

## **They All Came!**

Wealthy CEOs, busy judges, doctors, lawyers, educators, laborers, rich and poor, black and white, a lady 105 years young, a stately 96 year old gentleman, a retired USAF, dozens of angels, fiery fox hunting ghosts. Laughing with tears in their eyes, they all came to tell their Dr. Rhine stories.

It was a rainy day in late July. With low expectations, I picked up my inexpensive, outdated camcorder, a toothbrush, and a change of underwear. Lazily, I picked my way down the Pig Trail from Fayetteville to I40 and on to Thornton, Arkansas. Thornton is near Pine Bluff and Fordyce, Arkansas.

The little town of Thornton is now virtually reclaimed by regrowth of the piney forests. One hundred years ago it was a bustling lumber town. Was I suprised by my reception by the people of Thornton!

Dr. Rhine had been dead for 37 years. I had called to see if I could talk to someone who might remember the old doctor. He had been nominated for the Arkansas Country Doctor Hall of Honor. My reception was an unexpected suprise! I felt out of place in my wrinkled blue jeans and T-shirt. I couldn't believe they all came!

For 2 days they stood in line, laughing, joking, tearfully remembering the old doctor. It was a reunion of sorts. I recorded nine hours of interviews from over 30 people.

The interview room was charged with vibrant energy. We laughed, we cried, we looked at old pictures, read old newspaper and magazine articles. Thoughtfully, we studied the doctor's old speeches and medical writings. Most were over 80 years old.

Almost all wore a button, which said RHINE BABY. They were one of over 7000 home deliveries he made over his 66 years of medical practice. He delivered five generations of some families.

His wife, three daughters, and the telephone operator (central) were the only main receptionists or bookkeepers he had. He had the luxury of a hospital in nearby Fordyce the last few years of his practice.

Why is this poorly educated, poorly qualified, poorly equipped doctor still healing people, still inspiring the young and the old, still spreading peace and joy?

Visit the Arkansas Country Doctor Museum. You will find pearls of wisdom you can polish to enrich your life!