



# WARREN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL & HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

# Newsletter

**October 2020**

201 Locust Street

McMinnville, Tennessee

## WCGHA OFFICERS



**President:**  
**Cheryl W. Mingle**



**Vice President:**  
**Marion Rhea Speaks**



**Secretary:**  
**Donna Sullivan**



**Treasurer:**  
**J.B. Brown**



**Past President:**  
**Ann Brown**

*Our office is located at  
201 Locust Street  
in the lower level of the  
County Administrative Building*

**Due to Covid-19  
A DECISION  
WAS MADE  
BY A MAJORITY OF OUR  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
TO CANCEL  
MEMBER MEETINGS  
AND KEEP THE OFFICE  
CLOSED FOR THE  
REMAINDER OF 2020**

In the month of October we would normally nominate a slate of Officers and Committee Chairs for 2021 to be voted on at the November members meeting. That has been delayed until our next schedule meeting, hopefully in January 2021. Our Christmas luncheon always scheduled in December has been cancelled as well. Let's all stay connected by reaching out to one another with a phone call or contact through social media and offer help, if needed, or to just to say hello. A simple hello, how are you, may be just what is needed to make someone's day.

We must follow our state and local guidelines to help conquer this virus and get back to a normal lifestyle we had all been so accustomed to.

My continued prayers and concerns for all of you,

**Cheryl Watson Mingle, WCGHA President**

## Committee And Chairs

### Membership:

*J. B. Brown*



### Circulation Manager:

*Debra Wilcher McBride*



### Programs:

*Marion Rhea Speaks*



### Bulletin Editor:

Position Open

### Newsletter Editor:

*Doyle Speaks*



### Publicity:

*Ann Brown*



### Refreshments:

*Christine Bouldin*



### Research:

*Bonita Mangrum*



*Mary Oaks*



### Office:

*Evelyn Wade & Ann Brown*



### Historian:

*Brad Walker*



*Come Visit Us*

**Due to Covid-19  
Our office is  
Presently closed**

**Our normal  
hours are**

**Monday  
&  
Friday**

**9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
931-474-4227**

Email:

[wcggha.tn@gmail.com](mailto:wcggha.tn@gmail.com)

On the Web:

[www.tngenweb.org/wcggha](http://www.tngenweb.org/wcggha)

On Facebook:  
Warren County  
Genealogical & Historical  
Association

and

WCGHA's Old Warren  
County, TN Family  
History/Photos

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# History of Our Older Churches

## LIBERTY CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Attending church is an integral part of so many of our lives and I felt it would be good to do a series of history from several of our older congregations. The churches chosen are in no certain order and here is the third in this new series for the Newsletter.



Liberty Cumberland Presbyterian Church was organized following the birth of the Cumberland Presbyterian Denomination in 1810. Like most of our historic churches in Warren County, it started with “brush arbor” meetings. The first of such meetings was held by Rev. George Donnell and people came from miles away to hear him speak.

The brush arbor meetings were held until 1815 at which time they built a log church. This log church began as a community church with various denominations in the area helping with construction.



They all worshipped there until 1829 at which time the other denominations withdrew and built their own churches and the Cumberland Presbyterians assumed full control.

One of the first pastors was the Reverend John Randolph, who pastored the congregation until 1849.

In 1840 a Sunday School was organized. The children were taught scripture as well as reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, and other subjects taught in public schools.

Another educational endeavor of the congregation came in the formation of Cumberland Female College. Organized in 1850, it was located at McMinnville, Tennessee, and was under the control of the Middle Tennessee Synod. With strong support from McMinnville, and neighboring Cumberland Presbyterian congregations, the school became highly prosperous. In 1878 it was advertised as:

*“First class Female College and Boarding School. McMinnville is easy of access, daily mail, telegraph*

*Continued on next page*

## ***Liberty Cumberland continued***

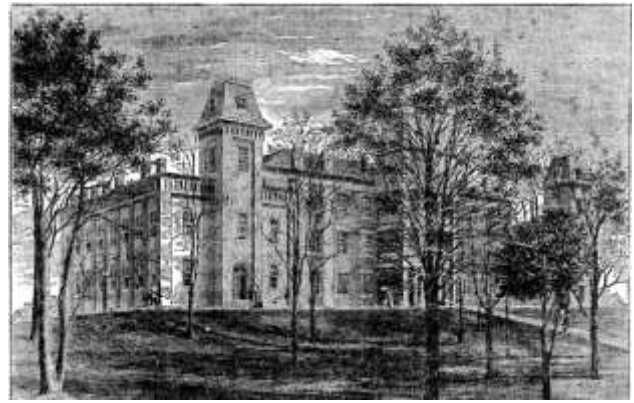
*and railroad communications, is proverbial for health, high morality, good and cheap living - no extravagance in dress, nor in bills for Board and Tuition. . . . Board \$13.50 per month, regular ministers charged only half tuition. Any person bringing three pupils will be charged for only two in tuition”.*

It later changed its name to Cumberland Academy and remained a quality school for girls until 1900.

