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Legacy is published by and for the Oliver Springs Historical Society. We welcome submissions, both in text articles and pictures, current and upcoming events, "in memoriam", reminiscences, etc..

The editor and staff of Legacy reserve the right to edit submissions for length and content, as well as to determine general interest and suitability of content for print.

Please support your historical society, both in submission of items for publication and in making your old pictures and documents available for archiving, thus ensuring that future generations will reap the benefit of our tireless efforts at preservation.

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# Legacy



## The Mighty Steam Locomotives

**The story of Oliver Springs**, Oliver's, Winters Gap, or The Gap as it was alternately and affectionately called through the years, could not properly be told without an extensive treatise on the railroad. Indeed, had it not been for the coming of the lumbering steam locomotive, with its associated steam, belching smoke, and cacophony of noise and fury, Oliver Springs might not have developed into a proper town at all, much less the tourist mecca it became by the close of the 19th century.

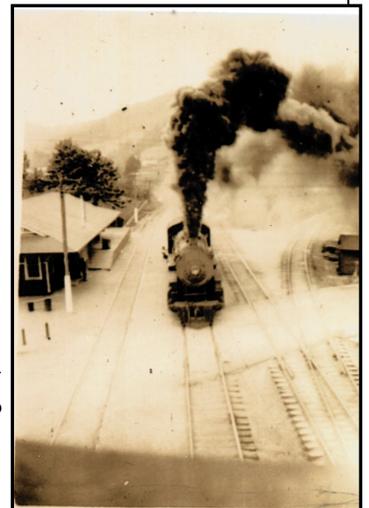


Robbie Underwood

For those of us who grew up in and around Oliver Springs, the railroad has always been inextricably woven into the fabric of our existence. Much of the notice we give it is due to the topography of our town, and the fact that much of Oliver Springs sits in a narrow valley, nestled in between Walden Ridge and Pine Ridge. It is no coincidence that the development of the railroad followed that valley floor as it expanded from Oakdale Iron Works down near DeArmond Gap, where today we refer to it as the Highway 61/27 split. Interestingly, Elverton was known for many years as Oakdale, then when the town of Oakdale was established along the Emory



River, Elverton was referred to as "Old Oakdale". According to Historian Snyder Roberts, the Oakdale Iron works and the Emory Iron Works that preceded it go back as far as 1819 or before, with the smelted pig iron being shipped via flatbottom barge or skiff down the Little Emory River to distant markets. This was a sometimes undependable method of shipping, subject to whims of weather and river conditions. To remedy this, The Oakdale and Cumberland Mountain Railroad was chartered and in 1880-81 ten miles of track



were laid between the Cincinnati Southern line at present day Oakdale, and across the Little Emory River to the Smelting Ovens at Elverton, or "Old Oakdale".

In 1883, the narrow gauge railroad was extended from Old

Continued on pg. 2

# The Mighty Steam Locomotives

Oakdale to Oliver Springs, where it turned left and up toward Big Mountain where six new coal mines had recently been opened. Coal was vital to the smelting industry, and the need for a ready supply of large quantities of the stuff made the railroad a profitable endeavor.

Evolving along with the burgeoning coal and pig iron industries was Oliver Springs' other growing industry, that being the rapidly expanding notoriety of the legendary mineral springs that emanated from rock strata at various elevations up the side of Walden Ridge. Indeed, since before anyone could remember, folks had been making pilgrimages to partake of the mineral laden waters which were reputed to have mystical, even magical powers of healing. By 1831 hotels and lodging houses were springing up to accommodate travelers seeking health and healing. By the 1870's Wealthy Welsh immigrant Joseph Richards had migrated south to Oliver's and was making aggressive inroads into the coal, iron smelting, AND tourist businesses. Sensing the attractiveness of a "thru route" connecting the Cincinnati Southern tracks to the west and north with Clinton and points beyond to the east, Joseph Richards sold the right of way in front of his "Richards Inn" for the handsome sum of \$1.00 to allow for the completion of the line connecting Clinton through Dutch Valley to the line coming from Old Oakdale, which had been improved from the narrow gauge track to the wider industry standard tracks. In 1894 this line was purchased by the Southern Railway Company, and big time railroading came to Oliver Springs.

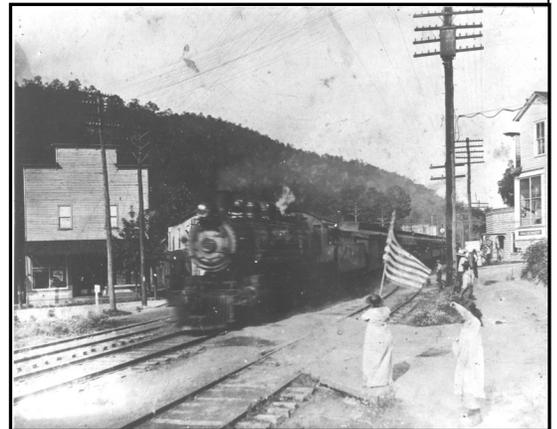


The first train Depot at Oliver's. It reportedly sat in the gap near where the old Oliver Springs Flower and Garden sat in more modern times.



