

CHRONICLER

PRESERVING OUR PAST



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The A-HA or the OH-NO Moment -- The Legacy of the 1970 Time Capsule

By Ruth Henderson McQueen, 150th Committee Member

Fifty years ago, in 1970, Loudon County staged a Centennial Celebration. With the leadership of State Rep. Benny Stafford, County Judge Harvey Sproul, and Dr. Paul Brakebill many events took place, including a beard growing contest and the burial of a time capsule.

Individuals were invited to purchase an envelope (cost of \$1) and put in objects or letters of significance. The time capsule was then buried on the southeastern corner of the Courthouse with instructions that it would be opened in 2020 during the Sesquicentennial.

Many months ago a 150th Celebration Committee was formed and started to plan for events to take place to mark this milestone event. Original plans, before the COVID-19 Virus, called for a major gathering on the Courthouse lawn for June 20, 2020. Early in the planning stage the ten committee members had extensive discussions about the 1970 time capsule and how to handle the exhumation. Many things were unknown -- some people thought it was a casket while others thought it was a smaller box -- memories were very different.

Because of the lack of information, the Committee unanimously voted to exhume the time capsule prior to June, in order to determine the condition of the contents. Thus, one wet cloudy Thursday morning, Mr. C. E. Wilson from Lee Heights Monument Company volunteered to bring equipment and locate the capsule. After a couple of hours of probing an object was found. More digging uncovered the lid of a concrete vault. Chains were attached and the lid was removed.

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The hopes were for an A-HA moment -- but that was not to be -- the "capsule" was a pine box and the vault had not proven to be waterproof. Water had gotten in from both the top and the bottom and the moment became an OH-NO! discovery.

The pine box had rotted and the lid collapsed onto the wet contents and turned into a large black moldy blob. Fortunately, a white plastic sheet had been placed in the bottom of the box and the corners could be used to lift the mass out of the ground.

The contents were taken to a secure location and allowed to dry. In recent days committee members, with gloves and masks, surveyed the contents. Ninety-nine percent of the paper items were totally ruined.

A few items were corroded but salvageable -- some coins, a piece or two of jewelry, a toy truck and a football mouth guard, to name a few. There are also military dog tags from two veterans that are readable. These items will be preserved and displayed in the coming months in a variety of locations around the county, including the public libraries.

Time Capsule, continued from page 1

While most of the contents in the time capsule did not survive five decades, there are still valuable lessons to be learned from this experience. First, we can appreciate the time and effort of those individuals who donated items in 1970. They were looking toward the future and were excited to leave a legacy for those who were coming after them. While the outcome was different than expected, it is good to remember that things often do not go as planned and that the second lesson may be to always make the most of challenging situations.

The remnants of the 1970 time capsule will be cataloged and displayed and used in educational programs and valued as a part of Loudon County history. Perhaps what is not known about the items will be as interesting and intriguing as what is known. The third lesson may be to make sure that the 2020 time capsule that will be assembled this fall, for opening in 2070 at the Bicentennial, will be secure and well preserved.

However, the most valuable lesson may be one that resonates throughout the history of Loudon County. The basis of this county is not items and artifacts -- it is the people and the relationships that are formed over time. This year we honor those who left a legacy of hard work, honesty, faith, integrity, good humor and a belief in the importance of family and community. It is now our job to pass these values forward to those who will shape the future of Loudon County in the coming decades.

**IN MEMORIAM**

3/8/20 Niles, Joyce
 3/8/20 Steele, William, "Bill" 52
 3/9/20 Walker, Mary Crowell, 90
 3/12/20 Hammontree, William H. "Bill" 81
 3/13/20 Roberts, Alma June, 95
 3/21/20 Harless, Bill, 86
 4/3/20 Ryan, Sharon Orr, 69
 4/5/20 Shoffner, Hall
 4/14/20 Bumbalough, Geoffrey Jay, Jr., 15
 4/18/20 Wilson, James Edward "Ed", 82
 4/25/20 Yearout, Dorothy Russell, 90
 4/28/20 Chambers, Edith Margaret, 94
 5/8/20 Stephens, Charles Ronald "Pap"
 5/13/20 Queener, Betty Ruth Ryan, 86
 5/18/20 Lee, Sammy Landy, 78
 5/20/20 Harmon, Velma Ruth Goforth, 79
 5/22/20 Jones, Edna "Bea" 95
 6/2/20 Russell, Kevin Wayne, 40
 6/3/20 Majors, Johnny, 85
 6/9/20 Ray, Clarence "Chuck" Harold, 84
 6/20/20 Ownby, Velma Cook, 96

TIME CAPSULE – 2020 to 2070

The Greenback Historical Society undertook the project of providing collection envelopes for the citizenry to be included in the 2020 time capsule to be opened in 2070.

They have purchased archival envelopes and photograph sleeves for interested citizens to place items in the capsule. Additionally, they have created 3 templates to help people record some information that might be of interest in 50 years.

These templates and envelopes can be picked up from any of the 5 Loudon Co libraries beginning on July 1 or found on line at 150yearsofloco.com. They may be returned to any library or mailed to the Greenback Historical Society, or email to 150yearsofloco@gmail.com

Cindy Benefield

COMMITTEES

Work continues on **The Driving Tour Brochure Project** led by Colleen Ragain and assistant Judy Hudson. Recommendations for listings can be sent to GbHS, P.O. Box 165.

