



VOL. 2 ISSUE 11 • November 2020

# Pittman Center Times

Official Newsletter of the Town of Pittman Center

Dear Subscribers,

Thank you for continuing to read the Pittman Center Times! We believe this is one of the best methods to communicate with the citizens of this community. We look forward to continued communication with YOU, the CITIZEN!

If you have any comments or suggestions, please feel free to call Town Hall at (865) 436-5499 or you can email us at [asutton@pittmancenter.tn.gov](mailto:asutton@pittmancenter.tn.gov).

-Your PC Times Staff



## MESSAGE FROM MICHAEL

It's hard to believe it is already time for the holidays! November has been a very exciting month with the national election as well as the local Pittman Center election. We would like to take this time to congratulate Cheryl Houston and Billy McCarty for being sworn in as Pittman Center Aldermen at the November 25th BMA meeting. We would also like to thank all of the candidates for taking an interest in their community's government and running for office and lastly, we would like to thank everyone who voted in our election. There were a total of 566 votes cast in the Pittman Center municipal election this year!

As we welcome our new board we will begin reviewing this years budget and future spending priorities. The Town has been fortunate to continue realizing strong revenues primarily from hotel/motel tax and local option sales tax. This revenue will give us the ability to complete additional projects and continue to provide the high level of service that our citizens expect.

Remember to mark your calendars for our annual Yule Log event the first Friday in December. The event will look slightly different this year, but we hope you come out and join us!

We hope you have a great Thanksgiving and start to the holiday season!

Michael T. Borders  
City Administrator

# TOWN MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

All Town meetings are open to the public. Members of the community are encouraged to attend! Complete minutes (after they are approved) are available on the Pittman Center website. Below is an unofficial and brief overview of the meetings.

## Planning Commission

The Planning Commission during the regularly scheduled meeting held on November 18<sup>th</sup>.



1. Public Hearing and Consideration of Rezoning Request for property located off of Copeland Road (Map:109 Parcel:021) in Pittman Center, Tennessee from RLD (Low Density Residential District) to R-2 (Planned Residential District). After a presentation from the proposed developer and considerable discussion the Planning Commission recommended a rezoning to the R-1 District to the Board of Mayor and Alderman.
2. Discussion and Consideration of Primitive and RV Campground Ordinance. The Ordinance was approved and forwarded to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

## Board of Mayor and Aldermen

During the regularly scheduled Board of Mayor and Aldermen meeting held on November 24<sup>th</sup> :

1. Election of Vice Mayor. Alderman Howard was nominated and elected to become the Vice Mayor.
2. First Reading and Consideration of Ordinance No. 304: An Ordinance Amending the "Zoning Map of the Town of Pittman Center, Tennessee" by Rezoning Property from the RLD (Low Density Single Family Residential) to the R-1 (Single Family Residential) District. The Ordinance was approved on first reading.
3. Review and Consideration of Bids for Culvert Repair on Butler Branch Road over Webb Creek. The low bid from Charles Blalock & Sons in the amount of \$92,120 was accepted.
4. Reading and Consideration of Resolution No. 229: A Resolution of the Town of Pittman Center, Tennessee amending the Pittman Center Personnel Handbook. The Resolution was approved.
5. Consideration of employee Christmas bonuses. The employees Christmas bonus package was approved.
6. Consideration of Cost of Living Adjustment. The cost of living adjustment in the amount of 2% along with a retroactive 2% from July 1, 2020 was approved.



## Upcoming Meetings

The regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting will be held on December 14<sup>th</sup>.

The regularly scheduled Board of Mayor and Alderman will be held on December 17<sup>th</sup>.

The next Tree Board meeting will be announced on our website.

If you have any questions regarding agenda items or action please do not hesitate to contact the City Administrator at (865) 436-5499.



## SWEARING IN OF THE NEW BOARD

Alderman Billy McCarty and Alderman Cheryl Houston were sworn in at the November 24<sup>th</sup> Board of Mayor and Aldermen meeting by Mayor Jerry Huskey. We would also like to thank former Alderman Rachel Huskey and former Vice Mayor Judy Tucker for their service to the Town. We also thank Kevin Howard for serving our community as our new Vice Mayor. We hope you enjoy the pictures from the swearing in ceremony.



