

WARREN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION



Newsletter



September-October 2015

201 Locust Street

McMinnville, Tennessee



2015 OFFICERS

President:	Cheryl Watson Mingle
Vice Pres:	Rachel Scott Hillis
Secretary:	Scarlett Griffith
Treasurer:	Allen Jaco
Past Pres:	Ladye Jane Hunter

WCGA Committee Chairmen

Membership:
Allen Jaco

Circulation Manager:
Wilma Davenport

Programs:
Rachel Scott Hillis

Bulletin Editor:
Chris Keathley

Newsletter Editor:
Cheryl Watson Mingle

Publicity:
Cheryl Watson Mingle

Research:
Bonita Mangrum

Office:
Evelyn Wade, Martha Holt

Refreshments:
Christine Bouldin

Webpage Administrator
Open

Speakers Rachel Scott Hillis & Cheryl Watson Mingle

Preserving your Keepsakes

Rachel made everyone aware of how important it is to label our antiques, keepsakes and pictures. The first thing she showed was a large photo of her great-uncle, Henry Eugene Scott. It was beautifully framed and on the back, she had his name and a information about him. Several in the group had memories of Mr. Scott. He had been a teacher at Central High School several years ago. Future generations will know this by Rachel doing the proper labeling.



How many of us have inherited pictures from our older family members and even some of us who have no idea who is in the pictures? Whether it be of a person, place or thing, we need to do this. You know when you have "ancestry" blood when you go to Cracker Barrel and sit there and wonder whose ancestors are on the wall, displayed. "I'm one for sure!" She said you can pick these labels up in the Wal-Mart craft section, or probably in any office supply. Rachel keeps her memorabilia in a curio cabinet.

Another great idea was taking pictures of everything you keep and consider a "keepsake!" She has what she calls her "guilt" book. That's probably because she buys souvenirs that would make her think of a particular person or place. I would just consider it a very sensible thing to do. That way, when a grand-child or whomever picks up a gorgeous piece of jewelry, or great-grandmothers' bowl with the hand-painted butter-cups won't say, "I wish I knew who wore this or what family used this at Sunday dinner". Each one of Rachel's priceless memories has a small picture and information about the piece. She had a beautiful piece of Irish pottery with a story, that was a gift. It could be labeled, but it also has a picture and the story within this little book. Very informative and useful information. Her program was great!

History of the Warren County Fairs



Gate to the Warren County A& L Fair

April 14, 1859 - McMinnville & Warren County Agricultural & Mechanical Society was organized. President -Andrew Jefferies Marchbanks - Chairman Board of Trustee Phillip H. Marburg. Others among this group were John Hopkins French, W. B. Smartt, William Buck White & Benjamin J. Hill. The purpose of this society was to promote the advancement of agriculture & industry in Warren County. Warren County's first fair was held in October 1859. The first order of business for the Board of Directors' was to find a suitable location. And to accommodate approximately 5,000 people. James Powell Thompson, had a tract just south of town on the banks of Barren Fork River. Just south of the railroad depot, 5 acres were purchased from Thompson. The event was scheduled for Friday and Saturday, Oct. 27 & 28, 1859. The intent was to show the finest produce, livestock, manufactures, and home crafts that came from people on Warren County's homes, farms, and industries. Today's fair would be different from 1859. They had the best stand of lard, the best soap, the best tanned hide, the best barrel of flour, the best flax reduced to lined cloth, best barrel of vinegar, apple brandy, shoes, boots, man's work pants, suit, coat, best horse shoes, ox shoes, door hinges, door latches. The list continued on and identified the diversity of the manufactures and crafts of our self-sufficient ancestors.

Horsemanship was a major interest, and many are varied contest brought out the versatility and abilities of our people when it came to handling their horses, oxen, mules and the buggies and wagons the animal pulled. William Luck was the ringmaster. An estimated 2,500 to 3,000 people attended the first fair. **1860** - Very sketchy, most we know is from tradition and the L. Virginia French diary. She notes that she was preparing several items for the canned goods and pickles show and that each of her children were being outfitted in new clothes for attending the fair. **1861** - War weighted heavily on everyone's mind. Fair cancelled. The War Between the States suspended the Fair for the next 4 years. **1867** - Fair revived in some

