



“ L E G A C Y ” N E W S L E T T E R

C A R O L Y N ’ S N O T E S (C A R O L Y N K E L L Y)

The new Food City gas station has opened on Tri-County Boulevard across from Norwood School. It’s hard to vision that the property was once the home of a thirty-five room brick mansion of Richard and Mary Jane Oliver. It was probably built in 1830 or 1831 according to Mr. Snyder Roberts. During civil war the mansion was used by Rebel and Union troops as a hospital for wounded and recuperating soldiers. As progress takes over we also need to remember our past history.

The town of Oliver Springs was incorporated in 1905. Cecil Crowe, our devoted and faithful worker in the Historical Society has been elected as our town mayor. You really find out about a person when you work with them. I have worked with Cecil in the Historical Society for several years and I found in him a Christian man. He is honest, truthful, caring and intelligent. The city and our Historical Society are fortunate to have him.

I noticed work being done at the former Madge Coker house and being afraid we were losing another of our historical homes, I just had to find out! It seems a lady by the name of Signe Whitney now owns the house and id restoring it. The house was first built in 1887 and first owned by Evan D Phillips who was born in Hirwaun, Wales. He was our first town mayor in 1905. He also served as postmaster from 1921-1931. He was very active in the Presbyterian Church and the Omega Lodge. They had one son, Thomas Phillips. I know my father was his good friend and I remember he had a picture of him. I remember the pretty wrought iron fence by their house. I even borrowed a high neck dress from Mrs. Phillips for a school play. Mrs. Whitney, the Historical Society is so proud you are saving another of our old pretty historical homes with our towns history.

Hot weather and low finances has slowed down work at the museum, but that will change. Our fall festival workers were busy planning for the event. Volunteer workers are always needed. If you haven’t been attending the Historical Society meetings, you are missing out on some good talks from interesting speakers, various things and even sometimes, refreshments!

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Purchase your Christmas ornament now.



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**P V T . W H A L E Y E X P R E S S E S P A I N
F O R L O S T C O M R A D E S , W W I
(B Y J E A N P O L L A R D)**

This week I am using a story that was given to me by Wesley Lee who lives in Knoxville and who is a devoted member of The Morgan County Genealogical and the Oliver Springs Historical Society. Wesley is a great asset to us he has a vast wealth of history of our area as well as Oliver Springs where he is also a dedicated member of their Historical Society. He wrote that he came across and wanted to share this touching letter with my readers although it was from a soldier from Oliver Springs. The person's name was (B 30 Sep 1896-D 25 Oct 1959). He was born in Sevier County, but died in Oliver Springs. He only had a 3rd grade education but served in the Army in WWI as a private.

When Whaley was leaving France he wrote a letter to the editor that was published in a French newspaper. Grandson, Jerry Jackson family has the clipping from the paper and Wesley sent me the typed version of his letter. Wesley said his heart was really touched that with a 3rd grade education Mr. Whaley was able to pen such a wonderful letter to the editor. It is as follows:

FRANCE

Dear Editor:

As a member of the American Expeditionary Forces and as one that knows full well the comradeships that Exists between the soldiers of the United States Army, I would appreciate a space in your valuable paper to speak a word for the ones who made the Supreme Sacrifice, and are now sleeping in some lone spot somewhere in France. Now, that the roar of battle has ceased, and these noble heroes have settled to their eternal resting place, we who count ourselves lucky in our great hurry to return to our homes must not for one moment, forget that heroic deeds done by the ones that fell and the noble cause for which they gave their lives.

As we step from the soil of France, when we embark for America, we must remember we are leaving a land almost sacred to us, a land that holds within its death clutches some seventy thousand of America's purest and dearest young men, they, free from selfish interests, and with their own lives in their hands faced shot and shell among the greatest disadvantages and at last fell, but not until they had freed the world of autocracy, and once more brought about the same freedom that dawned in 1776. Of course they are not here to enjoy this freedom, but the freedom itself shall stand as a memory of these brave lads who paid the cost. No, they are not here, their life's work is done, tho short it was, it was a task to be honored by all men and even by our God who so tenderly watching over them as they are sunk in death and who, sooner or later will gather them up and pay them justly for their valorous deeds, yes, the principles for which these brave heroes died are established. They did their part but we are now left to see that these principles of justice and right are carried out through the coming years. Are we going to fail at this on account of our selfish interests, and cause the dead to blush in their graves? Or are we as a strong united band going back to civil life with the firm determination to win in everything that is great and good for a Christian people?