During the Civil War the church building was used as a hospital for Union Troops. It was burned to the ground during that time. In 1867 the second sanctuary was erected. An educational annex was added in 1944 under the pastoral leadership of the Rev. W. E. Miller. He wrote President Roosevelt for special permission for materials and received a personal letter in return along with an order releasing the necessary materials to build.

Liberty Cumberland also played a part directly in the formation of the First Presbyterian Church in town and outlasted the divisiveness and temporary confusion that resulted from the split of the Presbyterian and Cumberland Presbyterian churches. The Liberty congregation helped establish the church in town when city dwellers began meeting in the courthouse in 1840 for worship. A church was eventually built in 1876 for \$12,000 and in 1906 this congregation went with the merger.

The present Liberty building was dedicated April 30, 1978, by native son Rev. Hinkley Smartt. It is often said that the setting under the stately ancestral



**Cumberland Female College photo from the Southern Standard newspaper, McMinnville, TN July 13, 1889**

oak trees make it one of the prettiest churches in the region.

The current Liberty Cumberland Presbyterian Pastor is Rev. Larry Green. The congregation meets each Sunday at 10:00 a.m. for Sunday School, 11:00 a.m. for Worship and 6:00 p.m. for Bible Study.



**Historic old Liberty Cumberland Presbyterian Church  
Copyright photo from McMinnville at a Milestone 1810-1960**



**Camp Smartt, located on this site, was a staging and training area for the CSA.**

*This article excerpted from:*

- Heritage of Warren County, TN 1807-2005 Submitted by Rev. Larry Johnson, 102 River Drive, McMinnville, TN 37110
- L. S. Merriam, Higher Education in Tennessee (U.S. Bureau of Education Circular of Information No. 5, Washington, 1893)
- The History of Brush Arbors -- H.J. Hill - Updated May 17, 2019
- Letters from Alabama, 1817-1822, Alabama Pioneers -- Anne Newport Royall
- McMinnville at a Milestone 1810-1960 By Walter Womack
- A New Presbytery is Born Compiled by Charles and Eleanor Murray
- Presbyterian Church file at the Magness Memorial Library  
Thanks to Cheryl Watson Mingle for her help in research

## FROM YOUR EDITOR:

Dear Members,

Most of us didn't expect this Covid 19 virus to be lingering around until the end of the year (at least I didn't). But, here we are.

If you all are like me, you're tired of politics and wish for November 4th to hurry up and get here. I won't dwell on that subject because I remember from many moons ago that politics and religion aren't always the wisest subjects to discuss in a social conversation.

For this issue I chose the Liberty Cumberland Presbyterian Church for the History of Our Older Churches. There's a great deal of information regarding its establishment in the Warren County area and I found it a challenge to summarize its history into a short story. I hope you enjoy the article.

The story on Cemetery Art is a fun research that my wife Marion and I enjoy. It has added a different perspective while visiting area cemeteries looking to confirm family tree research.

One thing I have found interesting while researching the history of older churches is that they all started with Brush Arbor meetings.

To fully understand how those meetings took place, one must visualize what it must have been like around 1800 or so when most of the churches in this area were organized. I did research on the internet to help establish in my mind this process. I thought I would share a bit of that research.

*From "The History of Brush Arbors" by H.J. Hill I found the following definition:*

*A brush arbor is a rough, open-sided shelter constructed of vertical poles driven into the ground with additional long poles laid across the top as support for a roof of brush, cut branches or hay. Appearing in the 1700's and early 1800's, brush arbors were used by some churches to protect worshipers from the weather during lengthy revival meetings.*

*Brush arbor revivals began in the late 1700's and were held regularly through the mid-1900's. These "protracted meetings" could last for days or even weeks, with many people traveling for miles to attend and staying to camp on the grounds.*

*An itinerant minister or a preacher who rode circuit through rural communities would send word in advance of his expected arrival and the congregation would erect a brush arbor to house the revival meeting, usually at a crossroads in a well-traveled area.*



**Internet photo from UTube**

*Leafy branches overlaid the pole structure, blocking the hot summer sun and most rainfall. A pulpit was set up in the center front. When the crowds overwhelmed the space under the arbor, extensions could be built to accommodate them.*

*In today's Appalachia the brush arbor revival has been replaced by tent revivals. Even though the service is held in a tent I still hear folks refer to it as the brush arbor meeting.*

Have a safe and fun Halloween, and don't forget to vote.