limited form. Judge Marchbanks, the original president and driving force in the first fair, died in 1867. The economy was poor, and lack of funds and resources gave little hope. **1868** saw a renewal of a true county fair. Officers elected and plans for the fair to be held Friday and Saturday Oct. 4 & 5, 1868. General B. J. Hill & Attorney Landy B. Walters were elected marshal of the fair. One additional class was offered in 1868 the society gave a nice prize to the county farmer producing the best and greatest amount of wheat per acre. **1869** - Oct. 13-14-15 expanding to 3 days and changed to Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. By **1872**, George Madison Smartt was fair president and David F. Wallace secretary. Each fair tended to emphasize and promote certain crops or manufactures in hopes of helping the local economy. In **1875**, President Smartt announced a special prize of \$16 to the woman who manufactured the best 8 yards of jeans material in hopes of helping the local economy. **1876** the fair was held on Oct. 12 & 13. And featured prizes for the best ham, best barrel of vinegar, best 100 pounds of flour, best stand of lard, best boots, best shoes, and best blacksmith work to include horseshoes, ox shoes, and wheel rims. After the Civil War the fair had financial problems. After the event each fall, there was a feeling that no future fair would be held. **1877** efforts to revive the County Fair fail and the fairground are sold to the board for \$525, including the use of the Bath Springs on the south side of the river. G. M. Smartt was elected president. **1878** - Admission was set at 15 cents per person, or 25 cents for a 3 day pass. Held Oct. 1, 2 & 3 with the opening address being given by J. B. Killebrew, State Commissioner of Agriculture. The fair offered \$25 as first prize in the pacing horse race tract on the 1/3 mile track, and it was announced that the race tract would be enlarged to one mile for the 1879 fair. This fair featured acrobats and amusements. There were classed for wagons, farm implements, furniture, livestock, garden produce, flowers, and food, all of which were made or grown in Warren County. The greased pig contest for contestants under 12 offered \$5 as first prize.

One unusual class offering \$10 was to the farmer exhibiting the largest number of rat tails collected in a year from one farm, probably because of a rodent problem in the county. Little is known of the **1879** fair other than the fact it was held. In the **September 12, 1880** edition of the McMinnville New Era announced the fair dates as October 6, 7 and 8, 1880. This was the last fair held in Warren County for almost 4 decades. The chief cause of its demise was undoubtedly financial. Between **1880** and **1914**, Warren County had no fair. **1915** - It appears that the Women's Civic League, together with prominent citizens in both the town and county, combined to produce a limited edition of a fair. While limited in scope, the 1915 fair crested an air of excitement and pride within Warren Countians. Heading the Women's Department, which included food and clothing exhibits, was Mrs. R. G. Hutchins. Miss Gillie, as she was called. Horse, mule, wagon teams, and horse and buggy exhibits and show ere held behind the school building and along South High Street. Colonel William H. Cummings was in charge of the livestock shows. The fair was a two-day event held on Friday and Saturday in early September, 1915. **1915 through 1921** offered no carnival or free acts, During the six-year period of the 'school fair,' prominent citizens had watched with increased interest the spirit which this limited fair had generated among the people of Warren County. There was a feeling among many of the leaders that, with proper organization, expansion of the program and added amusement, a county fair could be a profitable venture as it had been in the 1870's. On **June 29, 1922**, the Warren County Fair Association was chartered. The incorporators were Thomas Mason, James D. Elkins, William H. Smartt, W. D. Hughes, W. T. (Bud) Moffitt, G. W. Hinkley, Frank R. Bruster, T. E. Bonner, JJ Walker and Frank J. Winton. The charter was approved by the Secretary of State, Ernest Haston, on July 1, 1922. The goal of the organization was 'to promote and improve the agricultural, horticultural, forestry, floricultural, and mechanical arts of the county and to improve livestock and husbandry', (the care,

cultivation, and breeding of crops and animals or management and conservation of resources). Capital stock in the amount of \$10,000 was issued. Arrangements were made to hold the association's **first fair during the second week of September, 1922.** A 40 acre plot of ground on Red Road belonging to P. A. Rich was leased to be used for the fair. J. D. "Big Jim" Elkins was the first president, and the three-day fair included a large carnival and 'free acts'.

Admission was 25 cents per person, or 50 cents per family, for all day. Parking your automobile or wagon was at no cost. Among the new exhibits or contests was the first automobile show, held on Saturday night. Mrs. Hill Grimmitt was in charge of the baby show.

