A Walk In Time... Past, Present & Future

Chartered on July 4, 1983

Oliver Springs Historical Society Quarterly Newsletter
Volume 2, Issue 3, November 2026

The Quarterly Forum - Woody Duncan

Oliver Springs Museum: Preserving the Past While Bringing History to Life

Something important is happening in Oliver Springs, and it goes beyond the preservation of an old building. The Oliver Springs Museum is becoming a gathering place where the community's history, stories and traditions are being brought back to life.

The museum serves a purpose that extends beyond displaying old photographs and artifacts. The facility is used for school activities, concerts, weddings, community events, and official visits.

The museum also plays an important role during the annual October Sky Festival. The festival celebrates our connection to the 1999 movie October Sky, which was filmed in part of Oliver Springs and surrounding Roane County communities. During the festival, visitors can explore the restored museum, visit the Depot, see vendors at Arrowhead Park and walk through the Main Street car show.

Our work at the museum is not finished simply because the doors are open. Preservation is an ongoing process. Every photograph donated, every story remembered and every visitor who walks through the doors adds another piece to the history being protected.

The museum's greatest achievement is not just preserving the past – it is helping Oliver Springs carry that past into the future.

WE APPRECIATE YOU... To those who volunteer without seeking recognition, your work matters more than you may ever realize. Every moment you chose service over self makes a difference. Thanks to all who have volunteered their time and service to the Historical Society.

OFFICERS

Chairman
Vice Chairman: Wesley Lee
Treasurer: Cecil Crowe
Secretary: Sara Brummett
MUSEUM DIRECTOR:
Woody Duncan

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Sue Orick

"A Walk in Time" is published by and for the Oliver Springs Historical Society. Anyone may submit material for the newsletter. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions. For questions or to submit material, email suezzee@aol.com.

MUSEUM INFORMATION

HOURS OF OPERATION:

Tuesday 10-2 PM
Thursday 4-7 PM

By appointment contact:
865-617-0813
Museum rental (865) 291-7204

Olivers Springs Historical Society: P.O. Box 409
OSHISTORICAL@GMAIL.COM

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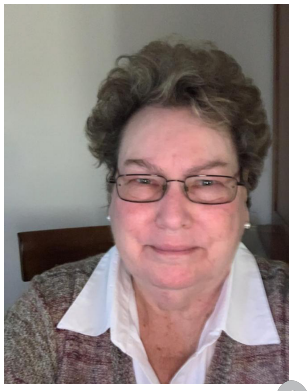
MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



SUE ORICK

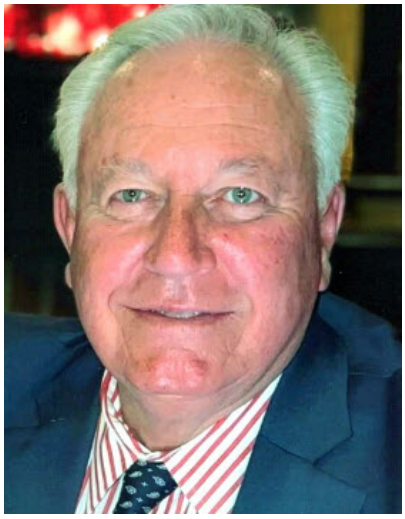
The spotlight this quarter is on our newsletter editor Sue Orick, a retired graphic artist. Sue has been a member of the Historical Society for over twelve years. She graduated from Florida with a degree in television broadcasting and currently lives in Florida with a second home she frequently visits in Oliver Springs. Instead of working behind a TV camera, Sue chose to continue designing behind a computer screen. An avid Volunteer fan and her love for East Tennessee gave her a place in Oliver Springs to volunteer and engage her skills working with the Historical Society in designing and creating artwork for any special event or ideals that required special creativity portraying the goal of the Oliver Springs Historical society. In addition to designing, she is also involved with the responsibility of the society's webpage. Sue's expertise in advertising has been instrumental to the October Sky Festival when reaching out to areas across Tennessee displaying its success.