The Southern Railroad Depot, C. 1948. This photo was also taken from the Cow Creek Trestle. The man next to the car is reputed to be Snyder Roberts.

One noteworthy routine of the early trains was necessitated by the difficult topography surrounding Oliver Springs. The Indian Creek floodplain that old town Oliver Springs sat on was essentially at the bottom of a "bowl", with foreboding hills on both sides. A train leaving the Depot heading west would often have to leave in reverse, backing up the Sulphur Springs hill toward Donovan, then gaining speed as it approached town, accelerating until it



was running at a breakneck pace as it passed through town and toward Cemetery Hill. Usually this trick enabled the trains to successfully conquer the grade at Cemetery Hill and continue on toward Harriman. Sometimes, though, the combined weight of the train and less-than-optimal rail conditions might necessitate a "pusher" locomotive being dispatched to assist in overcoming the steep grade. Over the years the hills at both ends were whittled away by steam shovels and then bulldozers, resulting in "cuts" through the hills that by modern times have reduced the tortuous grades into no more than subtle climbs.

It is a sometimes sad truth that while progress adds in one area, it subtracts in another. So it was with rail service to Oliver Springs. The Cow Creek branch winding down from Windrock ceased hauling after the road winding the mountain was completed and then improved, allowing for large dump trucks to onload coal and drive it down the mountain, bound for market. Another factor in the cessation of the rail shipments of coal were brought about when the contract with Duke Power was lost, forcing the Windrock Mine Ownership to seek other contracts, the most significant of which was with T.V.A. to supply their coal fired steam plants. The contracted price per ton was less than the price per ton that L&N charged to haul the coal. Facing that reality, the age of truck hauling from Windrock Mine was born.

The final "nail in the coffin" for local rail service was in large part due to improved roads and highways. Folks looking to travel to Knoxville and Chattanooga for "Day trips" and shopping excursions, etc., found it easier to drive a car and come back when they wished, rather than being bound by the railroad scheduling. Passenger service continued to diminish until, in December of 1968 the last passenger service to Oliver Springs was discontinued.



# The Mighty Steam Locomotives



**The picture at above right** was posted to Wesley's "You're Probably From Oliver Springs if..." page by Gabe Passmore, who informed us of its pedigree, saying, "Here we see the mighty Class A N&W 1218 as it storms through Oliver Springs, Tennessee on it's way to Harriman on September 9, 1990. The locomotive served the Norfolk and Western Railroad for all of its first life: then, when the N&W Railroad retired the locomotive, it sat until the 1980's when the Locomotive was restored for the Norfolk Southern Steam Program which brought the 1218 around the country including to Oliver Springs. When the program ended in early 90's, 1218 went back to Roanoke for what may be an forever sleep."

In my youth the train was a true symbol of adventure, of romance, of faraway places... I loved hearing those lonesome sounds in the middle of the night, and I fancied myself hitching a ride to faraway places, searching for loves and lovers as yet unknown... I truly love trains.

My life's ambition is to travel on an old-fashioned sleeper car train, going cross-country..... traversing continents. Automobile travel is a wonderful advance, but it can never match the majesty, romance, and sheer dramatic effect of a mighty steam locomotive chugging out of the station, pulling elegant sleeper and dining cars laden with starry-eyed sojourners off to far distant destinations. Ahhh, the mystique.....

Katherine Adcox remembers hearing the trains passing through the Oliver Springs of her youth, saying, "Growing up hearing this sound, nothing else sounds like this train as it came thru town. Strange how we forget things & the picture brings back these wonderful memories.."

Joyce Hepler-Fox: "This may have been the morning our Sunday School class (First Baptist Church) met out in the parking lot so we could see the old steam engine."



*Robbie*

# *Carolyn's Corner*

**Happy New Year to each of you!**

The New Year has given each of us an opportunity to be a blessing to someone or something. Our Historical Society is blessed by so many who work so hard. Those who have donated money so graciously, "We thank you!" We have come so far, but we are beginning to see the light at the end of the project. What an accomplishment that will be! We work hard to preserve our history, but we fail to realize that we are making our own by what we do.

A few of our good members passed away last year: R.C. Fox, Donald Gross, Lee Lawson, G.A. Mead and Marinelle Martin. We appreciate all their help and support. We miss them!

The museum decorations were beautiful! If you didn't see it, you missed a beautiful picture.

If you noticed a Greyhound Bus sign on the front of the museum, you could have wondered why? Years ago, when the Greyhound buses began to run, the garage was the first stop on the way to Kingston, right down Kingston Avenue! I thought the sign deserved a place at the Museum.

Our annual C.S. Harvey Jr. Gospel Singing was at Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church. Thanks to their generosity for a place to meet. We always have a good spiritual program that everyone enjoys. Thanks, Mt. Pisgah!



