

**The Family  
of  
Jim and Lorryayne Copenhaver Muncy  
Bland VA**



# Credits



Jamie Smith Disterhaupt, Granddaughter of Jim and Lorryne Muncy and daughter of Jamie Muncy Smith, has submitted a number of pictures with captions of the family of her great grandparents, grandparents, uncles, and aunts. They contained many scenes from Bland in the early days (circa 1940-50s) of the Jim and Lorryne Muncy family and their six children: Donnie Ray, Bobbie Lee, Sarah Bette, Jamie, Jimbo and Tom Ed.



Ann Hardy Beardshall enjoyed editing the pictures and putting them together for this presentation. She was a childhood friend of the Muncy children and a classmate of Jimbo. She also used pictures from the Bland County Historical Society, especially the yearbook collection, and her own collection that involved the Muncy friends.

## Jim Muncy Born in 1907 to Charles and Mary Ella Mustard Muncy Bland VA

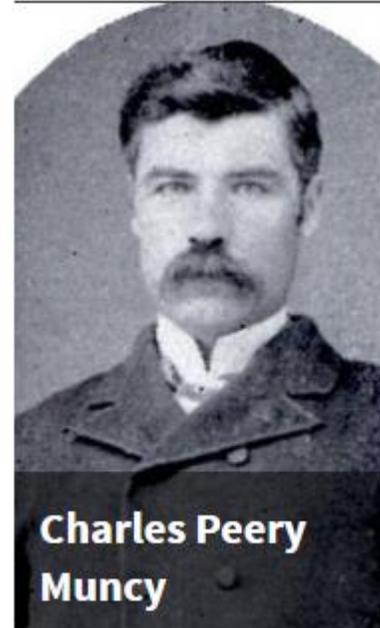
Jim Muncy was the son of Charles Peery Muncy Sr and Mary Ella Mustard. He was one of 10 children born to this union.



### ***Charles Muncy Sr. Family***

Seated: Eloise Muncy Kegley, Kathleen Muncy Edwards, **Mary Ella Mustard Muncy (mother)**, Anna Muncy.

Standing: Jim Muncy, Grat Muncy, Nannie Rose Muncy, Charles Jr, Betty aka Drugstore Miss Bess, Andrew, and Minor.



**Charles Peery  
Muncy**

Father

Charles Muncy was a teacher, merchant, banker and well-known political figure. He attended Virginia Polytechnic Institute, graduating with an Agriculture degree in 1875. He owned a general store in Bland, VA and was Clerk of the Court of Bland Co. from 1885 through 1899. He was the chief organizer of the Bank of Bland County and was First Cashier, serving in that position until his death. *This information is courtesy of [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)*



Mother

# Muncy Home on Main Street in Bland



The home where Jim Muncy grew up was located on Main Street about a block from the Bland Courthouse beside Dunn Motors in the current location of the Highland Funeral Chapel. Middle picture: In 1957 when the JT Dunn dam broke and swept through the town, it was badly damaged. Right picture: After the water went down, the house was repaired and remained occupied by Misses Anna and Nannie Rose Muncy. Upon the death of Miss Nannie Rose, the house was sold and torn down.

Lorrayne Guy Copenhaver born in 1910 to  
Mack and Daisy Etter Copenhaver  
Crockett VA



Father, Mack Copenhaver - Mother, Daisy Etter Copenhaver  
Lorrayne Copenhaver, brothers Edward and John standing in front  
of the Crockett Bank where Mr. Copenhaver worked.

# Jim Muncy and Lorryayne Copenhaver High School/College Days in the late 1920s



Big Jim Muncy's graduation from Bland High School, Bland, VA about 1926. James is on the left, holding his diploma. He graduated from Marshall College afterward. Others identified in picture: Leona and Lucy Muncy (white dresses in front row), others unidentified



Lorryayne - Freshman at James Madison State Teachers College - 1927 She later transferred and finished at Radford State Teachers College.



