

Doris Mahannah is Loving Life

By Dawson Baker
Staff Writer

If someone asked what the world was like 107 years ago in 1916, what would come to mind?

The crossword puzzle was only three years old, and Thomas Edison had unveiled the first moving picture only six years prior to 1916.

It would be another 21 years before the invention of the first jet engine, and 68 years before Apple released the first Macintosh computer.

One Hartwell citizen does not have to imagine it, because she has lived through it all.

Doris Mahannah, born June 24, 1916, will have a lot to celebrate this weekend, as she rings in her 107th birthday.

"I was born in North Carolina, [and] I had good parents and good grandparents," Mahannah said. "My grandparents were just like my own parents. They corrected me if I did something wrong.

"It was wonderful."

Mahannah spent her early years growing up in North Carolina and recalled how she and her family used to travel to church.

"My father didn't have a car. He had a buggy, and when we went to church with the buggy, I'd stand up front, and my mother would hold the baby," Mahannah said. "I was six years old when my father bought his first car. A 1921 Ford."

That would be the Ford Model T for those keeping track at home.

"I just had one child, a daughter," she said. "I never thought I would see her at 50



(Photos by Dawson Baker)

Doris Mahannah will celebrate her 107th birthday this weekend. The Hartwell citizen is still loving life at 107 as she works with the Tiny Stitches organization in order to make and donate items to newborns across North Georgia.

years old." Now, Mahannah has a grandson at 50 years old and two great-grandchildren in their 20s.

Mahannah, like most members of her generation, devoted a portion of their early years in service to their country.

"I had three brothers in the service and a husband in the service," Mahannah said. "I worked, before the war was over, at [a] shell plant making ammunition.

"I was sewing before that, but when they had to go into service, I decided it was time for me to do something for the government too. This was ammunition for the Navy, 40mm shells, and we worked on the nose of them.

"I worked on them until the war was over."

Following the war, Mahannah spent many years working for a custom furniture

company, where she was responsible for making all of the sample pieces.

Mahannah lived in the mountains of Virginia for many years until her husband passed away, and she made the move down to Georgia to be closer to family.

"[We] had a beautiful home," Mahannah said. "I wish you could see it. I had the prettiest home, [but] my husband died, and I had to live there by myself and I didn't have neighbors close by. My daughter insisted that I couldn't live there by myself because my nearest neighbor was almost half-a-mile away, so I moved down here with my daughter in Marietta."

Mahannah would travel with her daughter to Hartwell, where they owned a home on the lake, to take care of the property.

"I would come up with her for them to mow the yard or something, and I said 'heck, I could live here. I've got neighbors all around me,' so that's when I moved up here in 2011," she said.

It was long after she arrived in Hart County that Mahannah found something to do with her spare time.

"I saw this article in the paper about Tiny Stitches, and I like to sew," she said. "I saw that ad and started working with Tiny Stitches, and the first time I turned something in with Tiny Stitches was in 2011."

Tiny Stitches is a non-profit organization based in Gwinnett County. They are not affiliated with any kind of national organization or religious entity. They have no paid employees. They work to benefit folks right here in the state of Georgia. They

make all kinds of sewn, knitted and crocheted items including gowns, sleepers, washcloths, caps, socks and so much more. All items are donated to newborns in North Georgia who are less fortunate.

Mahannah said she has been a member of the group for the last 12 years, and according to her fellow members, she out produces all of them.

"You see all that beautiful stuff over there?" Mahannah said as she pointed to a table piled high with blankets, sleepers, caps and so many more hand made items. "I made about everything over there."

Mahannah learned to sew at a very young age, and credits her mother with first sparking her interest in sewing.

"She sewed for other peo-

ple," she said. "I was the only girl, my mother had three boys, and I was the oldest in the family so I just always sewed something.

"I started with making doll's clothes, and then I started making for myself.

"I've sewed ever since I was big enough to thread a machine."

Mahannah bought her first machine in 1935 after completing high school.

"I finished high school, and I got a job," she said. "I paid \$115, I think it was, and I would pay for it just \$5 each month until I got it paid for." Mahannah knows how to do it all in the realm of sewing, mastering the craft along the way.

The 'Greatest Generation' is still among us, and it lives on in Hart County through Doris Mahannah who is *Loving Life* at 107 years old.

August Needs

Girl creepers

Girl lap-front shirts

Girl caps

Boy/Girl socks

Boy diaper shirts

Girl afghans

Boy quilts

No receiving blankets needed

😞 One of our own, Frances Alkire passed away on June 26th. She served us so faithfully not only stitching for us, but in her position on the board as Vice-President. She was a good friend and she will be much missed. Her funeral will be at St. Lawrence Catholic Church in Lawrenceville at a date to be determined. We will let you know when the details are available.

👉 VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY from CARLA

I also wanted to make you aware that over the Quaker State 400 race weekend (July 7-9) Speedway Children's Charities is planning to conduct several fundraising events and there will be volunteer opportunities:

Saturday, July 8 – 50/50 Raffle Ticket Sellers

11:30am – 4:30pm

4:30pm – 9:30pm

Sunday, July 9 – 50/50 Raffle Ticket Sellers

11:30am – 4:30pm

4:30pm – 9:00pm

Please let me know if you, your staff, friends or family members would consider volunteering for a few hours to help us over race weekend. The more funds we can raise at our events directly impacts how many grants we can distribute. (carlafayebeasley@gmail.com)

CALENDAR

July 26th, Wednesday 9:00 Prepack/Pack

August 1st, Tuesday 10:15 Duluth Workshop

August 30th, Wednesday 9:00, Prepack/pack

September 5th, Tuesday 10:15 Business Meeting

September 27th, Wednesday 9:00 Prepack/Pack

Pre-pack - 9:00 at Midgard Self-Storage/ 130 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Sugar Hill

Business Meeting - 10:15 at Atlanta Sewing Center/ 1248 Duluth Hwy, Duluth