Our tenderest feelings are for the mothers and fathers whose sons were slain in the awful conflict, but grief gives way to joy when we think of the final meeting when all these boys rise from their peaceful sleep around with immortal glory.

Who shall sit at the peace table then when the terms of peace are made,

the wisest men of the troubled lands, in their silver and gold brocade?

Yes, they shall gather in solemn state to speak, for each living race,

but who shall speak for the unseen dead, that shall come to the council place?

Tho you see them not and you hear them not, they shall sit at the table to;

they shall throng the room where the peace is made and know what it is you do;

the innocent dead from the sea shall rise to stand at the wise man's side,

and over his shoulder a boy shall look—a boy that was crucified.



**P V T . W H A L E Y
(C O N T I N U E D F R O M P A G E 2)**

You may guard the doors of the council hall with barriers strong and stout,
but the dead unbidden shall enter there, and never you'll shut them out.
And the man that died on the open boat, and the babies that suffered worse,
shall sit at the table when peace is made by the side of the martyred nurse.
You may see them not, but they'll be there, when they speak you may fail to hear;
you may think you're making your packs alone, but their spirits will hover near,
and whatever the terms of the peace you make with the tyrant whose hands are red.
You must please not only the living here, but must satisfy the dead.

Pvt. Wm. Arthur Whaley

Depot Service Co. No. 53

A. P. O. 762

A. E. F. Lemans, France

Since we have just celebrated the 4th of July and our time of Independence I am touched deeply to read such a letter from a soldier who had witnessed so much grief during his stay in France. His love and concern for those American soldiers who died and were buried over there is expressed so tenderly and I do it will touch the hearts of all of you. Let us count our blessings and give thanks for those who have paid such a price for our freedom. Thanks to Wesley for sharing this with us.

**R I C H A R D D A V I S D A Y
S E P T E M B E R 1 0 T H**



September 10th was a day set aside to recognize and honor Richard Davis
an outstanding educator, longtime resident of Roane county
and charter member of our Historical Society

“ R E M E M B E R I N G T H E P A S T ”
(B Y S H I R L B U C K)

The Town's Fire Alarm

We called it “water tank hill” said Shirl Buck of Oliver Springs. When I was a young boy I remember the town having a water tank on the end of Morgan Street behind Roy Borum's home and beside the tank was a good size whistle looking siren. The siren was somehow connected to the fire department at the foot of the hill in the downtown area where the fire trucks were housed. It had an old wind-up three phase type switch that would take several seconds to receive and transmit signals from the firehouse before making its sound for alarm. The town limits at this time only extended to the railroad tracks in Norwood Community and to the Kellytown section of town and a short distance into the Tuppertown area. The fire trucks were not allowed to go anywhere outside the city limits. When an alarm was sounded by the siren the volunteer fire dept would know which part or section of town the fire was in by how many times the whistle would sound. It might blow twice in a roll for one area with a pause and repeat or maybe three times then repeat again for another section of town. On one occasion the sound of the siren had become weak and my dad Mitchell Buck was asked to go and check the problem. Dad was an electrician and had his own shop downtown so he took his tools, climbed up the water tank and then looked around and found a squirrel had crawled up into the sounding mechanism. Reaching with a long stick he removed the unwanted dead carcass that was keeping the siren from doing its job. So the town's warning system was back in business with its whistling sound faithfully blowing strong and loud each day. It blew at 12:00 noon, then at 7:00 p.m. on Mondays for fire drills and continued to sound its alarm for fires. The town's siren that was probably installed during War World II has long been forgotten by most people but it is still a significant part of my memories of growing up in Oliver Springs.

Note: Inquires from citizens who remember the siren describes it as been three or four feet tall and two feet in diameter. It was attached to a power pole about 35-40 feet high within reach of the water tank. As time passed the siren was removed for repairs and never re-installed. The siren has disappeared but the memories of the loud whistling sound can still be heard in the minds of those who remember.



Picture taken atop water tank, above old football field, by Jimmy Hannah.

We went up with him to help get his equipment to take pics of the town. top three are Joe Lockett, Bill Heacker, Glen Wright. Front, Nathan Stonecipher and Hubert Wright. My eyes were closed--scared !!! I think this was about mid 40's

Photo description by Nathan Stonecipher.