Lorryayne - Performance Photo at James Madison State Teachers College - 1927

# Jim Muncy and Lorryne Copenhaver “Courting Days” in the late 1920s



Lorryne about the time  
of her marriage in 1932



Jim and Lorryne in Jim's car (circa 1927)



Lovebirds, late 1920s

## How They Met

Lorryne took the bus into Bland from Wythe County to teach French at Bland High School. When she got off the bus, Jim was talking with a group of men on the porch of the old hotel, and watched her arrival. It was love at first sight.

# Jim Muncy and Lorraine Copenhaver were married November 13, 1932



“Big Jim” Muncy in the 1930s



Lorraine Muncy on her way to the  
1936 Republican Convention in  
Cleveland OH

# Contributions of Jim and Lorryayne Muncy to Bland County VA

- **The *Bland Messenger*, a weekly newspaper, was the local news source for the people of Bland County VA. Jim Muncy served as editor with Lorryayne Muncy as his assistant from 1932 until his death in 1953. His column, *The Observer*, was eagerly awaited by the readers each week. After his father's death, Donnie Ray became the editor with his mother as assistant until 1958 when Southwest VA Enterprise purchased the paper. Mrs. Muncy remained as associate editor until 1960.**
- **Bland Game Room was established by Jim Muncy in the 1930s and later became the Beer Garden.**
- **Jim and Lorryayne Muncy's 6 Children who were delightful childhood friends during our "growing up" days in Bland, later all became productive citizens and contributors to their own communities. They are: Bobby Lee (deceased) \* Donnie Ray \* Sarah Bette \* Jamie \* Jimbo \* and Tom Ed.**

# History of the *Bland Messenger* 1928-1958

”In 1928, publication of the “Bland Messenger” was assumed by James Bascom Muncy, Sr., who edited and published it until his death on October 5, 1953. Muncy started in the newspaper business at the early age of 19 and later purchased the “Bland Messenger”. During the 25 years that he published the Messenger, it was issued with punctuality and the circulation more than doubled under his management.

Muncy used his newspaper constantly for the betterment of Bland County. James Bascom Muncy, Sr., was one of the most colorful, civic-minded men of his day, a relentless man in expressing his belief and a man of indomitable courage in promoting progress in his native county. Widely and affectionately known and remembered for his “Observer Column” in the “Bland Messenger”, he was always ready and unselfishly willing to promote an objective that would put Bland “Up Front.”

The “Bland Messenger” was continued under the direction of his widow, Mrs. Lorryne C. Muncy, with her son Raymond McDonald Muncy, as assistant editor. Mrs. Muncy also continued writing the “Observer Column”. On January 1, 1958, the “Bland Messenger” was leased to the Southwest Virginia Enterprise Publishing Company, Wytheville, Virginia, with James A. Williams as editor. Lorryne C. Muncy was retained as associate editor until August, 1960.

From *The History of Newspapers in Bland County* on BCHS website:

<http://blandcountyhistsoc.org/News/Newspapers/BlandMsngrHist.pdf>

# BLAND MESSENGER

An Independent Newspaper Devoted To The Interests Of Bland County And Southwest Virginia

### IT IS REMEMBERABLE THAT BLAND COUNTY SCHOOLS WILL CLOSE

Richard Gibson, Appraiser, Bland County, Va., has advised that the schools in Bland County will close on Monday, January 22, 1962.

### Bird & Andrews Plan Meet With Education Leaders Who Hope To Find A Way To Avoid School Closing

M. A. Newberry Installed As New President Of Mechanicsburg Institution, New School Building Idea Strained

### Annual People's Events and Places

Annual People's Events and Places

### Honesty—We Say It's Typical Of Bland Counties

Richard Gibson, Appraiser, Bland County, Va., has advised that the schools in Bland County will close on Monday, January 22, 1962.



### TIME FOR REVALUATION!

It is time for reevaluation of the Bland County economy, and it is time for reevaluation of the Bland County government.

### Blind Youth At FFA State Meet

Blind Youth At FFA State Meet

Blind Youth At FFA State Meet

### NOTICE TO FARMERS

NOTICE TO FARMERS

### Re-Surfacing And Bridge Repairs On Secondary Roads In County In 1962

Re-Surfacing And Bridge Repairs On Secondary Roads In County In 1962

### Bland County Men In The Service Home For Holidays

Bland County Men In The Service Home For Holidays

### Ceres FFA Has Interesting Meet

Ceres FFA Has Interesting Meet

## Have YOU Mailed Your Renewal To THE MESSENGER ? ?

The Bland Messenger arrived at homes in Bland County on Thursdays for many years. After it was purchased by the SWVA Enterprise, it was delivered on Wednesdays.