Willie Lee Lawson



R.C. Fox



Marinelle Smith Martin as a young lady

Try and attend our meetings. We may be boring at times, but we also often have some good and interesting speakers you would enjoy. We even have refreshments sometime, so you never know what you might find. Meetings are the first Monday in the month at 6:00 P.M.

See you there!!

*Carolyn*



Marinelle at far right in Basketball Days

# Oliver Springs High School Class of 1949



1st row, L-R: Elizabeth Ann Hudson (floral Skirt), Louise White, Lela Mae Borum, Wilma Jean Sisson, Anna Kate Irwin, Joe Lockett..

2nd row, L-R: Lindell Duncan, Bill Bunch, David Lausterer, Ray Lane.

3rd row, L-R: Lucille "Frankie" Walker, Goldie Walker, Betty Sue Cox, Helen Ruth Tuck, Patricia Basler, Redonda Davis, Harold McKinney.

4th Row, L-R: Betty Schultz, Eloise Chadwick, Onalene West, Betty Sue Blank.

5th Row, L-R: Patsy Harvey, Pauline Ray, Margarat May, Sam Barger, Kenneth Stubbs.

6th Row, L-R: Hoyt Hendrickson, Denny Sisson, Carl Hensley, Dave Devaney.

7th Row, L-R: Edd Melton, Glenn Hammonds, James McKinney, Marvin Grubb, C. Braden.

8th Row, L-R: Hobart Hoskins, Joe Kelly , Bob Parten, Milton Simmons.

# Oliver Springs Hotel– A Love Story

By  
Mimi Brock

Part 2



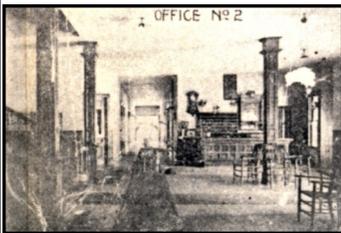
## Synopsis of 1st part of the story “Oliver Springs Hotel– A Love Story”

Susan Sullivan, along with her mother, father, grandmother and younger brother. Came to stay at the Oliver Springs Hotel so that Grandmother could take the healing waters.

As Susan was waiting for the family to join her for breakfast, she seated herself on the front steps. While seated there she was unaware that someone in the distance was taking a picture of the hotel and, coincidentally, of her– a picture which would become famous in time to come. A family got off the train as she was watching and she was disturbed and embarrassed by the stares she received from a young man ascending the stairs holding the hand of his young wife.

## As these thoughts entered her head

and as she watched the next group approach, Roger came running down the steps to tell her that the family was in the dining room for breakfast and had sent him to look for her. Susan rose from her perch and she and Roger climbed the steps together, entered the lobby and went into the dining room where the family awaited them. Susan was thrilled at the beauty of this room!



There was blazing white linens on all the tables. All the dining chairs were padded and upholstered in a red damask material. Sparkling glassware adorned each place setting and the silver was polished to a high shine. The coffee which Mama and Papa were drinking was served in the most delicate fine china cups. Everything was the best and the most beautiful. In addition, adding to the luxuriousness of the

room, it was lit by the most ornate chandeliers.



Sue sat down at the place saved for her. A glass of orange juice sat before her. Suddenly realizing how hungry she was, she quickly drained the juice just as a waiter arrived with a covered dish which when uncovered revealed a mound of fluffy scrambled eggs. Another waiter brought in a platter of sausages and bacon and a second covered dish which was filled with sliced bread and a loaf which had not been cut. On the table there was butter, salt and pepper shakers, and a variety of jams and jellies. After the waiters had served each of them they quickly left the room. Mama, Papa, and Mamma drank coffee while Susan and Roger had milk. As they ate Susan told them about her time spent outside. She told them about the new arrivals she had seen. However, she didn't mention the rude young man who had stared at her so hard. Sue had no idea that she was a very beautiful young lady. She was used to attracting attention, particularly on the part of most men both young and old. However, the bold stare of the young man this morning was especially disturbing since he was holding the hand of his wife. Oh well, she would just think of it no more.

After finishing their sumptuous breakfast the family decided to sit on one of the porches to discuss their plans for the day. Mama and Mamma had a morning appointment with the hotel doctor who would prescribe the type of waters both of them should take. The healing springs associated with the hotel were the primary reason for their trip to this place in Tennessee. The medicinal qualities of the springs were well known even as far away as their home in Cincinnati. Mamma, with her arthritis, was looking forward with great anticipation to be healed or at the very least getting some relief. Of course Mama would not let her go alone so she had agreed to go with her.



## Oliver Springs Hotel— A Love Story

Papa was going to go into town to see some business men with whom he had been corresponding about an investment of some sort. Roger, who was fascinated by anything having to do with nature, was planning to explore the hotel grounds for anything which might pique his interest and which he might add to his collection. That meant that Sue was on her own to do as she pleased. She decided to go out to the croquet field to either watch or play depending on whether there were others there. As each of the family went off toward their particular destination, Susan strolled back through one of the two lobbies and went back outside. As she went down the front steps she saw a surrey with several people inside. She thought they were probably headed for the nearby town of Oliver Springs and she thought this would be the way her father would be traveling into town for his business. She went down the rest of the steps and turned at the bottom to head toward the croquet field.