1923 - Officer changed and Ernest Smallman became secretary and general manager. The dates of the 1923 was held on September 6, 7, and 8. A heavy rain, which fell all day on Thursday, dampened the start of the fair, but it was termed a great success after two days of great attendance. **1925** - The association purchased the Red Road site and made major improvements in buildings and facilities. **1929** - New officers guided the fair with P. A. Rich as president; Sims Read, vice president; H. A. Dillon, vice president, and C. D. Walling, treasurer. M.H. Grimmitt was chairman for the livestock department. Miss Margaret Colville headed the women's department' Mrs. C. T. Dews was in charge of farm products, and W. E. Foster, was in charge of the poultry division. J. J. Page Shows played the midway, and free acts included four tropes with nine different acts.

There were fireworks every night. A horse show was held each night with T. R. Clark, H. A. Dillon and J. R. Ramsey as chairmen. **1930's** -

In spite of the depression, the fair flourished and made a profit each year. **1933** - An advertisement in the Southern Standard stated the fair to be held September 7, 8, and 9, noted that the premium list was greater than any other county fair in the State of Tennessee. The Silver Band played during the entire three day fair under the directions of Professor Albert I. Cina. Free acts by stunt man and daredevil aviator Bobby Irwin, who wing-walked, jumped from

one plane to another, and jumped from a high tower onto the wing of a plane.



There were fireworks each night, and the midway featured at one of its shows Rosalie Davis, noted fan dancer who had recently starred in the Chicago World's Fair. Later newspaper items stated this fair broke all records. This may be due to the reduction of admission to 25 cents per person over 12 years old and 15 cents for those 11 and under. Highlights of the 30's were the mule race held at the opening event on Thursday morning, and automobile show held on Saturday night. The fair prospered until the war years of 1942-45. By **1953**, County Court appropriated money to acquire a site and build facilities for a new, non-profit Warren County agricultural & Livestock Fair for the county. The 1953 fair at the old fairgrounds on Red Road was the last produced by the Warren County Fair Association. The

fairgrounds were offered for sale to any new industry looking at Warren County, shown over the next six years, was chosen by Century Electric Company of St. Louis, Missouri, when they announced their intention to build a motor plant in McMinnville in the 1960's. Thus ended the **third phase** of county fairs in our county, and, with the opening of the new, non-profit fair on the New Smithville Highway in **September of 1954**, the **forth era** of fairs in our county began. **1957** - Fair officials incorporate the "Fairest of the Fair." pageant. **1981** - The Fair added another office. In **1982**, the proposed building was constructed and dubbed 'Cliff's shack.' It is now used for the Fairfield Village mayor's office. **1983** - A large shed was built to house antique farm machinery, a blacksmith shop was erected to house demonstrations. Also included was room for splitting wood shakes, wheelwright demonstrations, etc... The fair manager was approached with a request to move the Pioneer Village to the fairgrounds. After several months of negotiations, the Audley Harrison House was moved to the fairgrounds. The City Bank built its branch there in **1984**. **1985** - The village was named Fairfield Village and included a hardware store, from Davis Hardware and had many items of yesteryear on display. **1986** - The Milling Company was added and produced corn meal and whole wheat flour during Fair Week. The County Store had many old time store items. High's Antique Funeral Parlor also was added to the fast-growing village. **1987** - The hoppy shop was built, one might see anything from rabbit traps to hand-made toys. Parts of a Civil War cannon were gathered and restored to mint condition and used and used for display as well as for parades, **1989** - A small church building that was used by blacks was carefully disassembled and rebuilt for the village. High Top School's building is a replica of the original that was on Long Mountain. The stone foundation is the original, and was moved to the village in the same year. Logs from old buildings were used for the construction. **1990** - The H. V. Massey Memorial Building was constructed. The Moore

building has two rooms, one is a print shop and the other is a photography shop. The cabinet shop was also constructed in 1990 and contains old tools, hand-made furniture, etc... **1991** - Fairfield Branch of River Park Hospital and the headquarters for law enforcement on the fairgrounds Sheriff's Department, as well as for educational materials. The Telephone building contains equipment for old telephones. **1992** - The smokehouse was moved to the village and was a working smokehouse. **1993** - The UBMC building contains broadcasting equipment, both old and new. The Electric building was also constructed, and shows types of appliances, boxes and wiring. Fairfield Post Office added and contains old fixtures from the post office. Old farm equipment is displayed in the Antique Machinery Shop to educate young people about farming methods in pioneer times. The first authentically historic structure to grace the fairgrounds was an old hand-hewn log home originally occupied by the Harrison family at the foot of Harrison Ferry Mountain. It stood on the old farm where McMinnville Stone Company (later Stone Man) rock quarry was located in the middle 1960's. Hugh P. Boyd, manager of the quarry and owner of the land, donated the structure to the Warren County Historical Society for its proposed Pioneer Village on the Bobby Ray Parkway. When the project did not work out, it was suggested that the log cabin be located and displayed at the Warren County Fairgrounds. The Jennings family lived here in earlier days, and the home also once served as a stagecoach stop.

