MONTHLY NEWSLETTER ISSUE #16 OCTOBER 2026

Welcome to the Cumberland County Archives and Family Heritage Center



A letter from the Archivist

Greetings everyone. As we welcome October, we also welcome back Joyce Rorabaugh as our volunteer genealogy course instructor. I can happily report that the first day of our Genealogy 101 class was completely booked and very well received by attendees. I also wish to share some wonderful news regarding Joyce. Prior to her retirement earlier this year, Joyce was nominated and won the John H. Thweatt Archival Advancement Award for distinguished achievement by archivists in Tennessee. For those of you that know Joyce personally, this award could not have been presented to a better candidate. We are all proud, and amazed, at her perseverance and determination regarding the expansion and continuation of our wonderful facility. I promise there will be photos once the award has been formally received.

Lastly, I owe a debt of gratitude to our amazing staff and volunteers. They have been brilliantly overseeing the day to day running of our archives during my unplanned absence. Here at the archives, we are truly lucky to have such a supportive team and community. Kindest regards.

(Lori Bowers, Archives Director)

Genealogy Corner

THIS MONTH'S RESEARCH TIP

Are you struggling to find emigrant ancestors on shipping manifests? Author Peter Wilson Coldham published a large four volume set titled, *The Complete Book of Emigrants.* Each book contains dates, shippers, emigrant names, departure and arrival locations. Volume One covers 1607-1660, Volume Two covers 1661-1699, Volume Three covers 1700-1750, and Volume Four covers 1751-1776. We are fortunate to have the entire set in our reference library for you to utilize in your genealogy research.







Current Exhibit

RUSTIC CARVINGS OF EAST TENNESSEE

This month, we are pleased to exhibit several examples of a rustic carving style found throughout east Tennessee. We have selected several autumnal themed pieces to be displayed in our front entry curio case. These unique carvings will be on display October 10th until October 24th.

(All pieces are on temporary loan from artists)



Upcoming Events

WORKSHOPS/CLASSES

Beginning on October 3rd, we are offering a free Genealogy 101 course. This course consists of six Saturday classes to be held consecutively. Class times are from 10:00am - 12:00pm. Contact us at 931-456-2006 or archives@artcirclelibrary.info



Hidden Gem Photo

THIS MONTHS HIGHLIGHT

'Autumn Leaf Special' Crossing on Piney Creek Tressel. Area of Westel, taken in 1974. I personally remember the train stopping at Crossville depot during the 1980's. It was a community event, with entertainment and vendors.

Stories From the Archives

This month, I wanted to share a wonderful historical description regarding daily necessities of early settler life in our region. This article was taken from the Crossville Chronicle's November 4th, 1926 edition.

"**Do You Know What a "Piggin" Is? Did You Make Meal In a Mortar?**

'Editor Chronicle: The first settlers in this part of Tennessee were used to hardships in North Carolina and Virginia. They were good hunters, expert marksmen, trained woodsmen, brave and generous.

They had to travel hundreds of miles through the trackless forests, cross rivers on foot or horseback, as there were no roads. Of course they could not bring much with them. The rifle was the most important and necessary article for the pioneer, for with it they could provide food and protect themselves. Most all hunters carried a light axe or hatchet, which served to cut wood for fires. They also carried a large hunting knife, which was about all in the way of knives they had. After more people came, things got better; blacksmiths came and brought iron from which they made axes, hoes, plows, etc. Some men were wheelwrights and made spinning wheels and looms; others were coopers and made tubs, barrels, pails, etc. Your scribe can remember when one would scarcely ever see a wooden bucket with a bale to carry it by. The pails had one handle; one stave was left longer than the others in making. The pails were used for carrying water; smaller ones were called "piggins" and were made like the large pails and used for milking. Tubs were made the same way only they had two handles. One had to carry a pail on their head or hip. The women generally carried the water.

Gourds were used for cups and bottles. Bottles were made by cutting off the handles just enough to allow the gourd to be filled. Dippers were made by cutting out a place large enough on one side to allow one to drink from it. At first the people did not do much farming, they lived something after the Indian style; fishing and hunting. They would grow corn and potatoes enough for their own needs. At first there were no mills to grind the corn. some may wonder how the corn was ground into meal. When corn was hard enough to make meal, it was put into what was called a 'mortar' made out of a log about two feet in diameter and three feet long. This log was set on end and a fire started in the center of the top end. The fire kept burning until it was deep enough to hold several gallons. The edge of the log was kept wet so as to confine the burning to the center. After it was burned large enough it was carefully cleaned out and was ready. Then a pestle, as it was called, was made out of wood. The pestle was like an old fashioned wooden maul. The corn was crushed in the mortar with the pestle until it was fine enough for bread. How would you like to go to that kind of mill, Mr. Farmer, for your corn meal?'"

C.L. Deatherage, author of article.



Mortar and pestle, Mount Vernon



Example of a 'Piggin"

Volunteer Opportunities

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

archives@artcirclelibrary.info

931-456-2006

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