Approaching the field she saw that there was a group of mostly young people engaged in a game. Since there were several benches scattered around, she decided to sit and watch. There were others who were doing the same and she thought this might give her the opportunity to get acquainted with some new people. Then, to her dismay, she saw someone coming who caused her to regret being here. It was the young married man who had caused her embarrassment earlier this morning. And he was headed straight for her bench! She made up her mind that she would not allow him to sit by her, talk to her, or do anything which would cause her any further embarrassment. He walked right up to her bench and asked if he could sit there. Susan had always been able to express herself firmly; she never held back her thoughts when something bothered her. Many times her mother had had to make excuses for her blunt behavior. However, her father thought it was wonderful that a young lady was able to express herself boldly and he encouraged this. Now she could not contain her anger. She rose quickly to her feet and, even though she had tried not to make eye contact before, looked him straight in the eye—Oh, such beautiful expressive dark brown eyes! Putting these thoughts aside she told him that she had seen him this morning as he climbed the hotel steps holding the hand of his wife. She also informed him that she highly disapproved of a husband who exhibited such terrible behavior at his wife's expense. After saying this, she stamped her foot, brushed aside him and headed back to the hotel. As she marched away she heard laughter behind her. Could he really be laughing at her? The audacity! Before she took another step he had darted in front of her impeding her progress. He laughingly explained that he was not married, that he had been holding the hand of his sister and assisting her on the steps. Susan was sure that her face must be a bright shade of crimson as he asked if they could go back to the bench, sit and let him properly introduce himself. Susan merely nodded her head, allowed him to touch her arm and turn her around to walk back to "her" bench which was still empty.

As they seated themselves he told her his name was Jonathan Bondurant from a small town near Baltimore, Maryland. His sister, Abigail, whom he loved very much, had a debilitating condition which periodically caused her pain and decreased mobility. His father, who owned the bank in their small town, had heard about the healing waters of the springs at this hotel and decided to bring his daughter to see if they would be beneficial to her. Jonathan himself had just started to work in his father's bank and was busily learning about the banking business which was fascinating to him. His family consisted of his mother and father, his sister and his nine year old brother Marcus. As they inquired further about the hotel and its environs and the springs which were highly touted, his father decided that this would be a good time for a family vacation as well as a time for Abigail to get some relief or help. Susan listened to Jonathan's story, smiled and nodded at the appropriate times but was still stinging from her mistaken impression of him. However, as he talked, she could feel herself begin to relax and really listen. Not only to his words but also to his obvious devotion to his family. He apologized for monopolizing the conversation and inquired about her family and their reason for visiting the hotel. As Susan haltingly began telling him about her family and their

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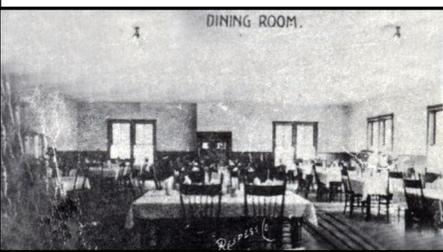
# Oliver Springs Hotel– A Love Story

(Continued from page 7)

circumstances, she saw Roger round the corner of the hotel , stop, look around ,and finally find her. As he rushed toward them she told Jonathan that he was quickly going to meet the youngest member of her family. Roger ran up to them and stopped as Susan introduced him to Jonathan. Roger, in the polite way he had been taught, put out his hand. Jonathan politely stood and extended his hand and they engaged in a hearty handshake. That aside, Roger eagerly reached in his pocket and withdrew a handful of rocks. He had been exploring the grounds behind the hotel and had found these rocks which were unusual to him. They were solid black and when you rubbed them the black came off on your hand. Roger didn't know this at the time but he had found some remnants of coal – a substance new to him. Susan, realizing that it was lunch time, told Roger to go inside, wash his hands and get ready to meet the family for lunch. He went running off to do so and Susan stood along with Jonathan and they started for the hotel together still talking and getting more acquainted as they walked.

Inside the lobby, before they went to their respective rooms, they agreed to meet in this lobby after lunch. At that time they would decide what the afternoon would hold depending on what their families had planned. Jonathan, who had seen his family in the dining room, headed in that direction while Sue entered the elevator to go up to the fourth floor where her family awaited her. She was so excited to tell them about Jonathan but held back as her mother explained about what the doctor had told them about the springs and their curative power. Mamma was eager to avail herself of this and expected terrific results. As soon as lunch was over she and Mama would be headed for the spring house. Papa was not back from town and they assumed that he would have his lunch somewhere in town along with the people with whom he had business. As they readied themselves and entered the down elevator, Sue was able to tell them about her meeting Jonathan and how nice he was. She was reluctant to tell them about her first impression of him. She saw no need to share this since it had worked itself out to her satisfaction.

