from Paris at the Depot.



Billy Mac Gaunce



An old 1949 State Police car, which Kentucky State Police Officer John Hall from Frankfort, was put on display when the train arrived Saturday.



Bill Snapp

**OBITUARIES**

**RICHIEY**  
J. Woodrow Ritchey, 78 of 950 Rose Hill Road, Carlisle, husband of Erma Storey Ritchey, died Friday, July 10, 1992 at the Johnson-Mathers Nursing Home, Carlisle. He was a member of the Carlisle United Methodist Church, he had perfect Sunday School attendance for 28 years, and he was a past member of the Administrative board.

He was a retired farmer, he lived all his life in the Rose Hill section of Nicholas County where he was born to the late George H. and Jeanette Patrick Ritchey. He was a member of the Nicholas County Tax Evaluation board, was a charter member of the Nicholas County Farm Bureau where he served on the board of directors for 30 years, and was an employee of Pepper-Peak & Florence Tobacco Warehouse and Ammerman Tobacco Warehouse for five years in Cynthiana.

Other survivors are a daughter, Mrs. Luther Lamer Anderson, Carlisle, a granddaughter, Carlotta Wood Anderson, a great-grandson, Shane Roger Sweet, Phoenix, Arizona, two nieces, Paula and Linda Storey, and a brother, H. Clay Ritchey, Louisville.

He was preceded in death by a sister, Miss Truman Ritchey.

Services were 2 p.m. Tuesday, July 14 at the Carlisle United Methodist Church by Rev. James Doughton and Rev. James Gaunce, burial in Carlisle Cemetery.

• Casketbearers were John Wallace, James Mynear,

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