**DIGGS FAMILY HOME IN OLIVER SPRINGS RECEIVES
2016 EAST TENNESSEE PRESERVATION AWARD**

MORRISTOWN, TENN. – East Tennessee is a beautiful region that is rich with history and interesting places. Each year, the East Tennessee Preservation Alliance recognizes outstanding persons, projects and organizations working to preserve our heritage for future generations. This year, our ten award winners are celebrated for their contributions to historic preservation and we want to share their stories. Awards were presented during a special reception at historic Arrow Hill in Talbott near Morristown on the evening of November 4th.

The Diggs family home in Oliver Springs has seen some changes. Built in 1905 by Alfred H. and Scotland Diggs, the house had to be moved away from the path of a new four-lane highway. It remains in the family and Bettina Diggs Cox recently embarked on a full renovation. The once missing porch was rebuilt and rooms throughout have been beautifully renovated. A unique feature of the home are the four fire-place mantels salvaged from the once popular Oliver Springs Hotel.

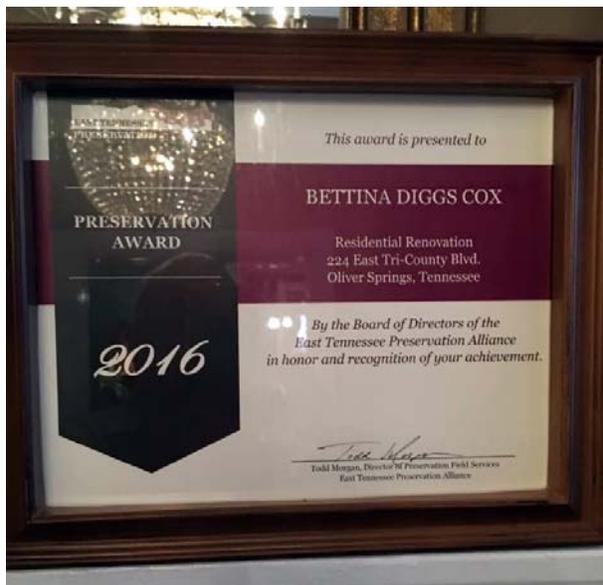


**Alfred H Diggs Home
In Oliver Springs**



Bettina Diggs Cox Diggs

Accepting her award from the ETPA



**Bettina Diggs Cox Diggs
award from the ETPA**

A LOVE STORY BY MIMI BROCK (PART 1)

THE OLIVER SPRINGS HOTEL
A Love Story

Why was it taking them so long? There was Mama fixing her hair, taking it down, and fixing it again differently. Papa kept checking his business papers and Mamma, her grandmother, in her advanced age was moving so slowly. Even Roger in his tenth year whom, one would think, would be the early bird of the family was entertaining himself by turning the lights off and on and by going out in the hall and pushing the button which controlled the elevator. So Susan, who had hurriedly gotten herself ready this morning, left the rooms they were using in this grand hotel, went down the stairs and was waiting impatiently for the rest of the family to join her at breakfast.

She entered the lobby and here could smell the delicious aromas emanating from the kitchen/dining area. This only increased her impatience and, furthermore, made her more aware than ever of her hunger. Therefore, she decided to go outside and take advantage of the early morning beauty of the area.

From the moment she had stepped off the train which brought them here, Sue, as she was called by her family, was totally enchanted by the magic of this place ! There was the majestic hotel whose wonders could only be known if one was staying here. The hotel was situated or nestled at the base of a tall mountain range and was surrounded by a wooded area as well as spacious grounds which included a tennis court and a croquet court which Susan had only seen at yesterday's arrival and which she was anxious to explore. These things were truly grand and fascinating but they could be seen at a more convenient time than mealtime. At least this was Susan's opinion. She reasoned that if you completed your necessary meals you could then be ready to see all the wonders of this truly remarkable place.

