

WARREN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION



Newsletter



March- April 2016

201 Locust Street

McMinnville, Tennessee



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Over a Century and still Fiddling

Joe Kuhn

Fiddlin' around for over 65 years



On May 15, 1861 Alf Stipes played this fiddle as men and boys from van Buren County went to the Civil War. Joe Kuhn still plays the same fiddle today.

Playing at a pie supper at Bone Cave, a square dance in Spencer or on his own television show in Florida, Joe Kuhn of Rock Island has fiddled around for more than sixty-five years. Joe began playing as a boy following his great grandfather, grandfather and father, who were all fiddle players. Joe had played with Bill Monroe, Benny Martin and many other bluegrass greats.

The fiddle he plays goes back many more years. It is a Grand Gerard that dates back to France about 1775-1820. To get the story on the fiddle we have to go back 155 years ago this May 15th and read the Civil War Diary of

Carroll Henderson Clark. It tells of the men and boys of Van Buren County going off to fight in the Civil War.

Here is an excerpt from the diary as it appeared in the Spencer Times Newspaper in 1911.

"It was understood by all that we would start on the 15th of May 1861. Spring opened early that year, and farmers were over their corn crops the second time. The 15th was on Wednesday, which was clear and beautiful.

We all met at Wiley Millers (now Goodbar). Our wives, sisters and sweethearts were there in great numbers. About 2 p.m. we told them goodbye and marched off to music of Alf and Joe Stipes fiddles and Lewis Ford's drum. Several of them never saw Van Buren County again. Remember this was in May 1861, We arrived in McMinnville late in the evening and the good people took care of us that night and gave us breakfast next morning."

As the men and boys marched off to the Civil War, Alf Stipes played and said, "Boy's, you are hearing sweeter music than that made by the barking of the Fox hounds as they chase the fox over Bone Cave Mountains"!

As a high school student Joe played at dances and traveled to different towns to enter contests. In the 1950s he had a band that played on WMMT radio in McMinnville. In addition to Joe, members of that band were Charles Webster, Joe Bob Basham and a girl named Dorothy Marsh. That girl who started with Joe's band would go on to become the famous Dottie West.

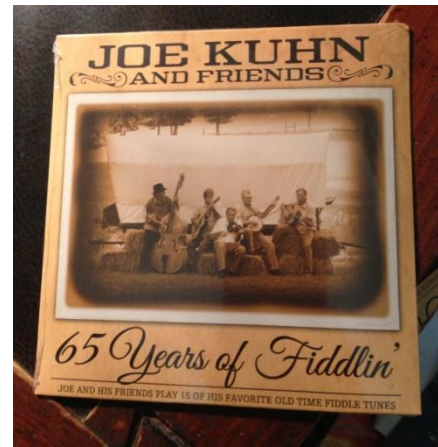
Joe was in wide demand as a fiddler for square dances and he often came to Black Bottom to play at square dances organized by Dot Page in the old building that stood across the road from Marti's Store next to Lewis Motor Company. It was here that Joe played with Van Buren County musician's like: Leon Hodge, Clifford and Carl Bouldin, Clifton Boyd, Joe Simmons, Jr. and others.

One event that he has a great memory of at the Spencer square dances is of Sheriff Perry Smith. Joe said that the sheriff would take his pistol out of the holster and lay it aside and square dance with the holster flopping up and down.

When WBMC radio went on the air in McMinnville in 1955, Joe became a country DJ and worked there until 1959. He then moved to Fort Myers, Florida and had his own television show on WINK-TV.

He returned to Tennessee in 1963 and became the general manager of WAKI radio in McMinnville. He later became part owner of the station and from 1968-1977 he was owner and manager of WSMT radio in Sparta, Tennessee.

Joe Kuhn says that fiddle still makes that sweet sound today. You can hear the sound on Joe Kuhn and Friends, 65 years of Fiddlin' a new CD Joe released in 2014. Great tunes like Orange Blossom Special, Draggin the Bow, Faded Love and others make that CD a treasure of great songs.



Joe says, " I always keep my bow rosined and ready, 'cause you never know when someone might want to hear a tune"!

And that is how a fine French violin became a "Tennessee fiddle"!

Source: Van Buren News & Joe Kuhn



Members visit with Joe Kuhn following the March meeting, as he explains his music career in his home "museum".



The reddish, single violin on the wall: This violin was made of match sticks by a man in prison, who gave it to Joe as a gift. The case with the two violins: The Grand General violin appears at the bottom.



March refreshments provided by Bettye Pack, Barbara Bates & Scarlett Griffith.

WCGA next meeting

Saturday, April 16th, 2 p.m. Depart from WCGA office to tour old plantation on Verville Rd. after Members Meeting around 3 p.m.



