

# WARREN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL & HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

# Newsletter

January 2021

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  
THE JANUARY MEETING  
AND KEEP THE OFFICE  
CLOSED UNTIL  
IT IS DEEMED SAFE.**

The decision on upcoming meetings will be made each month depending on the recommendations from our state and local government officials.

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

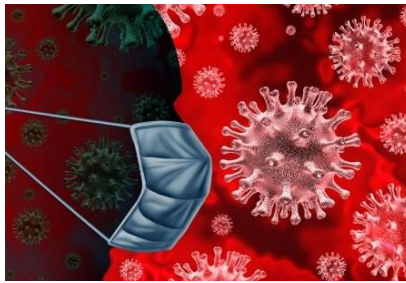
and

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

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is located at  
201 Locust Street  
McMinnville, Tennessee  
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County Administrative  
Building

# TOP STORIES OF 2020

**Covid-19 was undeniably the top story of 2020. The virus, with no known cure, affected us all in every aspect of our lives. It's instilled fear, put masks on our faces, kept us home-bound, closed businesses and found its way into some of our households with devastating illness. We did not have a WCGHA meeting after March for fear of spreading the virus. This kept the Association searching for ways to remain somewhat active. Our hope is in the vaccine developed with distribution that began in December.**



Shutterstock photos



**HATS OFF to our very active Cemetery Projects Committees who kept active, when possible, throughout the year. The cemetery clean-up projects, along with a very successful phase I cemetery sign project were something we can all give a round of applause. Pictured, l-r, Bonita Mangrum, Bettye Pack, Cemeteries of Warren County Committee Chair J.B. Brown, Ann Brown, Donna Sullivan, Cemetery Preservation Project Committee Chair Debra McBride, Carolyn Lance, and Mary Oaks. Pictured to the left are Evelyn Wade and Alma Shoemaker.**

# MORE IN REVIEW



**OFFICERS INSTALLED** -- Installation of officers for the 2020 term of the Warren County Genealogical & Historical Association was installed at the January 18 meeting. Pictured, l-r: Ann Brown, Past President; Donna Sullivan, Secretary; Marion Rhea Speaks, Vice-President; Cheryl Watson Mingle, President and J.B. Brown, Treasurer.



**PIONEER FAMILIES** -- Hundred dollar smiles for the 100th Pioneer Family recipient -- J. B. Brown proudly accepts his certificate in January from Pioneer Family chairman and Vice President Marion Rhea Speaks and President Cheryl Watson Mingle. J.B.'s qualifying Ancestor is his great grandfather Bartlett Wright. He also received certificates for ancestors James Walker and William Thomas Bond. A total of 109 certificates have been awarded.

**SHOW & TELL** -- Donna Sullivan proudly displayed her Dowsing Rods at the January meeting. Dowsing is a type of divination employed in attempts to locate ground water, buried metals or ores, gemstones, oil, gravesites, and many other objects and materials without the use of a scientific apparatus. Use of these rods is often referred to as water witching.



**PROGRAMS** -- WCGHA was treated to a great program at the February meeting, thanks to McMinnville native and current resident Rachel Elkins Killebrew. She was our guest speaker at the February 15 meeting where she shared her experiences while working with the Saturn V Apollo Moon Program.



## COMPUTER CLASSES OFFERED AT AREA SENIOR CENTER



WCGHA Treasurer, J.B. Brown, presented a class on Computer Basics at the McMinnville Warren County Senior Center in early April. WCGHA members Mary Oaks, Doyle Speaks, Alan Jaco and WCGHA Vice President Marion Rhea Speaks took advantage of those classes. Additional classes were planned but were cancelled due to Covid-19.

# MORE 2020 IN REVIEW

## AREA CEMETERY CLEAN-UP THROUGHOUT THE YEAR



HOPEWELL CEMETERY – LATE FEBRUARY  
Posing for a picture while on a quick break are Alma Shoemaker, Carl Shoemaker, Donna Sullivan and Susan Driver.

