

Citizens of the Month



The Maupin Brothers

By: Bobbie Sue Shelton

Freeland and Thomas Maupin are brothers who share a common love for music and dancing. They grew up and attended school in Eagleville. They are the sixth and seventh of 10 children of John D. and Mable Maupin. All children except Ollie B., who passed away in 2001, live within 20 miles of each other. Most of the Maupin family are well known for their music and dancing ability. They were taught the love of music and dancing at an early age by their grandmother Finley who lived with them. This family's talents are still being passed down to the grandchildren and great grandchildren of John D. and Mable.

Freeland was born Nov. 16th 1940. He has been married to Sarah, daughter of Paul and Emily Pauline Lowe for almost 46 years. They are parents of 2 children: Noland Antonio (Tony) and Sandra Renee and have 4 grandchildren and 1 step grandchild. They have lived in the Eagleville – Murfreesboro area all their married life and at the present live on S. Windrow Road near Eagleville.

Thomas was born November 16th, 1938. He married Beulah Shores almost 44 years ago and has two daughters, Deana and Danyeal, and two grandchildren. Thomas retired from AVCO in 2000 after 41 ½ years of service. Thomas and Beulah live near Murfreesboro.

Thomas is a well-known five time national buck-dancing champion. He has been dancing as long as he can remember and has danced at “Uncle Dave Macon Days” in Murfreesboro every year but one of this 27-year tradition. He describes himself as a “self taught buck dancer with a flat foot style”. Everyone likes to see Thomas put on his tap shoes and get out his plywood board. They know they're in for a treat. Thomas said that when he was young, people would want him to



Thomas and Freeland dancing on the street in Quebec, Canada

“dance a little jig” for them and he was always ready to oblige. Maybe that's why buck dancing is called jig dancing in Kentucky. He won his first competition with a friend, Owen McConnell, in 1954 in a talent contest at the old theatre in Eagleville. Thomas has traveled and danced in competitions and exhibitions over most of the south and eastern part of the United States. They span from the Sunshine Park in New York to a street in Quebec Canada where he and Freeland danced

for an accordion player, to south on a street corner in New Orleans. He and Freeland have often traveled together and entered into competition with each other. Several years ago at the Dave Macon Days in Murfreesboro, Thomas, Freeland and their now deceased brother Ollie B, competed against each other. Ollie B. also shared the love of music and dancing with Thomas and Freeland. He was sick quite a while before his death and during his illness he gave his dancing shoes to Thomas. The shoes were too big and Thomas commented, “I can never fill his shoes, but I can dance in them”. The first Dave Macon Days after Ollie B's death, Thomas danced in Ollie B's shoes. Although he used tape to keep them on, Thomas was dancing for his brother in his brother's shoes.



Thomas dancing in his brother's shoes at the Dave Macon Days.

In about 1986 or 1987, Freeland and Thomas went to East View in West Tennessee for a dancing competition. This one and only time, Freeland came home with the 1st place plaque and money. Thomas came in second. Freeland has never let Thomas forget this trip. Thomas also remembers trips to Athens Alabama where a 93-year-old man beat him two years in a row. Thomas said his mother, Mable, never saw him dance in public but he had an aunt, Mary Sue Perrell who came to Dave Macon Days and watched him dance. He felt his Mother's presence when he looked out the audience and saw Aunt Sue.

Thomas is featured in a video showcase located in the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville. The video was filmed near Ft. Nashboro. He was dressed in the 30 or 40's style of clothing and was dancing on the street corner. He felt he was chosen because of his comments about how he feels that dancing has always been a part of music and the two have always gone together. Thomas believes that a good dancer feels the music and the music becomes a part of him. “You just have to feel it,” he said. Thomas has recently been visited by a reporter from North Carolina



Thomas dancing at a music festival in Ala-



and an article on him will be published in the October “Old Time Herald” magazine.

Thomas and Freeland expressed how fortunate they feel to have met so many people at these competitions that have become really good friends for life. About 20 years ago they met some members of a band from Kentucky, John and Gene Lanham and June Evans, who invited them to come to Kentucky for some old time pickings. Since then the Maupins have traveled to Kentucky many times to visit their friends and to attend music functions. Freeland and Sarah have often stayed in their home and through them met the sheriff of Ohio County, Kentucky who also has a love for music and plays spoons for the band.

Although Freeland had a love for dancing all his growing years, in 1973 his singing talent began to emerge and he started singing in church. Since about 1987 his talent has been recognized by others in the music field and he has entertained in Kentucky, Maggie Valley, N. C., New Orleans, La., Ohio, Mississippi to name a few and at many functions all over Tennessee. He and Thomas often volunteer to entertain at the Westbrook Towers in Murfreesboro, to the patients at local nursing homes, and to the many senior citizen functions in the middle Tennessee area. Once a month Freeland and a group of musicians give a program at a senior citizen apartment building in Nashville. Thomas also goes when he available. The residents like to dance as well as listen to the music. The oldest resident is 98 years old and each month she will dance with Freeland or Thomas. The next oldest is 92 and she also wants to dance and will dance several times during the program. Often Freeland’s plan of a 2-hour program lasts an extra hour or two. The residents keep making requests and the group keeps playing, singing and dancing.



Freeland, Sonny Lonas, Bill Bohanan, John Carrington and Raymond McCord entertaing residents at the Dandridge Apartments in Nashville

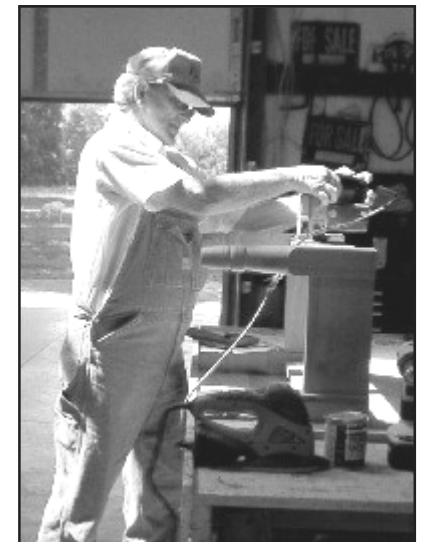
Freeland also has another talent that includes woodworking for a while, from 1975 to 1980 he had a wood working shop and enjoyed a hobby of making furniture. He would go to the woods, cut a tree and have it sawed into lumber for his project. Since his retirement from Square D in 2003, he has renewed this interest and built a wood working shop to start his hobby of furniture making again. He continues the habit of having a log cut

for his lumber with the help of his friends, Price Hartman and Gary Wilson who have a portable saw mill. Freeland has recently completed several antique reproductions of pie safes, dressers made of walnut and oak and several tables. At the present his project is his first sugar chest. He likes working with all kinds of wood and at times, mixing the wood on a project. Sarah is often looking to see how she can make room for another piece of furniture that he has made and she might want to keep.

Freeland doesn’t have all the talent in his house. Sarah is one of the best cooks around, believe me or just ask Freeland. Looking at the beautiful plants and flowers around her home, you can tell she also has a great big green thumb. She too enjoys music and dancing and comments about all the friends they have made over the years that they met through music ... Friends for life she calls them.



Thomas dancing with one of the residents.



Freeland working on a project

