MONTHLY NEWSLETTER ISSUE #15 SEPTEMBER 2026

Welcome to the Cumberland County Archives and Family Heritage Center



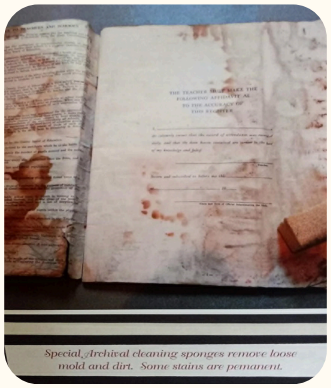
A letter from the Archivist

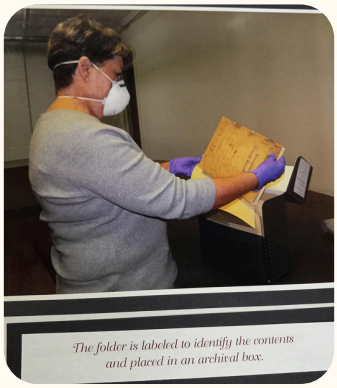
Greetings everyone. With the arrival of September, we are settling into our post-summer holiday season. There has been an increase in visitors since late August, many of whom are resuming genealogy research after their summer travels. Also, this month, I find myself speaking to county 4th grade students during their downtown tour days. It is encouraging to see the students interested in our history, especially in connection with school life during the early 20th century. Being able to show photographs from that time period always gains their attention. Especially when looking at school buildings, roads, and types of clothing worn. The students always state that they are very thankful for HVAC units and indoor plumbing at their schools. Despite our modern world's digital distractions, as a historian, I am pleased that our youth remain engaged and interested in their county's history. Thank you all for your continued support.
(Lori Bowers, Archives Director)

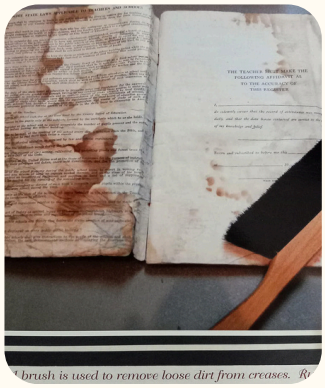
Genealogy Corner

THIS MONTH'S RESEARCH TIP

If you are struggling to find copies of a Tennessee ancestor death record , the Tennessee Virtual Archives might be worth investigating. In 1908, Tennessee began requiring death records be kept statewide. However, that law lapsed at the end of 1912, therefore no records were retained for 1913. Fortunately, statewide recordkeeping resumed in 1914. Larger cities in Tennessee did keep earlier death records: Nashville, (from 1874); Knoxville, (from 1881); Chattanooga, (from 1872); and Memphis, (from 1848). teva.contentdm.oclc.org







Current Exhibit

ARCHIVAL PRESERVATION

Have you ever wondered how old damaged documents and papers are preserved for future generations? This month we are displaying several images that depict cleaning and care of such delicate items. We will also have preservation tools and an explanation of their use on exhibit.



Upcoming Events

WORKSHOPS/CLASSES

Visit our booth at the Crossville 125th Birthday Bash, September 12th 10:00 am - 4:00pm. Beginning on October 3rd, we are offering a free Genealogy 101 course. This course consists of six Saturday classes to be held consecutively. Class time is from 10:00am - 12:00pm. Interested? Contact us at 931-456-2006 or archives@artcirclelibrary.info



Hidden Gem Photo

THIS MONTHS HIGHLIGHT

Mecca Theatre showing the 1937 film, *Shall We Dance.* If you enlarge this photo, you can see there is an empty produce basket hanging from the gentleman's arm. There also appears to be a sack of potatoes sitting at their feet.

Stories From the Archives

As the town of Crossville celebrates 125 years, I wanted to share a brief timeline of events surrounding incorporation. Long-time volunteer Mike Boniol has graciously given me permission to use excerpts from his publication, *Crossville, Tennessee 1900 - 1902.* (Lori Bowers)

"April 1901: A charter was drawn by Smith & Lansden the first of the week. The probabilities are that Crossville will be incorporated by special act of the legislature within a week. The object sought is to provide for better streets, sidewalks and police surveillance. Order has been unusually good here for some months. Our town is sadly in need of better sidewalks and other things that tend to build up the town and place it in the condition the county seat should be. The provision of the statute that extends the four mile law to all towns of less than 2,000 inhabitants enables Crossville citizens to incorporate the town with the despised saloon left out, otherwise no steps would have been taken to incorporate."

"House Bill No. 1109: Section 1. Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, That the town of Crossville, in the county of Cumberland, and the inhabitants thereof, within the boundaries hereinafter specified be, and are constituted a body politic and corporate, by the name and style of Crossville. The boundaries of said town will be as follows: Beginning at a point in the Cookeville road, where the Tennessee Central crosses said road northeast or W.A. Hamby's residence; thence a direct line to W.C. Keyes' northwest corner near W. O. Kearley's residence; thence a direct line to the northeast corner of the cemetery; thence with the line of the cemetery so as to include it to the Rockwood road; thence a direct line to Perkins Spring near the Grassy cove road; thence a direct line to the one mile post on the lantana road; thence a direct line to J.B. Johnson's line to W. A. Hamby's west line; thence around with his line so as to include his property to the Cookeville road; thence to the beginning."

(Section three would lay out the legislative power of Crossville, being vested in a Board of Mayor and Alderman.)

"On June 26th, 1901 the results of the city elections were released. D.L. Lansden was voted Mayor, with the Alderman being: H.R. Webb, Wm. Jerrett, J.E. Burnett, and Samuel Cline.

On July 17th 1901 an article was printed stating, 'The city government of our town is rapidly assuming shape and in a short time we will be fully equipped with the necessary officers and ordinances for discharging the duties and guaranteeing the privileges of a regularly incorporated municipality. The first meeting of the Mayor and Board of Alderman was held at the office of Smith & Lansden." Within a few days the Mayor and Alderman met to create a series of ordinances, 34 in number.

(While I will not list all of them here, section four stands out as far removed from what we consider normal today) Section Four: Forbids playing at any outdoor game of sports on the Sabbath and fixes the fine at not less than or more than five dollars. This ordinance, it is thought, is intended to stop Sunday baseball playing. (Michael Boniol, Lori Bowers)

Incorporation of Crossville offers fascinating historical insight into our county during the emergence of the 20th century. If you are interested in reading the complete list of acts and ordinances, we have a copy located in our reading room reference library. Happy 125th Birthday Crossville!!

Volunteer Opportunities

We are seeking volunteers to assist with indexing, genealogy research, and processing archival materials. Interested? Contact us for further details.

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