Upon entering the dining room Sue spied Jonathan and his family already seated. As he saw her enter he smiled and nodded in her direction and she smiled and nodded at him. No one in her family had noticed this exchange but, as they seated themselves, Roger saw and recognized Jonathan and told Susan that he had seen him. Mama asked about what Roger meant so Susan had to explain her meeting with Jonathan. Once she started she was reluctant to stop telling her mother the details of her conversation with him and of how impressed she was with his demeanor and his polite behavior. Her mother listened and with a mother's intuition read into her daughter's enthusiasm the fact that she was very interested in this young man. She determined that she would find a way to acquaint herself with this Jonathan to determine for herself his appropriateness to be a potential suitor for her daughter.



Lunch today was a tomato bisque accompanied by a salad made with fresh spring greens including watercress and cucumbers with a creamy house dressing. Served with this there was fresh baked crusty bread and a choice of tea, coffee, milk or the refreshing water taken from one of the nearby springs. At any other time Susan would have enjoyed this food and all the attention of the servers. But today her lunch was spoiled by her frequent glances at Jonathan's table. The Bondurant family finished their lunch and, led by Jonathan, were headed toward their table. Susan watched as they approached and nervously informed her mother that they were coming here, probably so that Jonathan could formally introduce himself and his family to Sue, her mother, and Roger. And that is exactly what he did. Mr. Bondurant upon his introduction to Mrs. Sinclair, Susan's mother, kissed her hand in a most European manner! She, in turn, blushed and rose from her place at the table to shake hands with Mrs Bondurant, Abigail and even Marcus who had been eagerly eyeing Roger. Jonathan then introduced his family to Susan and it was obvious by their reaction that he had been telling them about her. As the combined group moved slowly out of the dining room, they headed,

# Oliver Springs Hotel— A Love Story

(Continued from page 8)

still as a group, for the closest porch. There the little boys huddled together and talked about things which interested only their age group. Jonathan, Abigail and Susan pulled chairs close together and began an animated conversation about matters important and related to their ages. The elder Bondurants and Sue's mother, Mrs. Sinclair were busily talking, mostly about this fabulous hotel and all the attractions it offered. Sue's mother told them about the appointment she and Mamma had with the hotel doctor and his recommendations for Mamma's treatment. Since it was almost time for that, Mama had to make her way upstairs to ready herself and Mamma for their treatment at the spring house. Mamma had chosen to have her lunch on a tray in their rooms and she was probably waiting for her daughter to return to the room so they could go to the spring house for their treatments. Mrs. Sinclair told Sue to watch Roger and wait for her father's return. Susan rose from her chair, kissed her mother on the cheek and wished her success in her treatment. After her mother left to go upstairs, Susan sat again in the chair beside Jonathan and Abigail.



She continued to be impressed by Jonathan's care and concern for his sister. He constantly questioned her about her comfort. She kept assuring him that she was alright even though she didn't seem to mind his asking. She explained to Sue that she had rheumatic fever as a child which left her with a heart condition. This caused her to have attacks periodically and this was the major cause of her problem. She didn't really believe that taking the waters here would do anything to help her. However, her father was willing to do anything which might be beneficial to her and a family vacation sounded like fun so she agreed to try the healing waters just to see the results. She wanted Jonathan to have a good time since he was starting to become very involved in the banking industry and the way things looked, any time off from his regular work was going to be quite difficult. Jonathan laughingly entered the conversation declaring that indeed he was having fun and so much more since meeting Susan. Susan accepted this

compliment with a smile and immediately changed the subject. She told them that she had seen a sign in the lobby announcing a dance to be held in the ballroom tonight. They all agreed that this would be a wonderful way to end the day. They decided to go to their rooms to rest until the dinner hour when they would meet, have dinner, and then go to the ballroom.

Roger and Marcus had been heavily involved in a checkers game and didn't want to stop. Jonathan said that he would stay with them. Mr. and Mrs. Bondurant had rooms on the second floor so Abigail exited the elevator first. As she stepped off she turned and told Susan how happy she was that they had met. Sue rode the rest of the way with a song in her heart. She could not remember feeling this way ever before. And the subject of this wonderful feeling was Jonathan! As she entered their suite she saw Papa's coat draped over the back of one of the chairs. She thought that he must have returned from his business trip and decided to lie down. She tip-toed to the door of his room and saw him stretched across the bed obviously asleep. She carefully tip-toed back to her own room and then giggled when she thought of the foolishness of tip-toeing when there was luxurious carpet in all the rooms. She giggled! When was the last time she'd done that? But that's the way she felt—all bubbly and filled with warmth. She stripped off the dress she'd worn all day and checked out her wardrobe for something special to wear to dinner and the dance. With that done she settled down on her bed with a light coverlet and thought she'd never be able to nap. Surprisingly she, almost immediately, slipped into a deep sleep. Upon awakening she was aware that everyone had returned and were scurrying around getting ready for dinner. Susan waited patiently for her turn in the bathroom. Roger was the first one ready and was busily fidgeting with some playing cards. Papa had taught him to play solitaire and he could spend hours with a deck of cards. Mama and Mamma were excitedly discussing their experience at the watering area as Sue quickly donned the dress she had

Continued on next page

# Oliver Springs Hotel— A Love Story

(Continued from page 9)

chosen earlier. Finally the family had everything done and they were ready to take the elevator to the dining room.