# Bland County Historical Society Bland Messenger Collection

Under the leadership of Brenda King, the Bland County Historical Society collected Bland Messengers beginning with the 1940s. For the 1940s and 1950s, the collection is incomplete, although we have many issues. Beginning with the 1960s the historical society has a complete collection.

They are stored in acid-free boxes at the Society Office located in the Old Jail. They can be examined by the public when the historical society is open. They have not been scanned at this time.

Southwest VA Enterprises has not kept hard copies (other than electronically in recent years). BCHS is the only place where you can examine back issues.



Volunteers Virginia Gills and Louise Repass organize the Bland Messenger Collection.

# Bland Game Room/later Beer Garden



In the background behind the TEXACO Sign is the Bland Messenger Office (the left portion of the building). The Game Room/Beer Garden is located on the right side of the building. The building burned during the early 1950s.

*(Note: This picture came from the Barbara Scott Kidd (pictured in the foreground) Collection given to BCHS by her daughter, Beth Kidd Koziol.)*

# Bland Game Room

The Bland Game Room was established about 1930s during prohibition.\* Initially, they did not sell beer because Prohibition had been enacted in late 1919. The Bland Game Room served as a gathering place for the members of the community to play games such as checkers, dominos, and bridge. There were many articles in the Bland Messenger describing game nights. It is probable that it served as a “speakeasy of sorts” for residents of Bland by selling alcoholic beverages “discreetly.”

**\*Prohibition:** “The driving force of the **Prohibition** movement was various religious organizations, who believed that less alcohol consumption would decrease the amount of crime, spousal abuse, and raise the overall amount of piety in America. ... The **prohibition** and women's suffrage movements created an alliance. The Volstead Act, formally National Prohibition Act, U.S. law enacted in 1919 (and taking **effect** in 1920) to provide **enforcement** for the Eighteenth Amendment, prohibiting the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages.”

“The increase of the illegal production and sale of liquor (known as “bootlegging”), the proliferation of speakeasies (illegal drinking spots) and the accompanying rise in gang violence and other crimes led to waning support for **Prohibition** by the end of the **1920s**.”

*Source: Google - Prohibition*

# Bland Beer Garden

The Bland Game Room was repurposed as the Bland Beer Garden after prohibition was repealed by the 22<sup>nd</sup> Amendment in 1933\*. Bland County remained a dry county, but was allowed to sell 3:2 beer\*\*. The Beer Garden burned in the early 1950s.

**\*Repeal of the Volstead Act by the 21<sup>st</sup> Amendment:** Despite a vigorous effort by law-enforcement agencies, the **Volstead Act** failed to prevent the large-scale distribution of alcoholic beverages, and organized crime flourished in America. In 1933, the 21st Amendment to the Constitution was passed and ratified, repealing prohibition.”

**\*\*3:2 Beer:** Low-point beer, which is often known in the United States as "three-two beer" or "3 point 2 brew", is beer that contains 3.2% alcohol by weight (equivalent to about 4% **ABV**).



*Source: Google - Prohibition Repeal*

## Bland Residents Learn of the Pearl Harbor Attack at the Beer Garden December 7, 1941



Jim Muncy and Donnie Ray standing outside Bland Messenger Office.

This story was related by Donnie Ray Muncy, 10 year old son of the newspaper editor in Bland, on Pearl Harbor Day on December 7, 1941. Jim Muncy was that editor of the *Bland Messenger*. He was also the owner of the Muncy Beer Garden located on Main Street in Bland. That Sunday morning, the residents attended the churches in town. Jim Muncy did not open the beer garden on Sunday morning out of respect for the churchgoers. Donnie Ray and his mother were listening to the radio that Sunday afternoon about 2:30 when President Franklin Roosevelt announced that the Japs had bombed Pearl Harbor. Ships were being sunk and there was a large loss of life among those serving in the military on the island of Oahu in Hawaii.

