



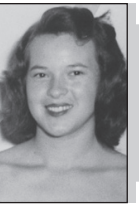
CHILTON COUNTY PEACH FESTIVAL

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1952 Peach Queen, Peggy Ann Poole, Lives On Farm In North Carolina Today

By Becky Tucker,
News Reporter

Peggy Ann Poole Barefoot was chosen Chilton County's fifth Peach Queen on Wednesday, July 16, 1952. She won Chilton's most coveted crown at the age of 15. Today, the former queen lives on a farm in Linden, North Carolina, which is in Harnett County.

"It was my first pageant and contestants had to be related to a peach farmer in some way, either a relative or involved in the peach industry," Barefoot said. "My step-father, Melvin Lockhart, was a peach farmer. He had been killed in a car accident the year before and I decided to compete to honor him. I feel he would have been so proud of me. He was a big influence on my life, a good Christian man, and was loved by all who knew him."

Peach trees grew all around their home. "We didn't have a roadside peach stand, but we took our peaches to the train station to be shipped to a buyer," Barefoot said. "I always went with my step-father, who was daddy to me, to the train station. I worked in the orchard, helped plant trees, spray them, and picked peaches."

The 1952 Festival began on Monday night, July 14, in the lunchroom of the old Chilton County High School building. A banquet was held at 6:00 p.m. to honor the contestants. After the banquet, they reported to the high school gymnasium where they were judged individually on stage in street attire and formal wear. No swimsuits were modeled in 1952. The name of the winner was kept secret until the ceremonies at the Clanton City Park on Wednesday.

Barefoot has fond memories of her aunt helping her with her street attire. Her aunt was a buyer for a large department store in Birmingham at the time. "She chose an aqua dress for me to wear with a black velvet hat," she said. "I thought it was odd for July because all the other contestants were wearing white hats. My aunt had assured me that my hat was very 'in' and I noticed one of the judges had on a hat similar to mine. The only difference in the two hats was mine had a broad brim and her's was small. I was so shocked I almost didn't make it across the stage. It probably didn't affect the outcome of the Pageant, but it made me feel better."

Members of the Clanton Kiwanis Club told Barefoot they would sponsor her if she would enter the Peach Pageant. She agreed and rode on the Kiwanis Club float in the Peach Parade with another contestant. The parade began in Thorsby at 9:15 a.m. and traveled down Highway 31 to Clanton where it ended at the City Park. "I remember the weather was great," she said.

There were numerous floats, bands, and deco-

rated cars in the parade. Thousands of people attended the Peach Festival, according to newspaper articles, and it was reported to be the largest crowd ever to gather in Clanton.

At the Peach Auction, Barefoot was announced as the new Peach Queen and Harold Lockhart was named Peach King. He was the son of a peach farmer. Even though her mother and step-father



Mrs. Barefoot

were Lockharts, she was not related to the King. In some of the prior Peach Festivals, the Queen was allowed to choose the King as her escort for the day. However, Barefoot said she was not involved in his selection.

Following the Peach Auction, the newly crowned King and Queen

high school sweetheart Edgar Foshee. "His family decided to move away from Chilton County and he didn't want to go," she said. "He was sent to Texas for training and I joined him there. I graduated from Burkburnett High School in Texas in 1954." Following high school, she attended Campbell University in Buies Creek, North Carolina. She worked for the U.S. Army XVIII Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

After a divorce ended her first marriage, she met her husband, the late Durwood Grant Barefoot, through a friend in 1988 and they were married in 1992. Her children are Kenneth A. Foshee of St Cloud, Florida, and Rhonda L. Foshee of Raleigh, North Carolina. Her late husband's children are Michelle Gerringer of Wake Forest, North Carolina and Andrea Swing of Clayton, North Carolina. She has five grandchildren and one great-granddaughter. She retired from her career as the Principal Deputy in the 18th Finance Group at Fort Bragg in January of 1997.

Barefoot said her greatest accomplishment in life has been "becoming a child of God." She is a member of Liberty Baptist

her father-in-law for four years. Her husband was diagnosed with aggressive cancer in December 2009. "He raised watermelons and sold them to a local grocery store chain," she said. "We planted our last crop in 2013 and now I rent our land to a neighbor. I have a large house and a big yard which I have maintained on my own since my husband's death in 2015."

"My Barefoot family lives close by and we do many things together," she said. "My daughter is only 39 miles away and she visits often. I also spend a great deal of time with my church family." Barefoot is thankful her health is good at 80 years old. "I still drive, just not at night," she said. "I am very active and I am blessed." Even though Barefoot seldom makes a trip to Alabama, she has a brother, who lives near Birmingham and he travels to see her in North Carolina.

Barefoot has many fond memories of Chilton County and its peach farming industry. This year marks the 65th anniversary of her selection as Peach Queen. She would like to wish all the young ladies good luck as they compete in this year's 70th Anniversary Peach Queen Pageant.



PHOTO FROM THE FILES OF S. E. SCOTT

Harold Lockhart and Peggy Ann Poole were crowned Peach King and Peach Queen at the Peach Auction following the Peach Parade which traveled from Thorsby to the Clanton City Park on July 16, 1952.



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PHOTO FROM THE FILES OF S. E. SCOTT

Peggy Ann Poole is pictured at the 1952 Peach Queen contest.

attended all of the functions for the day, which included a barbecue, water ballet show, and baseball games. Her only other function as Peach Queen was a trip to Chicago after the Festival, which she made alone, to present the winning peaches to America's Farm Federation. "It was my first plane trip and it was just for one day," she said.

At the end of her reign in 1953, Barefoot had moved to Texas and was unable to crown her successor. "Those in charge invited me to come back to Chilton County to crown the new queen," Barefoot said. "However, I could not afford the plane fare and those in charge of the Festival didn't offer to pay my way back, so I was not able to attend."

She had married her

Church in Spring Lake, North Carolina where she has worshipped since 1997. "I volunteered in the baby nursery for 14 years and now I serve as a greeter for worship services," she said. "I have been on two missionary trips to Honduras, served on the mission committee, served as a deaconess, and served on a team to hire a new pastor in 2007. I now host a prayer meeting in my home every Tuesday night."

In addition to her church activities, Barefoot volunteers at Carolina College of Biblical Studies one day a week where she does various office work. "I have also taken five courses of Biblical studies there," she said.

Barefoot was the caregiver for her mother for about eight years and

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