



A Walk In Time...

Past, Present & Future

Oliver Springs Historical Society
Quarterly Newsletter Volume 2, Issue 2,
July 2026

The Quarterly Forum - Woody Duncan

The Quiet Power of Those Who Serve Without Applause

Some of the most meaningful work in our museum is done invisibly. It's done by volunteers who show up when needed, notice what needs to be done and do it without being asked, who give their time, energy, and care with no exception of recognition. They do not seek praise, titles, or public thanks. In fact, most of them would rather avoid the spotlight altogether.

Yet their impact is undeniable.

These volunteers are the steady hands of the Historical Society. They give not because it earns them attention, but because they believe in helping. Their motivation comes from compassion, responsibility, and a quiet sense of purpose.

Volunteers who do not brag understand that helping others is their own reward. They do not post every act they do on social media or seek applause for their efforts. In a world where attention and recognition are often highly prized, their example shows that generosity can be quiet without being in the spotlight.

In a world that often celebrates loud achievements and visible success, this kind of service can be easy to overlook. But it is precisely this humility that makes it so powerful. When help is offered without expectation, it creates trust. When kindness is given freely, it strengthens in ways that cannot be measured. They remind society that kindness does not need an audience.

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

Chartered on July 4, 1983

OFFICERS

Chairman: Jerry White

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

Olivers Springs Historical

Society: P.O. Box 409

OSHISTORICAL@GMAIL.COM

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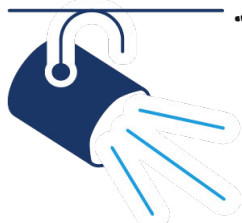
HAPPY
Birthday
America!



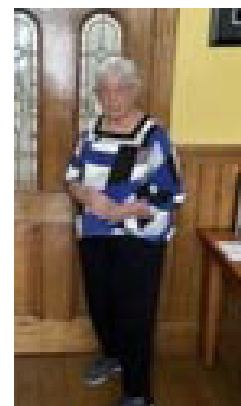


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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



**BECKY
MELTON**

The spotlight this quarter is on Becky Melton. Becky is a life-long resident of Oliver Springs and has been a member of the Oliver Springs Historical Society for over 15 years. Becky has one daughter, Donetta Harvey, who is the co-owner and manager of Harvey's Furniture in Oliver Springs.

Becky attended Orchard View Elementary and Oliver Springs High School. She played basketball at both Orchard View and Oliver Springs, and her claim to fame is that she never fouled out of a game. While in high school, Becky worked at Charlie Reaves Café. After graduation from high school, Becky attended Bluefield University in Virginia and the University of Tennessee. She attended cosmetology school and worked as a Beautician for over 30 years. During this time, she also taught Cosmetology and worked at Wal-Mart for 22 years.

Some people find joy in a single hobby, while others embrace a variety of interests that enrich their lives. Becky is someone whose passions include cooking, fishing, floral arranging, and a career as a hairdresser. For many years, working as a hairdresser allowed her to express her creativity while helping others feel confident and beautiful. Her profession required patience, skill and a keen eye for detail, qualities that became evident in her love of cooking and floral arrangements. Bringing together the art of fishing, the sensory joy of cooking, and the precise design of floral arrangements created a unique, deeply rewarding lifestyle for Becky.

We are so thankful for Becky for providing her services to help prepare and coordinate meals for the Roane County Inmates when they are working at the museum. Becky also helps prepare and coordinate meals in support of numerous other functions at the museum, such as volunteer work days. I, for one, am glad that she likes to cook. Her time, effort and commitment are greatly appreciated.

Becky is also responsible for the planning and coordination for the raffle at our monthly meetings. Becky secures volunteers each month to bring an item to be raffled, which helps provide additional revenue for our mission. **Volunteers are the backbone of the Historical Society and Becky reminds us of all the difference one person can make.**

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.



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**Make sure you read
"Special Note" at end of
article!**

The Train Depot That Could and Did...

Adapted from "Depot Timeline" by Wes Lee

The passenger depot was built circa **1893** by the Southern Railway Company, matching the timeline of the historic Oliver Springs Resort Hotel. During World War II, the depot served as a central town hangout where locals watched servicemen pass through.

1982: The campaign to save the landmark began when the railway announced its closure, with plans to demolish the structure. Oliver Springs Historical Society president Rose Ingram led a petition with over 1,000 signatures to block demolition and to obtain the depot and restore it to its former glory.

Approximately **1984:** The Southern Railroad abandoned the building and turned it over to the Oliver Springs Historical Society on the condition that it be moved to prevent liability issues. The Tennessee Valley Authority and the Historical Society donated land across the street to serve as its new location. Moving of building completed April 23, 1984.