After the announcement, Mrs. Muncy (Lorrayne) wrote out a note and asked Donnie Ray to take the note to his father at the beer garden. Donnie Ray hurried to the Beer Garden where many of men of Bland were enjoying their refreshments on that Sunday afternoon. Jim Muncy opened the note and read it to the crowd. The men dropped their beers and headed home to get their guns and returned armed to the beer garden. They were ready should Bland be invaded by those “nasty yellow bastards.”

Some 600 of Bland Countians would ultimately be drafted, would enlist, would serve in vital civilian jobs, and defend this country against Germany and Japan. Many of those present that day in the Muncy Beer Garden would become part of “The Greatest Generation.”

Taken from *Fallen Heroes of Bland County*, page 66:

<http://blandcountyhistsoc.org/WarMem/FallenHeroes.pdf>

## Bland Beer Garden Burns in 1954



This photo was published in the September 2, 1954 issue of the BLAND MESSENGER.  
Photo taken by Ralph Reynolds

## Jim and Lorryne Muncy Family Home Jackson Street in Bland VA *(street that runs behind the Bland Court House)*



**The family home was located on Jackson Street directly across the street from the current location of the Bland Fire Dept.**



# Jim Muncy and Lorryayne Copenhaver Family at Home



Jamie and Bobbie Lee in yard in 1940s



Lorryayne, Jim, Bobbie Lee and  
Donnie Ray in the 1940s

# Jim Muncy and Lorryayne Copenhaver Family at Home



Lorryayne directing a “future performance” in front yard – Donnie Ray (standing), Jamie (with hands ready for “piano performance”), Bobby Lee with “script” and Sarah Bette with “cat”  
(Note: Lorryayne’s hat)



THE MUNCY TRIO.— Pictured above is the Muncy Trio, the small daughters of Mr. and Mrs. James B. Muncy, of Bland, who have presented programs at the Lions Club, and were a feature of the Kiwanis Charter Night program at Wytheville on Wednesday, May 19. Reading from left to right, the little Misses are: Barbara Lee, Jamie and Sara Bette. (Photo by Greear Studio).

5-27-48

Apparently the practice paid off!

# Jim Muncy and Lorryayne Copenhaver Family at Home



**Jim with Jamie  
(behind him), Sarah  
Bette (standing),  
Jimbo (in front of  
Sarah Bette) with  
family cat, and  
Bobbie Lee with the  
family dog, SUPER.**



**Sarah Bette with family dog, SUPER,  
and Jamie in 1950s.**

# Muncy Children Visit with Relatives especially Grandma Mary Ella



(left to right) Cousin Kathleen Gayle Muncy, Sarah Bette Muncy and Jamie Muncy

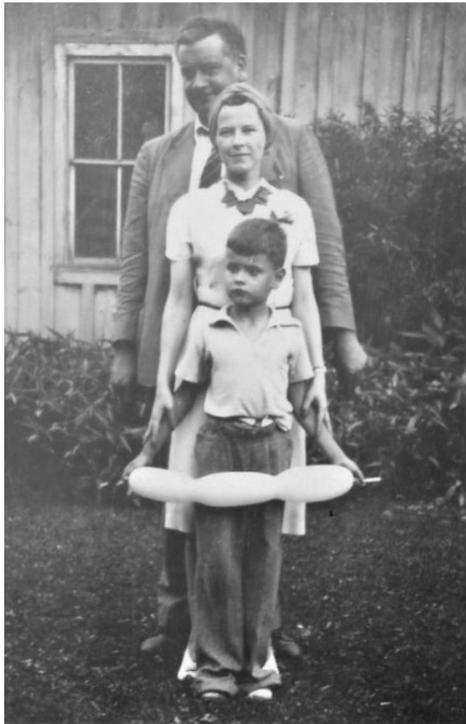


(left to right) Jamie (4 yrs), Sarah Bette (5 yrs) and Bobbie Lee (6 yrs) perform for their grandmother Mary Ella in front of her house on Main Street in Bland