Upon entering, Susan was aware that Jonathan was hurrying to meet them. He said that he had secured a table which would accommodate both families if it was permissible to them. Mama and Papa, at the same time, agreed. Susan thought that Mama must have had time to tell Papa about Jonathan and his family. Also, she had probably told him about Susan's feelings for Jonathan. The parents, along with Mamma, seated themselves at the head of the table, Roger and Marcus were next and Sue was seated between Jonathan and Abigail who was looking very pale and fragile tonight. However, she joined the conversation with enthusiasm.



Dinner started with a clear broth followed by sliced cucumbers, green onions, and green peppers in a cream sauce. The main course was lamb chops with mint jelly, potatoes rosemary, and English peas. The meal was finished with apple cobbler topped with clotted cream. An altogether satisfying meal! At the completion of dinner the older men decided to go to the parlor to enjoy a cigar. The women went to the porch to watch Roger and Marcus play checkers as Mama and Mamma discussed their time taking the healing waters. Susan thought that they would convince Mrs. Bondurant to indulge along with Abigail. Susan, along with Jonathan and Abigail, could hear the music coming from the ballroom as the three of them approached. Upon entering they were thrilled to see couple after couple dancing. An orchestra played a waltz and everyone seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves. The ballroom was beautifully outfitted with upholstered chairs arranged in groups of four to six usually surrounding a small table. At the end of the room there was a large table containing a punch bowl and many shining glass cups. The room was lit with the same chandeliers as the dining room except these were dimmed but equally lovely. Susan, Jonathan and Abigail sat together at one of the seating areas. Jonathan offered to get punch for the two of them but they decided to wait. Throughout the last several years Sue had been to lots of dances and had many beaux so she was familiar with all the latest dances. When Jonathan asked her to dance it thrilled her to know that she had that familiarity. However, she was reluctant to leave Abigail. Abigail assured her that she would be quite content to merely sit and watch the dancers. Susan gratefully accepted this and took Jonathan's hand as he led her onto the dance floor. As she entered Jonathan's arms she felt the most wonderful, joyous contentment. It seemed that this was the place she belonged.

Following Sue's enchanted evening it was taken for granted that she would spend the remainder of her vacation with Jonathan. As their departure time neared, Jonathan, in a sweet and touching ceremony asked Susan to marry him—and she accepted! Now the families had to work out the logistics of the distance between Cincinnati, Ohio and Baltimore, Maryland. This would prove to be an exciting and exacting procedure but with the love which was so strong between them they and their loved ones would be able to work things out.

Their plans were finally made and their decision surprised no one. They would return to this wonderful hotel early next year for their wedding and the various activities surrounding it. What a lovely way to recall their first meeting!

Mamma had great success with her treatments at the hotel. Abigail's condition remained steady and she was able to be an attendant at the wedding as would Roger and Marcus. Jonathan was quickly advancing in the banking industry and could possibly see a branch opening in Ohio. The hotel remained in all its majesty until the night in 1905 when it tragically burned. At that time Susan and Jonathan had been married six years and were the parents of a three year old girl named Abigail. They would always remember the beautiful hotel located in Oliver Springs, Tennessee and be forever grateful for its existence.

# Time Warp



East Fork Omega Lodge, C. 1900. Thomas Wright is second from left. Thomas Wright was a farmer, Confederate Civil War veteran, and father in law to Postmaster Luther Cross. He was married to Martha Wilkie Wright. They lived on Poplar Creek and raised three daughters.



Leola Walls



*Lillian, Eva M,  
Richard and Evelyn*

From Spurgeon and Nora Lee  
Bunch Walls Album



Edith Ross and friend Fline in front of Butler Mining Commissary. J.K. Butler owned several mines around Big Mountain/Prudential Hollow, and operated a commissary down from First Baptist Church, on the site where the Emmitt Hall house was built later. J.K. Butler also built the home that later became Sharp Funeral Home. Edith's mother was Elizabeth Butler Ross, sister to J.K. Butler.

# OCTOBER SKY FESTIVAL

**On Saturday, October 16,** the people of Oliver Springs and the surrounding area woke to a huge slice of "October's Bright Blue Weather." Well before dawn Historical Society members and volunteers were busy preparing for the crowds of visitors who would be welcomed to this annual event.

At the Museum and Archives building last minute touches were being made on the beautifully appointed rooms of which the members are quite proud and on which they have spent countless hours renovating.

