

# Tornado of 1929



Natural disasters are nothing new. In the early 20th century, especially in the rural/agricultural areas of our country, they could be especially devastating.

In April of 1929, a series of tornadoes cut a swath of death and destruction across half a dozen counties in Georgia and South Carolina. Over 70 persons died and several hundreds were injured in the storms which also destroyed many family homes and ruined the crops (and livelihoods) of their farms.

At approximately 8pm in Cochran Ga, some residents described a red, whirling funnel advancing up the main street before swerving some five blocks from the town center. It descended on a settlement known as Happy Hill, virtually wiping it out. It then jumped to Dexter GA and again to Renz GA before moving up the Atlantic seaboard into Spartanburg SC. Every place it touched down was left in ruins.

Reports of miraculous salvation came from all corners. A family saw their home blown to bits as they took "shelter" by lying in a drainage ditch. They were unharmed. Seven farmhands were lifted by the tornado and flung far into the air, landing in the Canoochee Swamp. They lived to tell the tale.

Others were not as fortunate. A second tornado formed around 11pm in Metter GA, where my 2nd great aunt and uncle lived with their family of five. Their home, which at the time was known to be the oldest home in Metter, was splintered by the

winds, collapsing upon the family residing inside. All were pinned underneath the debris but it was my 65 year old great-aunt, Sarah J Trapnell (nee Buie), who lost her life.

*Michael Ondrasik and Home Video Studio of Mount Dora specialize in the preservation of family memories through the digitalization of film, videotapes, audio recordings, photos, negatives, and slides. For more information, call 352-735-8550 or visit our [website](#).*