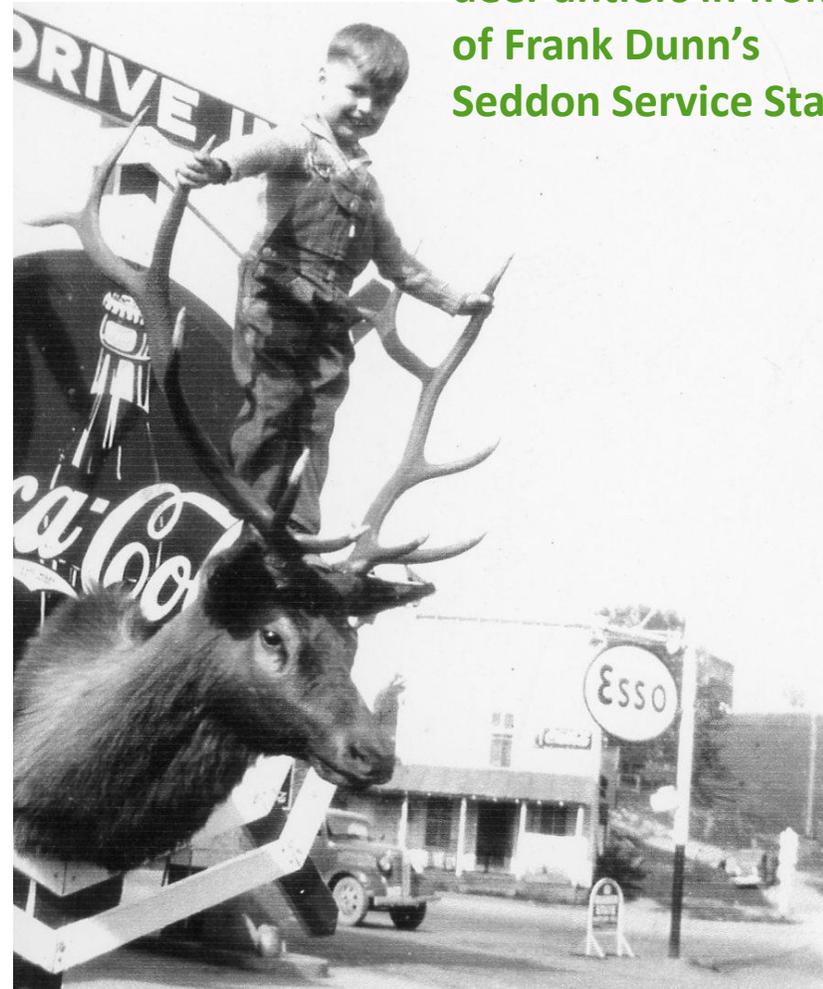


The Muncy boys - Donnie Ray (standing) and Jimbo (seated), Grandma Mary Ella about 1940

# Raymond McDonald (Donnie Ray) Muncy



Donnie Ray aboard  
deer antlers in front  
of Frank Dunn's  
Seddon Service Station



Donny Ray Muncy Bland Ky

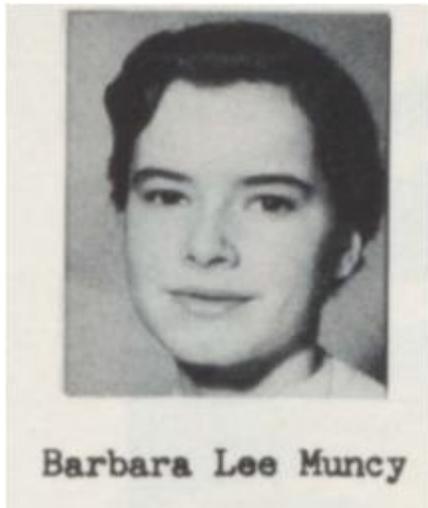


Donnie Ray, new editor of Bland  
Messenger after his father's death  
in 1953 in bowtie seated 2<sup>nd</sup> from right

# Barbara (Bobby Lee) Muncy



Bobby Lee and Jimbo, as teenagers, with their mother in the 1950s



Barbara Lee Muncy



Bobby Lee Muncy  
"Toad"



# Sarah Bette Muncy



Sarah Bette pictured with other piano students taught by Mrs. Rosa Bird



Sarah Bette wearing her badge sash in her Girl Scout Troop

# Jamie ("Jamie") Copenhaver Muncy



Jamie Muncy and Stewart Stafford with her new bicycle. She let Stewart take the first ride on the new bike. He promptly wrecked it and bent the horn!