Mrs. Rose Ingram of the historical society headed the drive to raise the \$8,000 (Just an FYI, \$8,000 in 1884 numbers would be \$27,781.70) to fund the moving cost but by the deadline to move, they were still \$3,000 short. The city of Oliver Springs pledged \$2,500 and the Oliver Springs Historical Society raised the final \$500 to pay for the move. Sonny Harvey raised \$3,500 to lift the depot on to a more stable foundation, utilizing labor from the Oliver Springs High School's Building and Trade class to place it on cinder blocks. At the time, initial estimates to fully renovate the depot ranged between \$80,000 and \$100,000.

1991, August: Lack of available grants caused the depot to sit idle.

1994, March: Over 100 years after its initial construction, the relocated depot was successfully saved.

The relocated structure featured a fresh coat of paint covering the old graffiti, new windowpanes, a new wrap-around wooden deck, and a preserved original wood aesthetic. The historical society successfully executed its vision to repurpose the building to serve as a local railroad museum and to house the Oliver Springs public library inside the depot's old baggage room.

1996: The Oliver Springs Historical Society and the town of Oliver Springs were honored by the East Tennessee Development District by being recognized for the depot restoration and it's use as a history museum and local library.

That same year the Oliver Springs Historical Society erected a sign for the facility and led an effort to restore a Norfolk-Southern caboose which at that time was done by East Tennessee Rail and Car Service of Knoxville for \$6,557. Those funds came from various fund-raising activities and donations.

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2017: The depot was showing it's age of 134 years and underwent more restoration thanks to Senator Ken Yager who was instrumental in securing funds in excess of \$100,000. The cost alone for removing lead paint and it's disposal, was estimated at \$50,000. Also steel cables needed to be installed to stabilize the structure of the building, a new roof, replacing rotten wood, replacing the cupolas that had been removed, a new railing and underpinning.

2026: Today the depot is a shining example of the history of Oliver Springs that was saved and makes the town stand out from other communities. Be proud of this and the people that were instrumental, some sadly may not be with us any longer.

SPECIAL NOTE: The Historical Society has led preservation and restoration efforts on the Depot for many years. Recent events seem to be working to wipe away what preceded that and place the depot in a new direction.

The museum's presence in the depot helps preserve and showcase the community's history in its authentic setting. The depot also has a historical significance and connection to local heritage. Maintaining the museum in the depot is an important part of local history, making it a fitting location for exhibits about the community's past especially when displayed in its original historic structure. In addition, historic depots can attract visitors, which can support local businesses and contribute to local economic activity.



DEPOT CIRCA 1970



DEPOT BEING MOVED

Moving Caboose



WORK BEING DONE ON FIRE ENGINE DISPLAY IN DEPOT PARK



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Celebrating America's Birthday: A Time to Reflect and Rejoice



As July 4th approaches, Americans across the nation prepare to celebrate the birth of the United States of America. This year marks another milestone in our nation's remarkable journey - a story of courage, perseverance, innovation, and an enduring commitment to freedom.

Independence Day commemorates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, when thirteen colonies boldly declared their freedom and established the foundation of a new nation. What began as an ambitious experiment in self-government has grown into one of the world's most influential democracies.

America's birthday is more than a historical anniversary. It is an opportunity to reflect on the principles that unite us: liberty, equality, opportunity, and the pursuit of a better future. Throughout our history, generations of Americans have worked to strengthen these ideals, overcoming challenges and striving to create a more perfect union.

Communities nationwide will celebrate with parades, concerts, family gatherings, community picnics, and dazzling fireworks displays. These traditions bring neighbors together and remind us of the shared values and experiences that connect people from all walks of life.

As we celebrate, it is also important to honor the countless individuals who have contributed to our nation's progress—service members, first responders, educators, healthcare professionals, community leaders, volunteers, and everyday citizens whose efforts help build stronger communities.

America's story continues to be written every day. The future of our nation rests in the hands of citizens who engage in their communities, support one another, and work toward common goals. Independence Day serves as a reminder that democracy thrives when people participate, contribute, and care about the well-being of their fellow Americans.

Fourth of July, should be celebrated not only of our nation's founding but also the spirit of unity, resilience, and hope that has carried America through nearly two and a half centuries of history. As we gather with family and friends, may we appreciate the freedoms we enjoy, honor those who came before us, and look forward with optimism to the opportunities ahead.

Happy Birthday, America!

As the United States marks the 250th anniversary of its founding in 2026, we would like to recognize the 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. ...

Our featured exhibit during this time is a military exhibit to reflect on our nation's past while encouraging discussions about its future. The exhibit honors the courage, dedication, and sacrifice of those who have served over the past 250 years.

The military exhibit stands as both a tribute to the nation's armed forces and a reminder of the enduring values that have shaped the United States since its founding.

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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