When asked if she is overwhelmed at times with constant changes and new additions to a project been considered, she responds, "I'm unable to help in a physical way due to a health issue, but I can sit at my computer and do anything the Historical Society requests. The people at the museum mean a lot to me and I can always count on their support and giving me their ideas and thoughts during a project. They have done an unbelievable job in accomplishing their vision of a historical museum in such a small town. I found there is always some way a person can volunteer."

Sue is also an artist and has an art studio in both homes. The last festival she attended, she was a vendor and sold several of her paintings.

Sue would love for anyone to email her at suezzee@aol.com and send her articles and pictures with stories about Oliver Springs for the newsletter. She loves all the history this town has acquired and loves learning about its people.

READERS NOTE: If any of our members have a story, pictures or anything historical to our area, please contact the editor, Sue Orick at suezzee@aol.com.



In Loving Memory of Jerry White

Jerry Wayne White, born October 28, 1952, passed away on October 22, 2026, just six days shy of his 74th birthday
Jerry was a one-of-a-kind person whose outgoing personality and wonderful sense of humor brought laughter and joy to those around him. He had a way of making people feel welcome, and his presence left a lasting impression on the lives of those who knew and loved him.

Faith was an important part of Jerry's life. For many years, he served as the choir director at Kellytown Baptist Church, sharing his love of music and his faith with his church family. Through his years of service, he touched many lives and became a meaningful part of a community that meant so much to him.

He proudly served his country as a veteran of the Army National Guard. He served for 6 years. Jerry was also deeply involved in his community, serving on the Board of Directors of the Historical Society for many years.

One of the greatest blessings of Jerry's life was his marriage to his beloved wife, Phyllis. Together, they shared 54 years of marriage, building a life filled with memories, love, and companionship. Their years together stand as a testament to a lasting commitment and a lifetime of shared experiences.

Jerry's greatest legacy will live on through the family he loved. He is survived by his devoted wife of 54 years, Phyllis White; his children, Kristy (Kevin) Seeber, Korey (Myranda) White, and Kasey White; his grandchildren, Kaitlyn (Jared) Miller, Karson Seeber, Kylee, Khloee, Kinzlee, Trinity White, Keigan (Meghan) White, Keylon White, and Kasen White. He also leaves behind his beloved great-grandchildren, Crew Miller and Riley White. Jerry is also survived by his brother, Ricky (Danita) White; his aunt, Chris White; several nieces and nephews; and several special cousins who held a special place in his life. Along with other family and friends.

Jerry will be remembered for his humor, and outgoing spirit, his faith, and the love he gave to those around him. Through his military service, his dedication to his church and community, and the laughter and memories he shared with his family, he made a lasting impact that will not be forgotten.

"Well done, good and faithful servant." — Matthew 25:23

The 2027 Calendars are Here!!

The new 2027 13-month calendars are printed and available for sale. Great for Christmas gifts. The Calendar contains over 50 historic photos and history sketches. Priced at $15 for one or three for $40. You can purchase them at the **Oliver Springs Historical Society Museum, Harvey's Furniture, or any member of the historic society.**



THE OLIVER SPRINGS HISTORICAL SOCIETY AWARDED A CAPITAL MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS GRANT FROM THE TENNESSEE STATE MUSEUM

GRANT WILL BE USED FOR PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENT.

Oliver Springs, TN – October 20, 2026 – The Oliver Springs Historical is a recipient of a $97,825.00 grant for Capital Maintenance and Improvements from the State of Tennessee as administered through the Tennessee State Museum. The grant award will be used to pave the Historical Society's parking lot and install street lights around it.

The Tennessee General Assembly made available $5 million in funding from the 2026-2027 Appropriations Act, "for the sole purpose of providing grants to museums with a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or affiliated with a governmental entity for capital maintenance and improvements."

In the fourth year of the grant program, it remains a highly competitive process. In total, the Tennessee State Museum received 160 applications, totaling $10,434,851 in requests. The Museum has made full or partial awards to 102 museums across the state, representing 49 counties. In the four years the Museum has administered the grant program, it has served museums in 76 counties across the state. A complete list of 2026-27 grantees, counties and amounts is posted at TNMuseum.org/grants.