Jamie and E. Reed Smith were married November 1964.



Jamie at Bland High School



Daughter Jamie & Mother Lorraine in 1955

# James B. (“Jimbo”) Muncy Jr.



Ann Hardy was a classmate of Jimbo in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. They were housed in the little red schoolhouse (pictured above) that now sits on the Fairgrounds. Jimbo was an avid reader of classic comics from his Aunt Betty’s Drugstore. Our teacher, Miss Myrtle Stuart, allowed her students to tell stories the last half hour of each day.

Jimbo regaled us with a story for several months, telling it in small segments each day. Later, Ann Hardy realized that the story was from the famous story by Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables*. Jimbo was quite a story teller!



Jimbo’s first grade class. 1946-47

# Thomas Edward (“Tom Ed”) Muncy



Tom Ed boards the Greyhound Bus with his mother in Bland at the Seddon Service Station. Bus Travel was a popular mode of travel in Bland after WWII before everyone could afford a car. Many people rode the bus to shop in Wytheville and Bluefield. Mrs. Muncy rode the bus up and down the East Coast and to Florida for years to visit her family.

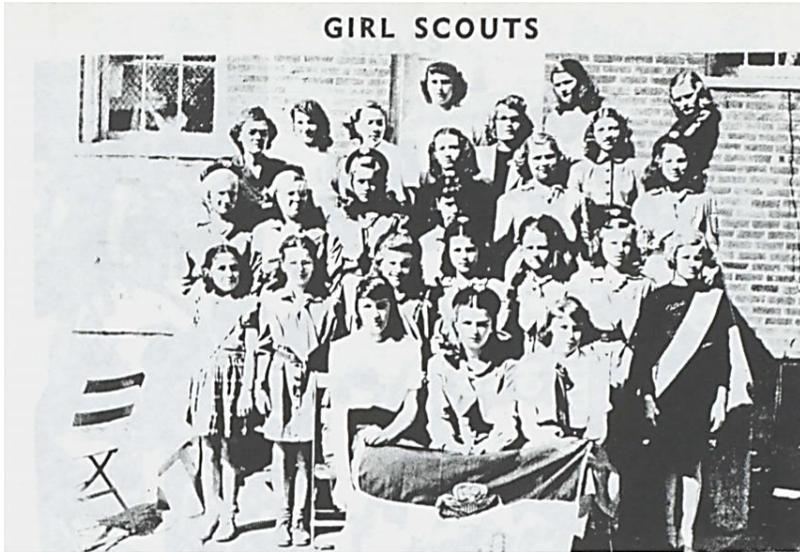


At an early age Tom Ed went to live his aunt Kathleen Muncy Edwards and her family in Sunbury NC. He is pictured above as a member of the Monogram Club. He graduated from high school in Sunbury and then attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He visited Bland frequently in the summer.



Tom Ed at UNC-Chapel Hill

# Scenes of the Muncy Children Around Bland



Sarah Bette with her Girl Scout Troop. She is the one on the right with her badge sash. Lena Mae Burton was the Scout Leader.



**Jamie, Sarah Bette, Jean Ann Morehead, Kathleen Muncy sitting on Confederate Soldier base at Bland Courthouse**

# Scenes of the Muncy Children Around Bland

BACKWARD  
GLANCE

BETTY HARDY'S BIRTHDAY PARTY



Little Miss Elizabeth Way "Betty" Hardy, daughter of Sam and Helen Hardy, celebrated her fourth birthday at her home in downtown Bland, c.1941. Those attending were (left to right) an unknown lad, Janet Bird with her hand on her brother Danny Bird, Bobby Pierce Kegley, Johnny Stafford, Shirley Shannon, Eleanor Bird seated, Betty Hardy, her sister Ann Hardy (with back to camera) and Jamie Muncy. Photo was donated to the Historical Society by Ann Hardy Beardshall. Anyone who can identify the young lad on the far left is asked to please contact Brenda King at the Historical Society, (276) 613-0866.



Friends dressed for a party?