## WOODS CEMETERY -- AUGUST

Cleaning up Woods Cemetery, located here in Warren



County, was on the agenda for J.B and Ann Brown as well as Thomas and Cheryl Watson Mingle a week or so ago. Ann cleaned the one existing tombstone identifying one of two comb (tent) graves. Thomas and Cheryl spent time removing overgrown bushes and vines from the other graves



## WOMACK CEMETERY IN NOVEMBER

Grandchildren and friends proudly pose for a picture in front of the Womack Cemetery after it was cleaned-up as a birthday present for WCGHA Circulation Manager Debra McBride. Pictured, l-r: are granddaughter Kayla Triplett, grandson David McBride, WCGHA Secretary Donna Sullivan, granddaughter Marli McBride, granddaughter Maci McBride, Debra McBride and Barbara Pearsall.

## CEMETERY ROAD SIGN PROJECT WAS VERY SUCCESSFUL



Ann and J.B. Brown are pictured with some of the cemetery signs that arrived in September. This project was announced in July.

## CEMETERY ROAD SIGNS ARE BEING INSTALLED



Installation of the cemetery road signs began in late October by the Warren County Road Department. J.B. Brown is shown holding the Crisp Cemetery sign and his wife, Ann Brown is pictured with the Old Philadelphia Cemetery sign, just two of several signs that were installed.

*(This is Phase I of the very popular Cemetery Road Project and Phase II will be introduced at a future date. If you are aware of a cemetery located in Warren County that needs a road sign, please keep it in mind and sign up to sponsor it when Phase II is announced.)*

# History of Our Older Churches

## Church of Christ



This is the present Smyrna Church of Christ located just outside of McMinnville in the Southeastern-part of Warren County. It was organized in 1837 and is listed as one of the oldest Church of Christ in the county.



*This is the fifth in a series of stories on Our Historic Churches in Warren County. I chose the Smyrna church, with its rich history, as a great example of the area Church of Christ.*

*(Story begins on the next page)*

The graves of John Myers 1792-1875 and his wife Mary 1790-1861 are located in the churchyard of the Smyrna church. John Myers was one of the founding elders of the

church. His request was to be buried, along with his wife, next to the church so that he would not miss any of the wonderful sermons delivered there.

## Smyrna Church of Christ

The Smyrna congregation was formed on June 7, 1837 at the McGregor school house located five miles south of McMinnville by John Myers and Isaac Jones. They became the first elders of the church. Its first name was New Smyrna Church or Congregation.

A decision to build a new church building was made about 1857 and it was located across the road from the McGregor School house. It was finished in 1858 at a cost of \$700. The school house was located where the cemetery presently sets.

The church building was built with three rows of seats. The custom at that time was that the ladies sat on the left side, the younger group sat in the middle row and the men on the right side.



**This picture taken in August 1950 is the first building constructed for the Smyrna Church of Christ used from 1858 until 1951. Sixteen-year-old I.D. Byars painted the sign on the Church building in 1938 at the cost of \$2.65.**

This building served the community until after WWII when an effort began to raise funds to construct a new building.

Construction of a new block building was complete in 1950. The building was remodeled and enlarged to its present state during the period of 1975-76.

Prior to the establishment of Smyrna and other churches of Christ in the area, around 1805 a number of Presbyterian and Episcopal pioneers from Virginia and North Carolina settled in the southern area of Warren County and founded the Old Philadelphia community. They were religious people, but without a preacher. They studied the scriptures together and by 1810 they began to worship as one body, and established the Old

Philadelphia church and called it the Church of Christ. Thus, creating the first movement of the church of Christ in Warren County.

Elisha Price and brother William Price, both pioneer preachers, moved into the area around 1812. They were influential in the movement in the area. This church predated the Barton W. Stone – Alexander Campbell evangelism by 10-15 years.

The Civil War had a devastating effect on the churches in the county. All churches ceased to meet except Rocky River, Smyrna and McMinnville.

Starvation became the biggest problem facing the churches after the War. With no livestock remaining from marauding armies and no crops planted or harvested in four years, food was scarce. Many residents moved out west to Texas and beyond to survive.

Before 1920 most of the churches of Christ were called either “Christian” or “Church of Christ” interchangeably. As the division over instrumental music and the missionary society became more defined, those rejecting the use of the instrument and missionary society identified themselves as churches of Christ.