"The Tennessee State Museum's Capital Grant program continues to support the infrastructure of Tennessee museums," said Ashley Howell, Tennessee State Museum Executive Director. "It is an honor to support the incredible work of our strong network of Tennessee museums. This grant is an extension of how the State of Tennessee can further support their efforts and the preservation of local and state history. We thank the Tennessee General Assembly for their support for Tennessee museums."

This grant will significantly improve the safety of our members and guests while walking across to our parking lot after events that end after dark and increase the parking lot capacity by striping the parking spaces in the lot.

(continued on next page)

Wonderful News!
(continued)

The Capital Maintenance and Improvements grant had a minimum request amount of $5,000 and a maximum request amount of $100,000. All projects must be completed by June 30, 2027.

The Oliver Springs Historical Society is devoted to the preservation of historical buildings and natural features of historical value and interest as well as the preservation of pictures, newspaper articles, written and verbal facts and anecdotal accounts of the proud history of Oliver Springs, TN.

The Tennessee State Museum, located on the corner of Rosa L Parks Blvd. and Jefferson Street at Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park, is your home to thousands of years of Tennessee history, art, and culture. Through six permanent exhibitions titled Natural History, First Peoples, Forging a Nation, The Civil War and Reconstruction, Change and Challenge and Tennessee Transforms, the Museum takes visitors on a journey–through artifacts, films, interactive displays, events and educational and digital programing–from the state's geological beginnings to the present day.

Additional temporary exhibitions explore significant periods and individuals in history, along with art and cultural movements. The Museum is free and open to the public Tuesdays to Saturdays from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Sundays from 1 p.m. – 5 p.m. For more information on exhibitions and events, please visit **TNMuseum.org**

The Importance of Having a Historical Museum in the Community

- When our community visits and supports the historical museum, we keep local stories, artifacts, and landmarks protected for future generations.
- A strong museum strengthens community pride and identity—helping residents and visitors better understand where Oliver Springs has been and where it's going.
- Museum visits also support learning for all ages through exhibits, school programs, and events that make history hands-on and accessible.
- Your support helps sustain preservation work and local tourism—bringing people downtown, supporting nearby businesses, and keeping our shared heritage visible and valued.

VISIT - VOLUNTEER - VALUE

1891

by our own historian Wesley Lee

Sometimes, when researching, I come across mentions of dates for Oliver Springs that help us date buildings, events, and people. Here are some items for 1891—some referring to good times and others pointing to hard times. This dated John Richards home, The Queener Brothers Store. And the date for the Clinton courthouse.

- Idle Men: "There are more idle men in this town than in any other town in the Union, according to its population, and prospects are good for them to remain in this shape."
- Mt. Carbon Coal Works: "Mr. G. W. Queener & Bro., proprietors of the Mt. Carbon Coal Works, have opened a first-class dry goods store in this place; they employ about fifty miners."
- Postmaster John R. Richards: "John R. Richards, the postmaster, has a fine residence, which is nearing completion, and will be quite an ornament to the town. John is indeed a gentleman and is the right man in the right place." Visitors in Town: "Mr. W. W. Keebler, of Johnson City, is visiting his brother, J. S. Keebler of this place."
- The Houk Club: "We have the largest Houk club in the Second Congressional District; its number, at present, we can't give; it includes Anderson, Morgan, and Roane counties with all hopes of enrolling Scott before election." (**Note**: The Houk Club of 1891 was a localized political organization or community association in Tennessee tied directly to the prominent Republican political family of Leonidas C. Houk and his son, John C. Houk.
- Clinton, at last, has the new courthouse; it only cost sixty thousand.



Richards House



John R. Richards

GET INVOLVED ..... BE A MEMBER

The Oliver Springs Historical Society invites you to help preserve the history of our town by becoming a member. We meet at 6 PM, on the first Monday of every month at the Museum, 301 Kingston Avenue in Oliver Springs.

Whether you are joining for the first time or renewing your membership, you will be contributing to the restoration of our new museum and archives. Your support is vital to the Oliver Springs Historical Society, and we appreciate your generosity and confidence

A Membership form can be found on our website home page. Just click GET INVOLVED. The Historical Society website is www.oshistorical.com.



Oliver Springs Historical Society
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