Members at the Depot were hanging quilts on the railings of the building, accepting and setting up cakes, cookies, and other baked goods to be sold.

Meanwhile, at Arrowhead Park, the hundreds of vendors were arriving and being directed to previously appointed locations. Cars for the Cruise-In car show were arriving and finding a parking place to exhibit their prize vehicles. Tractors were also being parked at their designated places.

At ten o'clock the crowd was welcomed by Cecil Crowe, mayor. Beginning the outstanding musical acts for the day was Jerry Maria, from Pennsylvania, who thrilled the crowd with his rendition of selections from the era of Frank Sinatra, his impression was quite remarkable. Jerry enjoyed playing to the crowd so much that he took his talent to share with Ken Smith who was the musical entertainment at the Depot. He proved to be a major attraction at that locale also.



Following Jerry our local, Sarah Hepler, along with her friend, Tre Jackson who attends Little Leaf Church, sang more modern selections. Sarah sings and accompanies herself on piano and guitar. Her music was especially appreciated by the younger crowd.

The next act was the always popular, "Tribute to Elvis" featuring our native, Greg Johnson along with Jeannette Bradley who does a Dolly Parton routine. Greg is always a crowd pleaser and, being featured in productions throughout the U.S., still remains just a local guy to area residents.

Following Greg was our own, Janelle Arthur, accompanied by her uncle, Robbie Underwood. Janelle, 5<sup>th</sup> runner-up on the national program American Idol, is always well received by the crowds. This time was no different as she sang song after song, some of which she wrote herself. Janelle is loved by local people who closely follow her career and performances.



The next musician to grace our stage was Ben Briley, another American Idol performer. Ben gave a beautiful performance and his choice of selections was well received by the entire crowd.



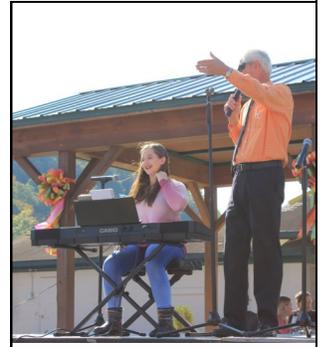
Dudley Evans, our M.C., and his group, Victorious, rounded out the day of outstanding music with Gospel selections delivered in their beautiful harmony.

Throughout the day the rich aromas of 'taters an' onions and green peppers, funnel cakes, fried pies, sweet rolls and doughnuts—to name a few, drifted across the park whetting the appetites of the people.

At 5 o'clock a group of weary but happy participants began to pack up and put away their wares. The members of the Historical Society, happy, but exhausted, put away and gathered together the things belonging to them convinced that, even

though there was a lot of work, time, and money involved in this annual affair, it was certainly worth it all since it is always so well received by our community.

..... *Mimi Brock*.....



# OCTOBER SKY FESTIVAL



Photos on This Page by Teresa Freels



Thanks to Mimi Brock for her spot on reporting of this most blessed day.. The weather was perfect, the crowd was wonderful... Just a fabulous festival that is fast becoming one of the premier festivals in the region!

*Robbie*



If you remember this service station, you are indeed an oldtimer! This station sat for years on the corner of Main Street and Winters Gap Avenue (site of the present day Regions Bank). According to Ed Coker, it was owned for years by Ed West, who also owned the Oliver Springs Drug Store before selling it to Dr. Fred Hooper's parents. ***(Ed West was also brother to William West, who gained notoriety for gunning down Marshal Pony Cash in September of 1904.)*** Ed Coker told me that Verldon Coker bought the station from Ed West, and operated it for several years before leasing it to the Clowers family.

Attentive readers will note the Daugherty Garage sign to the rear of the Esso station. This garage was operated at one time by Ralph Daugherty before he moved his business to the Abston Building. It was also onetime home to the Walls and Coker Trucking Co. facility, and later Hal Duncan Radiator and Brake Shop, with Cumberland Recording to one side.

The picture below was taken from an old Oliver Springs High School yearbook, showing Coker Esso as a sponsor of the yearbook. In this picture the two service bays can be readily seen. Joyce Hepler-Fox had asserted that she well remembered the service bays, and here is proof that Joyce's memory is once again framed in veracity.



# Christmas Party

On the evening of December 5, at our regularly scheduled meeting, the Oliver Springs Historical Society hosted our annual Christmas celebration.

After a few brief remarks from chairman, Jerry White and a prayer from Cecil Crowe, members and guests helped themselves from an array of sumptuous selections prepared by loving hands.

The Great Hall of our Museum was filled with tables groaning with the weight of dish after dish of food, as they say, "fit for a king."

New member, Nancy Byrge, had prepared a delightful strawberry punch which was served along with bottled water or soft drink selections.

Becky Melton, food chairman, with assistance from other members arranged the tables of food which were a delight to behold. After all had eaten their fill, visited with each other, admired the decorations, and toured the building, a selections of goodies was packed up and taken to the police station to be shared with those on duty and therefore unable to attend.