In the religious census of 1906, the first year a split was recognized nationally, all congregations of the restoration movement were officially identified as churches of Christ except one, that being the McMinnville or Central Christian Church. By 1920, the McMinnville church had adopted the change from “Christian” to “Church of Christ”.

The present minister at Smyrna is William Walkup and states that the congregation is very active with attendance running around 100 on Sundays.

Several churches of Christ have larger congregations than Smyrna. Some of those are Central, Westwood, East End, and Bybee Branch to name a few.

Except for interest in the church members, there is no direct relationship between the church and Smyrna Cemetery. In order to assure constant upkeep and perpetual care, Smyrna Cemetery, Inc. was formed and is governed by a board of directors. Randy England is president of this board. An annual Decoration Day and picnic is held the last weekend in July. This year’s date is Friday evening July 30 and Saturday July 31. A meal is available for purchase on Friday evening and decoration is held on Saturday with hamburgers and etc. available for

**See SMYRNA CHURCH next page**

# Smyrna Church

Continued from page 7

purchase. You are encouraged to donate items for the auction that is scheduled to begin at noon on Saturday. Those functions are held at the pavilion located on the cemetery grounds. All profits from those functions are donated to the cemetery fund.

## HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Quoting from **The Restoration Movement in Warren County** the late James A. Dillon, who was the Warren County Historian, "major issues facing some churches prior to 1861 were finances and attendance." This was most likely true with a lot of churches of different denominations in the area.

*The American Restoration Movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century began with the merging of various contingents with hopes to return to apostolic Christianity. Two were of critical significance to the movement. The first was driven by Barton W. Stone at Cane Ridge, KY and named themselves as "Christians". The second started in western Pennsylvania and was headed by Thomas Campbell and his son, Alexander Campbell. They adopted the name "Disciples of Christ".*

*Both factions were dedicated to reviving the early church and unifying Christians in the two movements. Their hopes diminished early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the Restoration Movement broke apart into different groups, primarily the "Church of Christ", "Christian Church" and "Disciples of Christ".*

*Despite being influenced by the Restoration Movement, individuals of the church of Christ do not consider themselves as a new church originating near the beginning of the 19th century. Rather, the whole movement is designed to represent in modern times the church first established on Pentecost, A.D. 30. The strength of their conviction rests in the renewal of Christ's original church.*

*The churches of Christ are autonomous congregations. Adherence to its teachings are the main bonds which connect them together. There is no primary headquarters of the church, and no organization superior to the elders of each local congregation.*

*In each congregation, which has endured long enough to become sufficiently organized, there is a*



***The Smyrna Cemetery, located across the road from the church, is one of the larger cemeteries in Warren County.***

*group of elders or pastors who serve as the governing authority. These men are chosen by the local congregations. Serving under the elders are ministers, teachers, and evangelists or missionaries. The members do not have authority equal to or exceeding that of the elders.*

*Churches of Christ baptize by immersion only.*

*"A cappella" singing is the only music used in worship. This belief excludes the use of instrumental music, along with the use of candles, incense, and other comparable elements.*

*There are over 15,000 individual churches of Christ. The most current reliable estimation notes more than 15,000 individual churches of Christ. The "Christian Herald," a common theological publication determines that the total fellowship of the churches of Christ is now 2,000,000. There are over 7,000 men who preach publicly. Membership of the church is largest in the southern states of the United States, especially Tennessee and Texas, though there are congregations located in each of the fifty states and in over eighty foreign countries.*

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*This article excerpted in part from:*

*Information from the Magness Library Genealogy Department, provided by Cheryl Watson Mingle, Library Genealogist*

[www.christianity.com/church/denominations](http://www.christianity.com/church/denominations)

*The Restoration Movement in Warren County  
Written by James Dillon -- 1982*

**SMYRNA CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
*History of the First 100 Years 1857-1957  
By Lowell Turner*





Warren County Genealogical & Historical Association  
P. O. Box 411  
McMinnville, TN 37111-0411

Jan 11, 2021

Dear WCGHA Members,

It's that time — your 2021 membership will expire on 2/28/2021. Your renewal will extend your membership through 2/28/2022. New memberships will now end one year from the date of membership.

