
Welcome to the Cumberland County Archives and Family Heritage Center



A letter from the Archivist

A warm February welcome to you. Sadly, last month's weather forced us to close a total of three days, which lead to a complete re-arrangement of our Saturday seminars. As always, we will announce updated class topics and times on our Facebook page and monthly newsletters. Needless to say, all of us at the archives are definitely looking forward to the seasonable temperatures that are currently being forecast and a return to business as usual. Currently, I am updating our private collections listings, as we have received several fascinating donations. One of my favorite items cataloged was a 1926 keepsake journal from a Hume Fogg High School graduate. This book holds lovely artwork and musings which accompanies the matching yearbook. As a historian, acquisitions such as these peak my interest by offering a detailed description of what hopes and dreams the youth of that era held. It is a privilege to receive and care for items such as these. Preserving the history of our county and state, is a responsibility we at the archives are honored to undertake.

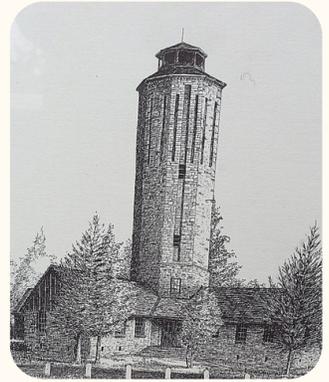
(Lori D. Bowers, County Archivist/Historian)

Genealogy Corner

THIS MONTHS RESEARCH TIP

It is important to keep a research log. These are meant to be written during each genealogy search session. Keeping these logs will help decrease duplicates within your records, especially as your files grow in number. Start with the basics. Write down what source you utilized, any links or page numbers, and the date you found your information.





Current Exhibit

ARTWORK BY DOYLE VADEN

These lovely pen and ink prints depicting Cumberland County landmarks were created by local artist, Doyle Vaden. They will be on display in our curio case until March 5th.



Coming Up

WORKSHOPS/CLASSES

Join us on February 14th for our Migration, Emigration, and Immigration genealogy seminar. We have 12 seats available for this class. Please call or email to register.



Mystery Photo

THIS MONTHS HIGHLIGHT

Workers in entrance to 'slope' mine at Isoline. Names and date are unknown. Do you recognize anyone in this photo?

If so, contact us at archives@artcirclelibrary.info

Stories From the Archives

As we are now in the depths of winter, many of us have lovely spring days in our thoughts. Especially those who enjoy growing their own produce or those involved in larger agricultural ventures. With that in mind, I wanted to share the following excerpts from *Cumberland County 1800-1985* by W. Calvin Dickinson. By the late 19th century most families in Cumberland County were still considered farmers. One J.B. Killebrew noted that “as an agricultural region, it is not of the best repute. The more mountain land a man owns, the poorer he is.” Even as late as 1911, an agricultural report stated that Cumberland county was a “practically undeveloped agricultural section”. It was thought by some that the only profitable use for most of the land would be pasture for cattle and sheep. At that time, the rearing of livestock was the most profitable pursuit of farmers. Even the strains of hogs raised in the county had been improved, with large numbers of Essex and Berkshire breeds replacing native razorbacks. Statistics from 1874 stated the county had 10,311 hogs and 4,466 sheep. One story of interest stated that in 1899 one Mr. DeRossett announced that he would be opening a skunk farm on the eastern side of Crossville. He claimed that skunk oil and fur were in high demand, “having little doubt of being money in the business.” As little else is written of this venture, we can only speculate whether or not it was a successful business.

There were areas of the county that held fertile soil. Leading crops were potatoes, corn, rye, oats, tobacco, sorghum, and cotton. Corn, however, was the principal crop, with over 800,000 bushels harvested in 1874. Fruit crops were also cultivated with success, due to the sandy soil and cooler climate. Grapes were a popular crop for some. Phillip Beyer had 30 acres near Lantana in the 1880's. His small vineyard produced between 600 and 1,000 gallons annually. Surprisingly, it was not until the end of the 19th century that an active market for Cumberland County agriculture became established. Located in Rockwood, it was a 55 mile round trip from Lantana, taking almost a week in a horse drawn wagon. Happily, agricultural pursuits are still strong within the county with over 46,800 acres of cropland being reported in the year 2022. (Lori D. Bowers)



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

facebook.com/CumberlandCountyTNArchives

[@cumberlandcountyarchives](https://twitter.com/cumberlandcountyarchives)