Footnote 1995: Clifford McClain, first president of the new "FREE FAIR," serving from 1954 through 1958, again became president in 1979. He held the office until 1994. McClain is commonly called the father of the Warren County "Modern Fair." Steve Grandy succeeded McClain.

Sources: James A Dillon Warren County Historian papers; The Warren County Story by Eugene M. Wiseman; Southern Standard; Warren County Historical Journal Vol. III.

Election of 2016 WCGA Officers Set for November

Election of officers for the 2016 calendar year is set for the November 21 meeting.

If you have an interest in becoming active as an officer with our organization, please contact Vice President Rachel Scott Hillis email to rhillis@blomand.net. We need candidates for the following offices:
Web Page Administrator
Newsletter Editor

Our guest speaker for
Saturday, October 24, 2 p.m.
WCGA meeting will be:

PAT CUMMINS
from



at the
Magness Library & Community House,
Main Street, McMinnville

Representing WCGA On The Radio



Scarlett Griffith, Cheryl Watson Mingle & Morris Griffith were guest for the "Behind The Mike" radio show on September 17. They are pictured with Kelly Marlowe who is host for the show on 96.0 AM radio in McMinnville.

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

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

Great Christmas Presents



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)

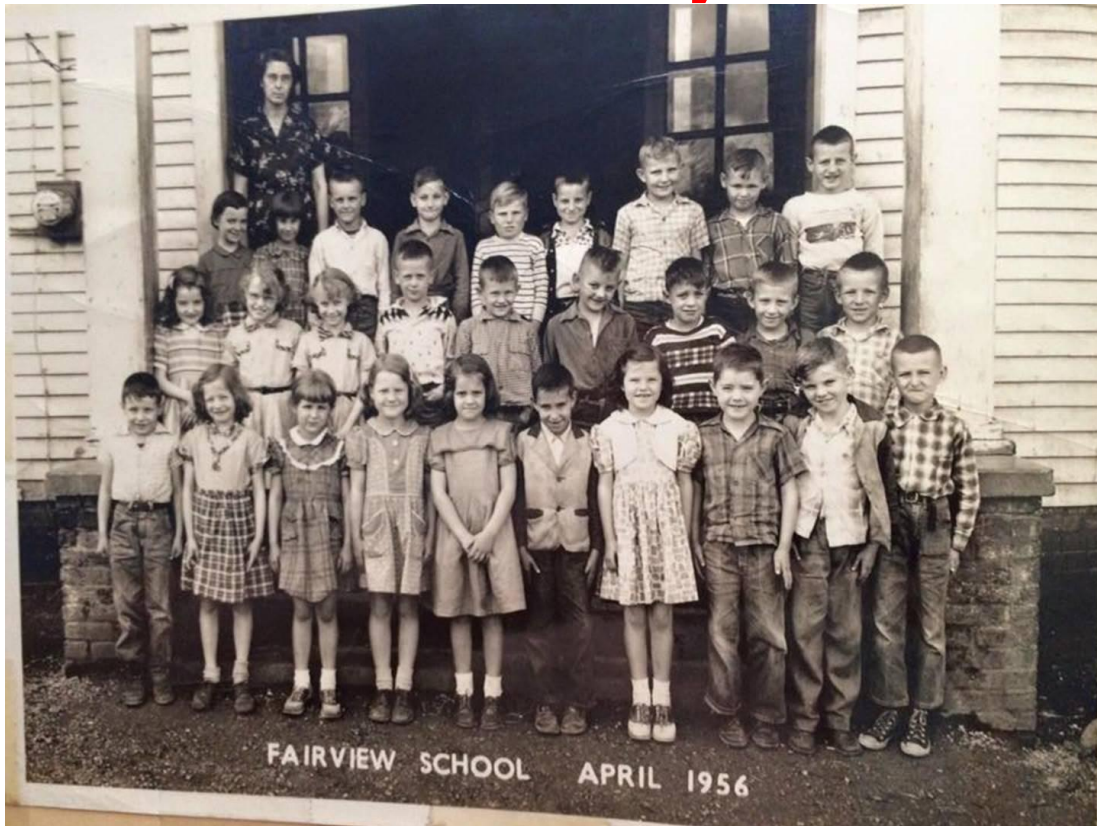
All four available for \$18 each at
Southern Museum

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

Down Memory Lane



FAIRVIEW SCHOOL 1956

Can you identify anyone?