Regular memberships are \$25.00. Joint memberships are available for \$35.00 (must reside at the same residence — only receives 1 bulletin). International memberships are \$30.00.

We have initiated a payment option utilizing PayPal for our customers who wish to pay electronically. You do not have to be a PayPal member to enjoy this new option. When you receive the invoice thru email, simply click View and Pay Invoice. You will be able to enter your debit or credit card information and print a copy of your invoice if you like. Since the office is closed presently, we will only be offering PayPal invoicing or payments by USPS to:

WCGHA  
P. O. Box 411  
McMinnville, TN 37111-0411

If you wish to pay by debit or credit card, please send a request for an invoice to [wcgaha.ba.tn@gmail.com](mailto:wcgaha.ba.tn@gmail.com) Be sure to check the WCGHA Newsletter for all the latest membership benefits and volunteer opportunities! Due to CV-19, we do not have a scheduled Members Meeting yet. We will send an email when we know the date.

J.B. Brown WCGHA  
Treasurer  
email: [wcgaha.ba.tn@gmail.com](mailto:wcgaha.ba.tn@gmail.com)

# Cemetery Art



This is a beautiful and unique stone and an awesome tribute to a young son. His mother chose the Superman symbol because he said it stood for Scout Superman.

Daylan Scout Sullivan  
30 Sep 1999 31 Jan 2017  
Smyrna Cemetery  
Irving College, Warren County, Tennessee  
Father: Derrick Sullivan      Mother: Brandi Knight Byars

# Technology Abounds at Historic Magness Library



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*WCGHA member Brad Walker, pictured at left, Director of the Magness Library in McMinnville, was featured in the most recent issue of Ben Lomand Connect Magazine. Marion Speaks, pictured lower left and Doyle Speaks, pictured lower right, were also included in the article. Brad is the Association Historian; Marion is vice-president and Doyle is editor of the Newsletter. Story reprinted by permission*

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**Story by LISA SAVAGE**

Brad Walker’s mother read to him at an early age, and once he could read, she guided him to their set of encyclopedias when he asked questions.

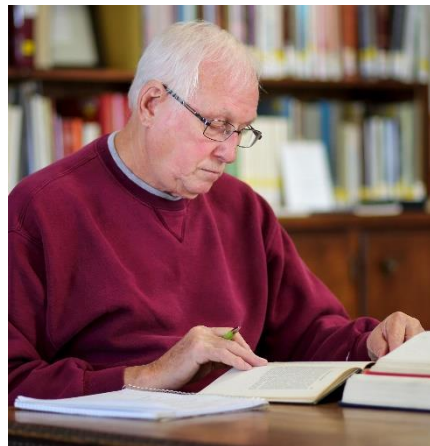
“Like most children, I started asking ‘Why?’ about everything, and my mother set me down in front of the encyclopedia and had me look it up for myself,” he says. He’s loved books ever since.

At 27, Walker started working in the genealogy department at the Magness Library, and 27 years later, he serves as the library’s director. “We’re using state-of-the-art broadband internet, and a lot of people don’t realize that we’re one of the

oldest libraries in Tennessee that’s still operating,” Walker says.

## **A LITTLE HISTORY**

Mary Steakley Cunningham started the library in 1913 in a front room in her apartment, he says. In 1917, the library moved to the site of the current building on Main Street, although it’s seen



**Continued on the next page**

# MAGNESS LIBRARY

Continued from page 11

many changes since then. In 1919, the name changed to Soldiers Memorial Library to honor local men who died in World War I.

Problems with funding led to a generous offer in 1924 of help from local businessman William Harrison Magness. He renamed it the Wm. H. & Edgar J. Magness Community House and Library after his father and brother. "Most people think it's named for him, but it's not," Walker says. "That's the official name, but we refer to it as Magness Library."

In 1932, a new stately, two-story library opened with lots of extra space. The library gained recognition on the National Register of Historic Places in 1993, but it has kept up with the times. "Even though we're on the National Register of Historic Places, we're one of the more modern libraries in Tennessee," Walker says. The library grew through the years, filling up the rest of the building. Philanthropist Gentry Ward Moffitt paid for an expansion in 2006, matching the original building's design as much as possible. The addition brought the building to over 10,000 square feet.