Betty Hardy was Jamie Muncy's best friend. Jamie attended Betty's 4<sup>th</sup> birthday party.

# Scenes of the Muncy Children Around Bland



St. Matthews Lutheran  
Leyburn Presbyterian Church



The Muncys attended the Leyburn Presbyterian Church. Sunday School classes were taught by their aunts, Misses Betty, Nannie Rose, and Anna Muncy. Jimbo and Jamie are among the children pictured above with their teacher, Miss Betty (Drugstore Bess) Muncy.

# Life after Bland for the Muncy Children

**Bobbie Lee:** After leaving Bland, Bobbie Lee became an X-Ray technician and married attorney Richard Sutherland. Eventually they settled in Richmond. They had one daughter, Anna. After Richard died in the late 1980s, Bobbie went back to school--chef school! Unfortunately, she passed away from cancer in 1993, before she could ever put her new degree to use--but she always was the most wonderful cook, and an incredible inspiration!

**Donnie Ray:** Donnie Ray left Bland to serve in the US Navy during the Korean War. Upon his return, he married Eleanor Bird and had a daughter, Sandra. He maintained a long and honorable career with the State of Virginia Department of Corrections, serving many executive positions in his years with various institutions, and was the final warden of the Virginia State Penitentiary in Richmond. He still lives in the Richmond area.

**Sarah Bette:** Sarah Bette also followed the X-Ray technician route, but ultimately worked for many years as a nurse for a medical practice in Washington, DC. Even after retirement, she remained active in the medical community, serving elderly patients with home care and working at retirement home facilities. She married Bernard Orleans of Washington, DC in the 1980s, and when he passed away, she settled in Wytheville.

# Life after Bland for the Muncy Children

**Jamie:** Jamie, like her sisters, started off as an X-Ray technician, but the big city called to her, so she followed Sarah Bette to Washington, DC. She worked with a doctor's practice by day, but in the evenings, she performed as a singer in nightclubs and venues, where she met celebrities like Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole, Jimmy Durante, Paul Anka...it was a great adventure! She ultimately married E. Reed Smith, a dentist who specialized in the dental care of autistic children and those with special needs. They had three children: Leanna, Jamie, and E. Reed Jr. They had only been married seven years when he was killed in an auto accident. In time, she moved her little family down to Gainesville, FL, where, inspired by her late husband's skill and understanding of children, she studied and became certified in Montessori training. For many years she ran a small school based out of her home, and only retired in 2009. She currently lives in northern VA near her son and his family.

**Jimbo:** At 17, Jimbo enlisted in the Marines, and thereafter finished a degree in political science at Virginia Tech. He married Nancy Tate, they settled in Richmond and had two boys, Tim and Freddie. Jimbo served as executive director of the Virginia Association of Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors for 25 years, and additionally as the editor of the association's magazine, *Image*. He has retired in Richmond.

**Tom Ed:** Tom Ed attended UNC Chapel Hill and graduated with a degree in business administration. After serving in the Army in the Vietnam War, he married and had a son, Ted. As a longtime, well-known resident of Asheville, NC, he specialized in sales and real estate over the years, but most recently as a business consultant. He still lives in Asheville with his wife, Libby.

# Epilogue

After all her children were raised and left Bland County, Mrs. Muncy continued to live in Bland until the death of her mother in 1966, at which time she inherited her childhood home in Crockett, VA. She worked for the youth division of the Dept. of Corrections and later became a house mother at Radford College, but gradually moved her place of residence on weekends and holidays from Bland to the Copenhaver house in Crockett. She remained a resident of Crockett until her death in 2007 at the age of 97. She was laid to rest beside her husband in the Bland Cemetery.



Members of the family became ardent supporters of the Bland County Historical Society. When the house was sold, Jimbo contributed many issues of past Bland Messengers to round out our collection.

The family also contributed many pictures and other artifacts from the Bland Messenger operation and other items related to the Muncy family to the Collection at the Bland County Historical Society. Their interest and support continues to this day.

We hope you have enjoyed reading about this past era in Bland History. If you have any comments and/or corrections, please let us know at [info@blandcountyhistsoc.org](mailto:info@blandcountyhistsoc.org)

*Ann Hardy Beardshall*