

FAMILY-OWNED BUSINESS CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

by Laura Gwinn

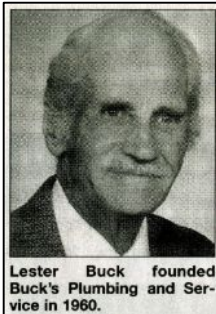
Shane Buck, left, and his father Jerry, are celebrating 50 years of Buck's Plumbing and Service this year with a celebration planned for May 21. Herald-Citizen Photo/Laura Gwinn

COOKEVILLE -- The vans and trucks are familiar, as they are seen all over town -- featuring a buck's head with the words "Buck's Plumbing" on it. What you may not know is that the business is celebrating 50 years of serving the Upper Cumberland this year.



"My father (Lester) began the business in 1960," Jerry Buck, owner, said. "It began as Cookeville Plumbing, but when I took it over in 1968, I merged the two businesses into Buck's Plumbing." Lester was born in Jackson County and his wife, Murrel, was born in Sparta. They moved to Ohio prior to settling back in Tennessee and stayed here ever since. Jerry ran the business with

Lester up until his death in 1994 at age 71. Lester had done excavation work and got into the plumbing business through his affiliation with Herbie Clouse, another plumber that was in the area at that time.



"I worked with dad since I was very young," Jerry said. "I'd go out on calls and do a lot with him." Through these many years, Jerry has seen Cookeville and the Upper Cumberland area grow tremendously. "I've seen businesses come and go," he said. "We've worked for most every restaurant, grocery store, bank and even the university. The Upper Cumberland area has been great and we love it here."

What does Jerry attribute his success to? "Treating customers like we want to be treated," he said. His son, Shane, who will be taking over the business after Jerry, echoes those same sentiments.

"We have fair prices, honest work and we show respect to the customers," Shane said. "We'll keep on serving the public for as long as we're around. It works well." As far as Jerry knows, he is the oldest plumber and the only one left in town that still runs and operates a family-owned business. "We're keeping it in the family," he said.

His wife, Linda, and daughter also help keep the schedules and do other secretarial work. "We run jobs all over the region," he said, offering general plumbing services. There will

be a customer appreciation day Friday, May 21, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Everyone is invited to join in the celebration where you can meet the employees and have lunch. The office is at 724 W. Spring St. For more information, call 528-1157.

Lester Perry Buck

b. 21 April 1923, Antioch, Jackson Co., TN – d. 25 October 1994, Cookeville, Putnam Co., TN. Lester married **Murrel (Reed) Buck** on Sept. 15, 1944, They were married 50 years at the time of his death. They had 3 children, Bobby, Jerry Buck and Debbie Buck-Wheeler, They had 8 grandchildren and 2 deceased grandchildren. and 5 great-grandchildren.



*See Murrel (Reed) Buck Shoemake Obt., buried in Cookeville City Cemetery, Putnam Co., TN.

*See Debra A. (Buck) Wheeler Obt., buried in Cookeville City Cemetery, Putnam Co., TN.

Murrel (Reed) Buck Shoemake, b. 29 November 1927 – d. 18 June 2000, Cookeville, Putnam Co., TN. Lester & Murrel Buck were married Sept. 15, 1944, They were married 50 years at the time of Lester's death in 1994. They had 3 children, Bobby, Jerry Buck & Debbie Buck-Wheeler. They had 10 grandchildren, 2 grandchildren preceded them in death. 5 Great-grandchildren. In 1998 Murrell married James Shoemake on New Year's Eve.

*See Cookeville City Cemetery, Putnam Co., TN at: <http://www.ajlambert.com>