## REMINDERS...

Please remember in order to participate in the citizens comment section of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen meeting you must fill out a form provided by Town staff and return the form prior to the end of day Tuesday before the Thursday meeting. You can find the form at [www.pittmancentertn.gov](http://www.pittmancentertn.gov) go to the “government” tab in the ribbon bar then to “printable forms”. You may also contact Town staff and have the form filled out over the phone at (865) 436-5499.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



Please remember as New Years approaches, Fireworks Permits can be obtained At Pittman Center City Hall for \$5

You may go to our website: [www.pittmancentertn.gov](http://www.pittmancentertn.gov) on the home page and click on the **Fireworks Ordinance** to see the full ordinance.



After discussion from Town staff we have decided to begin featuring Pittman Center businesses! We believe this to be an excellent way to support our local businesses and learn a little history at the same time. If you know of or are part of a business that you would like to be featured please reach out to us at [asutton@pittmancentertn.gov](mailto:asutton@pittmancentertn.gov).



# History of Buckhorn Inn

Buckhorn Inn was founded by Douglas Bebb in 1938. Douglas Bebb (1907-1984) became interested in Gatlinburg and the Smokies because of his parents, amateur botanists, who visited the newly established Great Smoky Mountains National Park in the early 1930s.



Because Douglas was a man of wide talents and interests who was also a quick-study, his early career was peripatetic. Born and reared in Hinsdale, Illinois, the son of a physician and his wife, he benefited from the cultural opportunities and influences of the urban metropolis of Chicago. Both he and his brother Hubert (who became an architect and practiced in Gatlinburg from 1954 until his death in 1984) were both greatly influenced by their attendance as young men at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Douglas completed his university studies shortly after the collapse of the financial markets which ushered in the Great Depression. Like so many young men during this period, he traveled throughout the country doing odd jobs, fishing for salmon off the West Coast and later working at the Chicago Exposition of 1933-34.

When he was in his late twenties, Douglas' parents suggested to him that he visit Gatlinburg and consider developing an inn in this new tourist destination. Availing himself of his parents' help, he bought a 25 acre site on which he built and developed Buckhorn Inn, the third oldest establishment in Gatlinburg and the oldest accommodation establishment still operating in Sevier County today.



With the help of local craftsmen, Douglas Bebb built the lodge (the main Inn building) and Cottages 1 and 2 in 1937 and opened his doors for business in 1938. Douglas sited the neo-Colonial Inn perfectly, capturing a majestic view of the three points of Mt. Le Conte as well as Trillium Gap, Brushy Mountain and Winnesoka Knob.

The evolution of Buckhorn Inn was a family effort from the beginning. Hubert Bebb sent down designs for the Inn, which early on billed itself as the "Mount Vernon of the Smokies." Its imposing columns and colonial architectural style gave it a special distinction in the Gatlinburg of that day. Douglas' parents visited often, eventually buying property nearby, and his mother wove the rugs that originally covered the

hallways and the living and dining rooms.

Douglas' first wife, Audrey, opened the Inn with him and was the Inn's first hostess--greeting guests, planning the menus and making the seating arrangements.



This energetic innkeeper, builder, cook and forester planted over 3,000 hemlocks and white pines on the cleared farmland, carefully sculpting the woodland environment so that no other human-made structure was visible from the Inn. He used his Art Institute training to carve buck heads for highway signs advertising the Inn. Two of his sculptures still grace the Inn's stairwell and one of his buck heads accents the end of the wooden wall to the left of the Inn's entrance.



Douglas raised his own chickens to produce the best eggs for his guests' morning breakfast. Every year he brought forth an abundance of fresh vegetables from his garden. He was a renowned cook, preparing all the meat dishes served at the Inn. His Sunday Buffets, which he prepared in their entirety because it was the cook's day off, were a favorite among the Inn's guests. He taught himself auto mechanics, modifying an old Model A to run on a light switch. Known among the family and guests as Doug's Jalopy, he used it to ferry items to the dump and back and forth across the property. He felled his own trees for firewood and milled his own lumber. The one-inch walnut paneling in the living room at Bebb House was milled by Douglas at his sawmill on the Buckhorn property.