WCGA On The Radio

WCGA President Cheryl Watson Mingle & Rachel Killebrew were the guest speakers for the "Behind The Mike" radio show on March 17, 2016. Pictured Cheryl & Kelly Marlowe who is host for the show on 96.0 AM radio in McMinnville

31 Mar 2016
Membership Report

	2016 1-31 Mar Changes	2016 1 Jan - 31 Mar Totals
Complimentary Memberships (Receive Bulletins, at no fee)		3
Exchange Memberships (Swap of Bulletins, at no fee)		3
Honorary Life Memberships (Receive Bulletins, at no fee)		2
Renewed Memberships (A member in prior year – full fee)	3	66*
New Memberships (First year as a member – full fee)	0	7
Total Net Memberships added in Feb 2016	3	
Total Memberships on 29 Feb 2016		81

* Includes 26 renewals prior to 1 Jan 2016 for the year 2016.
15 Newsletter Receiver Only Memberships (No Bulletin, no fee).
Memberships begin on 1 Jan of each year.
40 members have not renewed for 2016 that were paying members in 2015.
New Members for year 2016: Belflower, Sandra; Woodlee, Gail; Marlow, Kelly; Menth, Carol; Sullivan, Jimmy; Tyson, Virginia; White, Trina

**Do You Have
CIVIL WAR SOLIDERS
who lived in**

**WARREN COUNTY
before, during or after the
war?**

Submit your Civil War Solider for entry in our upcoming Warren County Civil War Soliders BOOK'S

You may obtain forms on our Facebook Page or at the Magness Library Genealogy Department or attached.

WCGA is on Facebook!

Come visit us at:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Warren-County-Genealogical-Association/135126859883450>

We're also on the web, visit us at www.tngenweb.org/wcgatn

**Give a piece of
Warren County History**



**The Courthouse, McMinnville, TN
(First in a series)**

**First Methodist Church, McMinnville, TN
(Second in a series)**

**The Birthing Tree, McMinnville, TN
(Third in a series)**

**Hebe, McMinnville, TN
(Forth in a series)**

*All four available for \$18 each at
Southern Museum
201 E. Main Street, McMinnville
Open Wed., Fri., Sat. 10:00 a.m.-4 p.m. and
Warren Co. Genealogical Association
County Administrative Building 201 Locust St.
Open Fridays 1:00-4:00 p.m*



WARREN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Meeting held in the rear of the
Warren County Administration Building
201 Locust Street, McMinnville TN 37110

Membership Renewal & Information Update Form



Annual membership fees for 2016 were due on January 1, 2016

Please make checks payable to **Warren County Genealogical Association (WCGA)** and mail to
WCGA, P.O. 411, McMinnville, TN 37111

Print Name and Address as desired on Membership Record:

Phone: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Please check one:

Dues for year _____ Individual Member, \$20 year ____

Other Donation \$ _____

Would you like to receive our monthly Newsletter by E-Mail? _____ yes

Our Bulletin is mailed two times each year

FAMILY NAMES I AM RESEARCHING:

We may be able to help you with your genealogy, so come by and visit our office. We are open on Friday from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. and we're located at the rear of the Warren County Administration Building, 201 Locust St. McMinnville, TN.

Thank you!

Civil War Soldiers of Warren County, Tennessee Questionnaire

Warren County Genealogical Association has been compiling data on our members' Warren County Civil War Veterans for many years and is now ready to publish this material. We want this publication to be as complete as possible, and we invite members of the public to contribute information on your Civil War ancestors if you would like to have them included in this important volume. Civil War participants, either Union or Confederate forces or Home Guard members, are eligible for inclusion. Give as many details as possible, using another sheet of paper if needed. **Please type, print, or write very plainly. WE WELCOME PHOTOS and will scan and return them to you quickly.** (Contact Warren County Genealogical Association at 931-474-4724 or come by our office in the Warren County Administrative Building on Fridays between 1:00 and 4:00 p.m.) Help us make this project a huge success!

Full name of Soldier: _____

His Company, Regiment, Branch, Rank and Army: _____

Date & Place of Birth: _____

Date & Place of Death and Burial: _____

Occupation before the War: _____

Amount of Schooling completed: _____

Approximate date of family's settlement in Warren County area: _____

Parents' names, with birth, death, marriage dates & places, and occupation, if known:

Father: Born _____ Died _____

Buried _____

Occupation: _____

Mother: Born _____ Died _____

Buried _____

Marriage: _____

Brothers & sisters of Soldier, with birth & death dates:

Please return this form as soon as possible to Warren County Genealogical Association, P.O. Box 411,
McMinnville TN 37111-0411 or email as an attachment to rhillis@blomand.net or ctmingle@blomand.net

Thank you!