MINUTES FROM THE MEMBER'S MEETING ON 8-15-2015

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the WCGA was called to order at 2:00 by Vice President Rachel Scott Hillis in the absence of President Cheryl Mingle. Twenty eight members and guest were present.

MINUTES

Secretary Scarlett Griffith read the minutes of the July meeting. They were read and approved on motion by Wanda Gant, and seconded by Martha Holt.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Allen Jaco gave the treasurers report. End of month balance for July was: 5011.12. Membership at end of July was 113.

OLD BUSINESS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

Vice President Hillis announced the committee to work on the Civil War Book would meet the first Saturday in September. Also, that the September "Behind the Mike " guest would be Cheryl Mingle on the history of the Warren County Fair and Morris Griffith 40 year member of the fair board. Speakers for our September 19th WCGA meeting will be Vice President Hillis speaking on "how to care for and keep our keepsakes" and President Mingle on "History of the Warren

County Fair. Everyone was glad Bonita Mangrum, our research expert, was able to return to McMinnville, to NHC for rehab after a several week stay in Vanderbilt Hospital. Another card was signed by everyone to be sent to her. It had been voted on at an earlier meeting to present her with a fruit and snack basket when she was able to return to McMinnville. A beautiful basket was given by Wilma Davenport, Cheryl and Scarlett filled with all kinds of goodies from the WCGA members to be taken to Bonita.

Due to a long program and film shown by our guest speaker today the other committee reports were not given.

PROGRAM

At this time Vice President Hillis introduced Jonathan Womack, guest speaker Jonathan gave the history of the Lucky Community covering almost 200 years. Throughout a very interesting film, he made comments on the different places and people that made up this area of Warren County. This presentation is in the August, September newsletter in detail.

Refreshments today were provided by Christine Bouldin and Wilma Davenport.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30.

Submitted by Secretary Scarlett Griffith

Do You Think You Are Trying To Connect To Warren County?

66 people have proven it!
They received Certificates for
**Warren County –
McMinnville
First Pioneer Families**

There's still time for you to make your connection by submitting copies of an official record linking you to Warren County before 1820. Those records can be birth, marriage, death, probate or will, church, cemetery, funeral or obituary, land records, tax records, court, military records, census, newspaper, or Bible for each generation, including the applicant.

To qualify for a certificate, suitable for framing, the applicant must directly descend from an ancestor (male or female) who was in Warren County no later than the 1820 census (this includes the boundaries of the original formation of Warren County from White county).



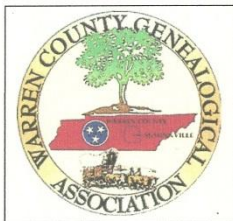
Warren County-McMinnville Pioneer Family Certification

Recognizing the Pioneer Families
living in the frontier area known
as Warren County Tennessee between 1807 – 1820.

Warren County Genealogical Association, Inc.

Verified and Certifies that
Marion Rhea Speaks
Is a direct descendant of Pioneer Settler
Moses Rhea

Warren County-McMinnville Pioneer Family
Certificate #024



Marion Speaks
Marion Speaks Chair - WCGA Pioneer Families Committee (date)

Jan Hobbs
Jan Hobbs - WCGA Pioneer Families Committee

Betty Pack
Betty Pack - WCGA Pioneer Families Committee

Berita Mangrum
Berita Mangrum - WCGA Pioneer Families Committee

Carolyn Lance
Carolyn Lance - WCGA Pioneer Families Committee

There is a \$10 application processing fee + \$3.50 shipping for the certificates. All applications and verifying material become the property of the Warren County Genealogical Association.

Current Tennessee residency is not necessary.

Applications may be obtained on line at

www.tngenweb.org/wcgatn

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

or may be picked up at

WCGA office at 201 Locust St.

Also available at the Magness Library on Main St.

They should be submitted to

Warren County Genealogical Association,
c/o First Pioneer Families,
P. O. Box 411,
McMinnville TN 37111.