After Audrey's death in 1950, Douglas married June Edmondson in 1951 and she and her four children came to live at Buckhorn Inn. By 1955, Douglas had completed what is now known as Bebb House for his new family to live in. The breathtaking view of the mountains from the living room, looking out across the terrace, is the central focus of the house. Douglas wanted the house to face out toward LeConte so that on a sunny day the family could sit on the terrace with its striking basket weave overhang, no matter what the temperature. As his family grew (he and June had two more children), he built a small, two-story house next to the family home that became known as the Boys' House. Hubert Bebb, the County's most influential architect, designed both these houses.



Until the 1960's a staff of four served three meals a day. In those early days without electricity, after dinner the guests might sit in their cars, listening to the news of far away events on their car radios. A coal furnace, stoked each morning by

Doug, welcomed guests as did the roaring fire in the Inn's main room.

Until 1979, the Inn was open from April to November. The seasons were marked then, as they are now, by the Inn's "regulars," none more regular than Dorothy and Jim Frisch and Robert and Liz Strehlow. The Strehlows, who spent every April and every October at the Inn from 1938 until 1984, would honk their horn as they drove up Buckhorn Road, and everyone would turn out to help them unload their supplies which included a TV set and a case





of Jim Beam. Bob called himself Buckhorn's Assistant Manager. He cued everyone to stand when Douglas entered a room and to hold their forks still until he sat down. One year Bob organized the Buckhorn Bottle Blowers and had the members of this musical group drive down to Huskey's Store to buy matching plaid shirts.



Among the more famous guests at the Inn have been David Lillienthal and Will Wemyss (co-founder of GENESCO). Walt Disney and his wife Lily stayed at the Inn in the 1954 when one of his location units was filming over the mountains in North Carolina. Mrs. Tipper Gore, wife of then U.S. Vice-President Al Gore, was a guest at the Inn in 1998.

In the days of the Bebb Family, the cocktail hour was an honored tradition. As Tennessee was dry in the early years, guests would bring their wine and spirits with them. According to Ellen, those who knew her father well would throw in an extra bottle of Jim Beam for the innkeeper. "Some of the guests would take turns hosting pre-dinner gatherings in their cottages, but the greatest honor seemed to be when my parents would invite guests to their home on the

next ridge (Bebb House)."

Because he had so much of himself invested in the Inn, Douglas chose his guests carefully. He did not believe in commercial advertising. With only a few exceptions, such as the time the Inn's recipe for corn pudding was featured in the *Ford Times* (1949), he relied on advertising by word-of-mouth. In those days, as now, the high seasons for the Inn were Spring and Fall. During the hot Summer, the Inn was never full because it didn't have air conditioning or television. Summer was the busy period for the rest of Gatlinburg and when tourists would begin their desperate search through the directory for a place to stay and happen onto Buckhorn, Douglas would turn them away, telling them that the Inn was full when only one or two rooms might be taken. He knew their preference was for color television sets and heated pools, and he only wanted people whose *first choice* was the Inn.



With no television or radios to entertain, the Inn's faithful guests would gather on the porch or in the living room for long evenings of conversation, reading, card playing, or a game of skittles or cribbage (the latter a game for which tournaments were staged and for which Douglas crafted a loving cup). In 1960, June Bebb wrote: Most of the discussions (sometimes a bit heated!) centered on the elections, world affairs, and sports, but a tramp in the woods or a view of our placid mountains dissolved all feelings that may have been stirred.



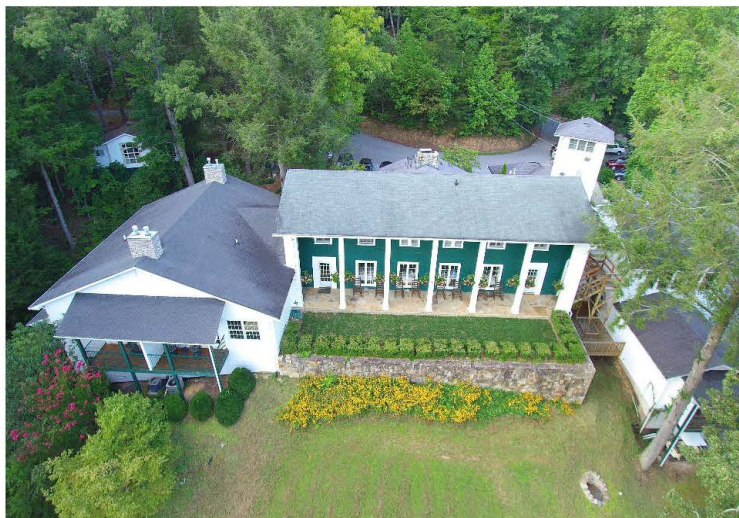
In 1978, the year June died, Douglas sold Buckhorn Inn to Knoxvilleans Rachael, Robert and Lindsay Young. Ellen said that letting the Inn go was difficult for her father: *My father's hands had touched every inch of wood and every particle of soil. But without my mother's presence to warm the great room, it seemed fitting to pass the Inn on to the hands of another.*