Wesley Lee was kept busy taking pictures of arriving guests, some of whom he had seated in the decorated sleigh on the front porch.

As more than one person remarked as we left for our homes, this was one of our best celebrations and was over much too quickly.



Photos by  
Wesley Lee



# The Cumberland Presbyterian Church

## Christmas Service

By  
Mimi Brock

Neither the postponed parade nor the dismal and gloomy weather put a damper on the group which gathered at the Cumberland Presbyterian Church on Saturday, December 17.

This annual affair is especially important to area residents and in times past has been considered the true beginning of the Christmas celebration in our town. The ringing of the historic bell brings happy memories to many in the area. Sidney Thurmer, in the absence of pastor Ken Johnson, did the bell ringing honors to the delight of the crowd.

This year those in attendance were treated to musical arrangements, first, by Beth Whedbee who played the piano as she and her sister, Amy Bowman sang "What Child Is This?" in their beautiful harmony.

Sarah Hepler, granddaughter of Joyce Hepler-Fox accompanied herself on the piano as she gave a rousing rendition of Cloverton's Christmas lyrics to Leonard Cohen's, "Hallelujah."



Matthew Thompson, grandson of Pat Stansberry, brought a sweet, touching, and timely message ending with the Christmas story from Luke 2.

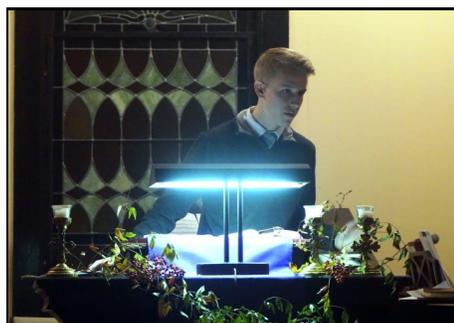
Tre Jackson, a young man with a powerful voice, sang "Mary Did You Know" and "Who Would Imagine a King." Faye Curd was instrumental in acquiring Tre for our enjoyment.

The final performance was Joyce Weaver who played a medley of Christmas carols on her violin accompanied by Beth Whedbee on the piano. As the culmination to the night's music, Ms Weaver

sang "The Old Rugged Cross" accompanied by Drew Bowman on the guitar. She invited the audience to sing the chorus with her and all eagerly joined in.

Jerry White, our announcer, welcomed everyone to this occasion and, in this same capacity, dismissed all with a final prayer by Matthew.

Everyone agreed it was a special night and looked forward to next year's program.



# Time Warp



Delia Cross at left, standing with her sisters who were Wrights but not sure which is which. This picture would have been taken around 1908. The Cow Creek Trestle was built in 1904, and as you can see, it is in background. Delia was the wife of Luther Cross, and worked as a mail clerk in the Post Office. She died around 1920 at only 40 years of age. I believe this building is Keebler's Store, on the east end which also housed the Post Office until the new Post Office was built on Estabrook Avenue around 1910-12.



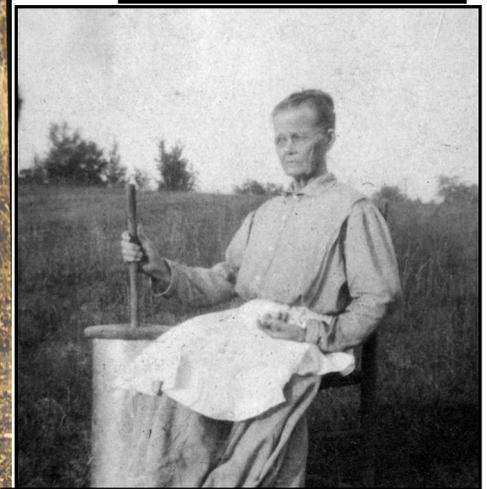
Luther Cross in front of the Cross Hotel. Most of us remember this building as the Dr. Van Hook office. Luther Cross was Postmaster for a time in the early part of the 20th century, and also worked as a road contractor as well as managing the Cross Hotel.



Interesting photograph taken from the Cross family album. The persons and location are otherwise unknown.



Erstwhile Mayor Ab LaRue with wife Jenny Hoskins LaRue and children Sunshine and Jack.



Martha Wilkie Wright, mother of Delia Cross. Martha was married to Confederate veteran Thomas Wright. They lived on Poplar Creek where Blair Road is today. The farm wife of olden times was seldom far from her butter churn. ....



Oliver Springs as seen from the Cow Creek Trestle that stretched across the town for most of its existence. This is looking back east toward the heart of town. This stretch is not as appealing to the eye as many other vantage points, but it shows a very vital element in the town's makeup. The railroad was the conduit through which commerce flowed in the early days. A "Switch" or "yard" engine would shuttle box-cars and flatcars on and off the main tracks to be alternately loaded and offloaded: sawn lumber heading out to all points north and south, Bricks made here and shipped to faraway projects, dry goods and staples brought in from distant markets to the people of Oliver Springs.

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