Doyle Speaks, Newsletter Editor,  
Speaksanddm@aol.com

# Cemetery Art



**This Woodmen of the World Memorial is the grave marker for James Rogers 1877-1910. It is located in the Liberty Cemetery in McMinnville.**

*Joseph Cullen Root was the founder of (MWA) Modern Woodmen of The World in 1882. He envisioned an organization dedicated to helping its fellow man. Its purpose was "to minister to the afflicted to relieve distress; to cast a sheltering arm about the defenseless living;... to encourage broad charitable views..."*

*Lifestyles have changed since Root wrote those goals into the Objectives of Woodcraft, but fraternalism remains strong. "The objects of Woodcraft have always exemplified love, honor and remembrance," said Executive Vice President Wayne Graham, the director of the Society's fraternal programs.*

*Today, Woodmen members do not simply share the fact that they have purchased insurance or annuities through the same organization. Woodmen is a fraternal*

*benefit society, with members connected by their membership and also their desire to better their lives, their families' lives and their communities. Taken from this website <http://www.woodmen.com>*

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**This beautiful Angel Statue was placed at the grave of Ada Walling who is buried at the Liberty Cemetery in McMinnville.**

*Lucy Ada Walling 1856-1892 was the daughter of William C. Locke and Sarah Ann Bonner Locke. She was the wife of Thomas Dillard Walling 1857-1943.*

*Find A Grave information*

**Ann Brown and Doyle Speaks photos**



## From the Facebook files of

### WCGHA's Old Warren County, TN Family History/Photos



This is an on-going series of photos from *WCGHA's Old Warren County, TN Family History/Photos*. The Public Group site was organized several years ago and is co-administered by Cheryl Watson Mingle, President of the Warren County Genealogical & Historical Association along with Ann Brown, Past President.

You're invited to join our Facebook group, comment and submit photos and history.

### *Can you remember...*



Photo provided

The eighth grade class of 1937 at City Grammar School, now the Blue Building, included the following students: Front left, Urban Gardner, Edgar Davis, Jack Cunningham, Douglas Fairbanks, Harry Greek, Charles Jones, Fred Phillips, Millard Myers, Brown Bell and A.J. Smith, principal. Second row, Flynn Hillis, Florence Cope, teacher, Edward Oliver, Jack McCorkle, Neil Cunningham, Roberta Melton, Evelyn Bryan, Edna Rogers, Cathleen Walker, Blanche Warren and Edith McKenzie, teacher. Third row, Betty

Yager, Jacqueline Hash, Penney Mitchell, Marler Fuston, Elsie Parrish, Lena McGregor and Kathleen Sullivan. Fourth row, Sara Quinn, Edith Couch, Nell Julian, Daisy Wooden, Melba King, Geraldine Sapp and Bob Horton. Fifth row, Marie Bratcher, Kathlene Payne, Jim Melba Hardcastle, Douglas Gunn, Arlin Patterson, James Parker and Arnold Martin. Sixth row, Lee Turner, Dorothy McGee, Ann McCollum, Betty Anderson, Virginia Harris, Betty Brixey, Alfred Capshaw, Ray Spivey, Herman Reeder and unidentified boy.

Submitted by Tommy D. Fairbanks, August 25, 2020

**WCGHA's Old Warren County, TN Family History/Photos  
MONTHLY INSIGHTS  
September, 2020**

4,606 Group Members (+43 this month)

Gender: 68% Women – 32% Men

113 Posts	353 Comments	3,403 Reactions
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**Top Contributors**

Tommy D  
Fairbanks  
Rickey Burks

**Top Post**

Cheryl Watson-Mingle: 1957 J. C. Penney Co.  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/WCGAoldwarrencountytntfamilies/permalink/3207614936021865>

Comments: 38  
Likes: 175  
Shares: 37  
Reactions: 6,867

**Peak Time:** Thursday, 8 p.m.

Don't forget to follow our Facebook page at  
Warren County Genealogical & Historical Association  
for information about our Association, upcoming events, and posts and links relating to  
genealogy and history

*Let's get rid of this virus*

**Be Safe...**

**Wear a mask**

**Honor the 6 ft. distance rule**

**Avoid crowds**

**Stay home when possible**