The Young Family's motivation in buying Buckhorn was to preserve an important part of the area's history: "We just really wanted to preserve and protect it. We were afraid it would become commercialized." After Douglas's death in 1984, the family also bought the family home, known now as Bebb House and Lindsay House.

Under the Young's protection, the Inn became elegantly decorated with antique furniture and colorful English chintz window coverings and bedspreads. Its furnishings, like its mood, is mellow. The grand piano came from Rachael and Robert's Knoxville home and the Inn's handsome mahogany, belonged to Rachael's mother.

The Youngs converted the water tower to a bedroom, one of the most special in the Inn, modernized the kitchen and the physical plan in general.

Bebb House, like the rest of Buckhorn Inn, has been updated over the years. The large bedroom at the rear of Bebb House was originally the nursery and its adjoining sitting room was once Douglas and June's bedroom. The whole of the house was renovated by Robert and Rachael's son-in-law, architect Jim McDonough. The chests in the long hall belonged to Rachael's mother, and the bed in the main bedroom came from Robert and Lindsay's great-grandparents. It is referred to in the family as the "birthing bed" because so many children were born in it.



**In 1998, Lee and John Mellor became the third owners of the Inn.** A major renovation and expansion program was begun. All of the rooms in the Inn were refurbished and The Tower was completely remodeled. All four existing cottages were renovated and three new cottages (modeled on Cottages 1 and 2) were constructed and opened for business on New Year's Eve, 1999. A meditation and prayer labyrinth was built in one of the Inn's large meadows. In April 2001, an addition on the west side of the lodge was completed, providing three new rooms and a

guest sitting room/conference center. In 2004, an addition to the west side of the Inn was made and a new guest house (Webb Mountain House) was incorporated into the Inn. Buckhorn House Events Center was completed in 2008 and Greenbrier House was completed in 2017. The grounds have been improved through the addition of the Callaway Garden and Terrace Gardens.

Some things have changed at Buckhorn over the years. There's been electricity for a long while now and there's even televisions and DVD players. The Inn still relies mostly on word-of-mouth advertising, although these days that includes the Internet. We no longer serve the three meals a day Doug Bebb managed, but we do serve a hearty breakfast and a four-course gourmet dinner that we like to think he'd be proud to call his own.

But, mostly, things go on here just as they always have. We still cut our own firewood and if the staff sometimes greets guests as if they were long-lost friends, it's because they are.



Buckhorn has been well-served by many good people in its employ over the years. For 30 of the 40 years Doug Bebb was here, he employed the same cook, Hazel Whaley, and the same housekeeper, Ella Huskey. There have been several managers at Buckhorn Inn during the 20 years the Young family has been its steward. These include Denise Motola, Ellen Bebb, Hugh and Kathy Welch, and John and Connie Burns.

With loyal guests who return year after year, the present staff continues to set their seasonal clocks by their arrival.

One of the greatest beauties of the Inn has always been its effect on people. Perhaps because it lies in the lap of such majesty, it reminds its guests, its staff and its owners of our collective insignificance. All of us at Buckhorn strive to maintain the beauty of the Inn and to preserve and advance Douglas Bebb's ideal of providing travelers with a respite from the hurly-burly of everyday life, an opportunity to renew their spirits in the tranquility of nature's bounty.



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*The Town of Pittman Center Town Hall will be Closed Thursday, November 26<sup>th</sup> and Friday, November 27<sup>th</sup> in Observance to the Holiday! We will reopen at 8 a.m. on Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup>.*

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