She walked down the front steps and seated herself on a step as she inhaled the scents of the early morning in a heavily wooded area. Being from the city she had never had an opportunity to revel in these glorious smells before. There was also the stillness, something else to which she was not accustomed. The stillness was broken only by the cheerful chirping of the birds, and they surely seemed happy on this new day. (Unknown to her, at that very moment, someone was taking a picture of the hotel, a picture which included her sitting on the front steps. This picture would later be famous among the local people and would be passed down through the years). Then as she sat and listened and enjoyed what she heard, she was suddenly aware of a sound in the distance, a sound which was familiar to her. A train was coming. When she and her family had arrived yesterday the engineer had been instructed to stop at the hotel for them. That had been quite an adventure. Papa had to collect the mountain of luggage from its compartment and Mamma with her arthritic knees had taken an impossibly long time. Roger had gotten off and on again, much to Mama's chagrin. However, the conductor had been very patient with and helpful to them. The people from the hotel had rushed to help them and they were quickly escorted to the sumptuous suite which they would be occupying for the next two weeks.

possible 1st installment

Maybe there would be another family coming here on the approaching train. Maybe there would be a young lady who would serve as a companion to Sue, one who would join her in taking part in all the activities offered by the hotel. Just as she hoped, the train, amidst much noise and vapors from the steam engine, stopped at the accustomed place on the track. Sue was aware of three stewards in their black and white uniforms rushing down the steps beside her to meet the people who were beginning to appear at the opening. The conductor was placing a step to allow easy descent from the train. First to appear was a gentleman who reminded Susan of her father. He was wearing the same type of suit and his hat was an almost replica of her fathers. The stewards from the hotel

A LOVE STORY BY MIMI BROCK (CONTINUED)

boarded the train and almost immediately reappeared carrying piece after piece of luggage. The next to be seen was a young boy who looked to be about the same age as Roger, This pleased Susan very much. Perhaps this boy would prove to be a friend to Roger and the two of them could spend time together freeing Sue from the responsibility of having to see that Roger was content. Next to appear at the opening of the train was a young man, He was dressed in a similiar fashion to the older man who had been the first one off the train, except that he wore no hat. He had dark hair and even features and, from a distance, seemed quite handsome. Susan's heart beat a little faster as she thought about perhaps being able to spend some of her time in the company of this young man. However, her thoughts were dashed as he turned to assist a young lady down the steps. This solicitous attitude made it obvious that he cared deeply for her. Following her came an older woman dressed in quite fashionable clothes. The older man stepped forward to assist her descent. As this group moved forward with one of the stewards who was carrying a load of luggage, Sue watched as several others came down the train steps to be assisted by the other stewards. At this time another steward appeared from what was probably the basement pulling a cart which would probably be used for the remainder of the luggage. There were several groups alighting from the train but Susan's attention was on the first group who had immediately caught her eye. The boy had run ahead and was eagerly climbing the steps leading into the hotel. He stopped momentarily to greet Susan with a huge smile which she returned. By this time the rest of the party was climbing the steps. Sue remained seated as each of them passed by her. The older man tipped his hat, the older lady smiled and spoke but, the young man, holding the hand of the young lady openly stared at Susan. How dared he! How rude of this man to look at her in such a manner when his wife was right by his side. Not only that, but, after passing by her he turned back to look at her again. She thought it was very crude for a married man to carry on in such a manner.

ht?

M E M B E R S H I P

We welcome our new members this year and look forward to sharing our history, stories and goals with them.

Attached is a membership form, please encourage your friends to join us! I would like to extend a great big "Thank You" to those who are current in their membership dues. Also thanks for all the hard work that everyone does all year long. It is wonderful to have such a dedicated membership working for our wonderful organization.

Membership Application Oliver Springs Historical Society Email Phone Select Membership Category Individual (\$25) Business (\$100) Gift (\$25) This gift membership is for: Name(s) for membership card(s) Address Make check payable to: Mail to: Oliver Springs Historical Society P.O. Box 409 Oliver Springs, Tennessee 37840

ON THE WEB
WWW.OSHISTORICAL.COM



**“LEGACY”
NEWSLETTER**

Oliver Springs Historical Society
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Oliver Springs, Tennessee 37840
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Dedicated to Historical Preservation

The Oliver Springs Historical Society is a nonprofit 501c3 organization and our members are 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. We have a large collection of historical information and artifacts and regularly host events to educate and entertain the public about the history of the area.

The Oliver Springs Historical Society's charter was adopted on July 4, 1983 and currently has a membership of approximately 200 members throughout our region and other parts of the United States. The regular meetings are held the first Monday of each month with an average attendance of 35-40 members. We have an appointed board of twelve members which meet quarterly.

To keep our members and community informed, we publish a quarterly newsletter called the "Legacy". We invite you to help preserve the history of our town by becoming a member of the Oliver Springs Historical Society as your support is vital to our long term goals