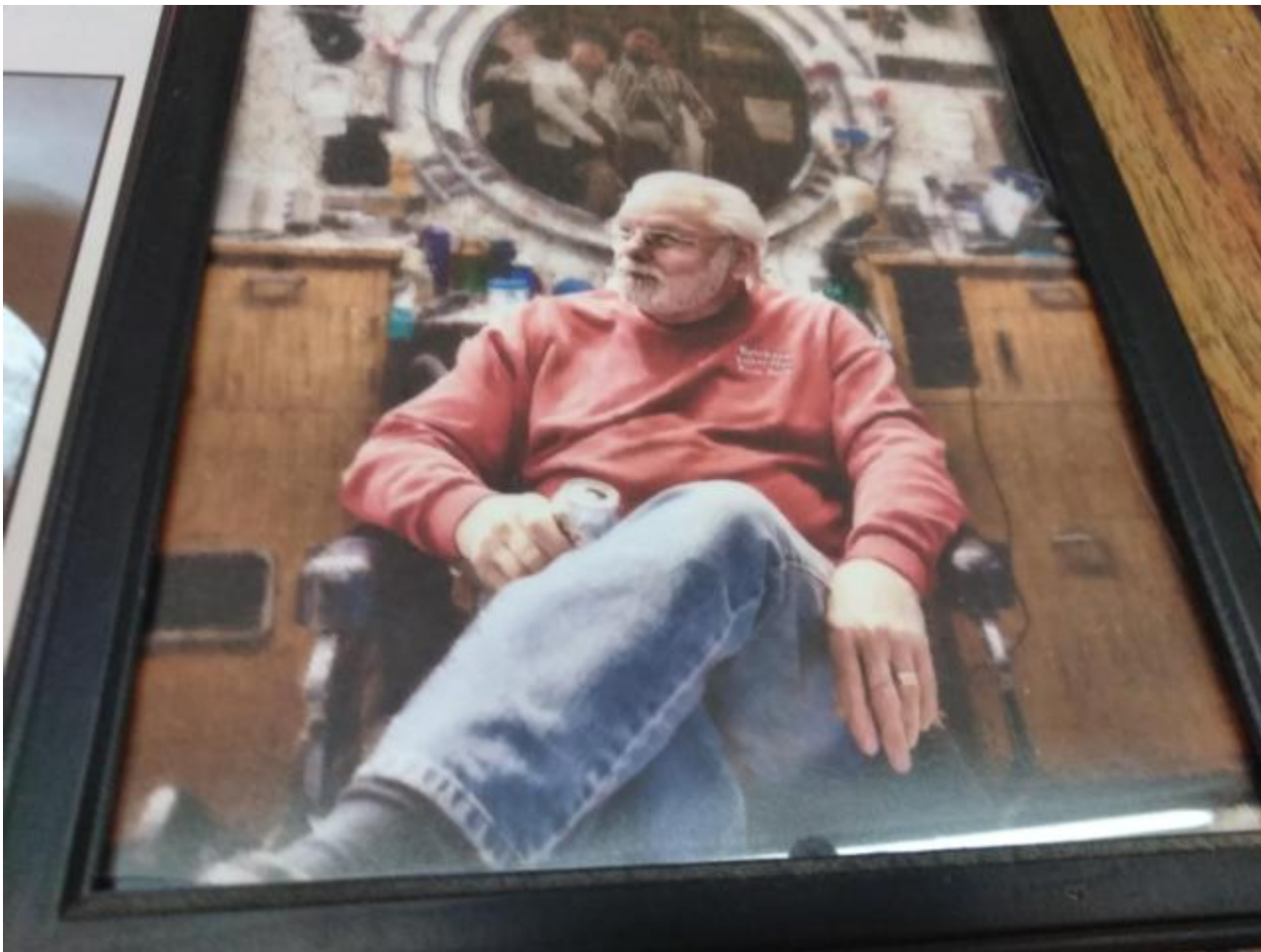


# Happy birthday, Fletcher! Alton barber turns 80

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer  
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ALTON – Donald Fletcher of Fletcher's Barbershop, located at 2509 State Street in Alton, is turning 80 years old Friday.

He has worked as a barber in the building for the majority of that time. In fact, this July marked 59 years of Fletcher's Barbershop being a part of Alton. Derel Dowland, who

has worked as a barber at Fletcher's for more than two decades, said the building was a barbershop as far back as 1927 when it was constructed, more than a decade before Fletcher was even born. As Fletcher's is a long-time Alton establishment, many of his customers and fellow barbers planned a celebration for him first thing Friday morning.

“He's going to know about it around 7 in the morning,” Dowland said Thursday morning when Fletcher was not in the shop. “We got him a cake, and some helium balloons. I also got some poster boards, but my penmanship isn't the best. He's got a wife and two daughters. They'll be here tomorrow, and he doesn't know a thing about that.”



Dowland was working in the shop Thursday morning with Charlie Sholar. Both of the barbers praised the man who owned their small shop alongside many longtime customers.

“He's just always cheerful,” said one man awaiting a trim. “My son's been coming here since he was five. Now my grandsons are coming here.”

“He's goofy,” Sholar added. “He's got a nickname for everyone.”

“He's a great guy, a super guy,” Dowland said. “He's always ready to help members of the community who need it. He's always giving back when he can.”

Anyone who would like to wish Fletcher a happy 80<sup>th</sup> birthday is welcome to come do so Friday.