## THE DIGITAL AGE

Digitizing library records and the card catalog began in 1994. "We had one of the first electronic card catalogs in the state," Walker says.

Online books first became available in 1997, and now, in addition to the library's 40,000 books, the library accesses e-books through other libraries across Tennessee using the Tennessee Regional eBooks & Audio Download System. "All you have to have is a library card," Walker says. "That gives our library patrons access to thousands of books at other libraries."

The library offers an expansive genealogy department, with full-time staff members on hand to assist with research. The library's fiber internet through Ben Lomand Connect provides speedy access to all library functions and connects to the library's 20 computers available for public use.

"A lot of people will come in and check their email," Walker says. But there's also all kinds of job search information and registration available on the computers, as well as some unexpected resources. For instance, the library hosts online testing through the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency for

boating safety education certification. "That's one of those odd things that a lot of people don't know that we do," he says.

Staff members continued its Story Hour for children using the Zoom video platform when the library closed because of the pandemic last year. The library reopened in October.

"We wouldn't be able to do all that we do without the fiber internet from Ben Lomand Connect," Walker says. "It's made all the difference in the world for us." □

## Brady-Hughes-Beasley photo archives

### 122 years of photography in Warren County

About 70,000 photos in the Magness Library's Brady-Hughes-Beasley Archives represent the largest collection of images and photo memorabilia in Warren County, says Brad Walker, library director.

The collection is a compilation of the work of three professional photographers from one family, over the span of a century. The photos document family reunions, community events, baptisms, weddings, sporting events, funerals, daily life and portraits of the residents in the county.

Anthia Brady Hughes moved to McMinnville after she married local businessman William Darius Hughes in 1892. She opened her own studio in 1898 and operated under the name of Mrs. W.D. Hughes. Her youngest daughter, Willie Hughes, joined her, and the studio became known as Hughes Studio.

Anthia Hughes' grand-nephew, Joe Hughes Beasley, served in the U.S. Army as a photographer. He later opened The F Stop, a camera store and commercial studio in McMinnville.

Beasley established the archives in the late 1980s and requested the photographs be preserved and remain in Warren County. His heirs donated the archives to the library in 2013.

"This is an amazing collection, and we're very fortunate to have it," Walker says. Contact the library for information about the archives' displays and shows.

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**Magness employee, WCGHA President Cheryl Watson Mingle, is the library genealogist.**

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

4,736 Group Members (+16 this month)  
Gender: 68% Women – 32% Men

13 Posts	257 Comments	1,096 Reactions
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**Top Post**

**Top Contributors**

Tom Bratcher

Lorie Gretzinger Pierce

Carolyn Smith Davis

Ricky Burks

Tom Bratcher: Brown Hotel

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/WCGAoldwarrencountytnfamilies/permalink/3450595995057090/>

Comments: 47

Likes: 178

Shares: 28

Post Reach: 4,532

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.

***FROM YOUR EDITOR:***

We're happy to report that WCGHA Co-office Manager Evelyn Wade and her 2 daughters have re-cooperated from the Covid-19 Virus. Let's all continue to pray for protection for all of our friends and family.

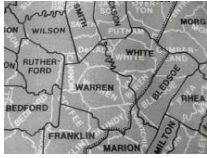
I chose the Smyrna Church of Christ for this month's History of Our Older Churches. It's not the largest Church of Christ in the county but one of the oldest. Special thanks to Cheryl Watson Mingle from the Magness Library Genealogy Department who provided research material.

Included in this issue is a reprint of a story from Ben Lomand Connect magazine on the Magness Library in McMinnville. Brad Walker, our WCGHA Historian, and Director of the library, was interviewed by Lisa Savage who wrote about the advantages of technology in the library.

May you all have a healthy, prosperous and peaceful new year!

Doyle Speaks, Newsletter Editor  
[Speaksanddm@aol.com](mailto:Speaksanddm@aol.com)

## 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.



***Old Daylight Store***

Submitted by Cheryl Watson Mingle  
October 21, 2020