The Greenback School 5th Grade Pioneer History Unit is described on our *Greenback Historical Society Facebook page*. Check it out!

GREENBACK HIGH SCHOOL

We owe a "thank you" to Emily Miller for serving as a contributor to the Chronicler, a voluntary job. Our readers are always interested in information about what our students are doing. Emily has done an excellent job and she is well appreciated. If any Greenback High Student is interested in being our contributor next year, please contact me at CarolynPeck87@Outlook.com or 816-0947.

Since school was dismissed in March, the deadline for the Nola Melton Essay was changed and graduation has been changed twice. Once it was to be August 8, but then changed to Aug 1. I understand that it will be celebrated at the Lyle and Tate Amphitheatre on August 1, at 2:00 PM. Masks and social distancing are requested. This year's essay, the subject of which is Senator Fred Thompson, will be awarded at the graduation ceremony and printed in our next Chronicler.

I am glad to note that our graduates will have the opportunity for the experience and be able to celebrate that, at least, in style. 2021 will still be an opportunity for a new group of students to enter the competition for another essay. It will include some research into a piece of our history. Those interested should contact English and History teacher, Ms. Judy Hawkins or Ms. Robin Cagle,IT, both of whom will have the needed information. A teacher's recommendation and a parent's permission are required in order to be accepted. Criteria include Content, Accuracy, Style, and Adherence to Criteria. The winning essay will be printed in the Chronicler, Greenback Historical Society Newsletter.

-Carolyn Melton Peck



*Thank you,
Emily Miller
for your contributions
to the Chronicler.
Best of Luck in all
your endeavors!*

CAROLYN'S CORNER

This year has been a time for reflection as we have gone through the winter colds, the early allergies, and the Covid 19 Virus. While being asked or ordered, whichever one uses to characterize it, to "Stay At Home," wash your hands frequently, touch your elbows rather than shake your hands, stay at least six feet apart, and in no case even consider giving or receiving a hug, it can be a lonely time. In spite of that, it has been a good time for reviving memories.

I have often wondered or opined that young people do not study or remember history as I think I have. I wonder why younger people seem not to be as patriotic or as proud of our country as my generation. We were born in the depression. I remember hearing my mother say that it was one of the easiest times to live because everyone was poor. But then, those of us who lived in East Tennessee were rarely hungry. Everyone had a garden, many grew their own chickens, hogs, and cows, either for milk or meat; some had goats or llamas, mules were used for workers, and horses for transportation.

When I was ten, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. The date is burned in my memory. President Roosevelt said it was a "Day of Infamy." Young boys left the farms and the schools to defend our country. Those 18 and older were drafted or volunteered to join the service. They all went and we were proud of their service. We prayed proudly for our heroes such as John Rufus Hall who, though not a pilot, landed his plane safely after his pilot was unable. Our songs were the battle songs, Off We Go into the Wild Blue Yonder, Anchors Aweigh, and Over There. Our movies were of our heroes and our movie theatres showed some of the battles and speeches of the politicians. We collected metal, even tin foil from our rarely given chewing gum, bought savings stamps, later to be exchanged for Savings Bonds, and planted "Victory Gardens." We learned to eat oleo rather than butter, but I never understood why. For those of us whose families had cars or trucks we received ration books for gas; we had

ration books for sugar, a precious commodity, and stood in lines wherever we saw them, knowing that something we needed or wanted badly must be at the end. In school, we followed the battles and became familiar with names such as Hitler and Mussolini. We learned of Omaha Beach and the incarceration of the Jews. Unfortunately, we interned the Japanese because we were afraid of them. A familiar slogan was "loose lips sink ships."

The war ended and we were teens. Some of the boys, now young men, returned to school or took advantage of the G.I. Bill to further their education. Our movies were still patriotic and we sang such songs as "Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Old Oak Tree" or "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." We were young-- alive. We gladly said the Pledge of Allegiance, sang the National Anthem, and listened to Kate Smith singing "God Bless America." We went to church and thanked God for our country and for those who returned safely. Although we barely noticed the changeover, we fought the Korean War.

In the early fifties, we married, had babies and "began our lives." For those of us in college, we proudly celebrated the National Football Championship of the UT Vols. "Zoot Suits" became popular. Life was wonderful and exciting again for many of us. As Bobby Anderson said, "We began to have a little money and some of us even had cars!" We helped rebuild Europe and Japan and averted another war with Russia and Cuba, but unfortunately fought in Viet Nam.

Then, during the sixties, the age of the "Hippies" began. Young people began to struggle against some of the norms in our culture. Boys grew long hair, girls refused to shave their legs, and they all became proud of patched up clothes and tie/dyes. Young marrieds focused on our own lives, struggling to become adults, raising and teaching our children, and making a living. Our biggest accomplishment was landing a "Man on the Moon." Our newest hero was Neil Armstrong!

The economy went up and down in the seventies and each of us felt it differently. If we noticed, some people felt it more than others, but in the areas where I lived and worked, the uneducated were the hardest hit. Some in the smaller factories were laid off and were standing in Food Stamp Lines. Those who had ridden work buses and gone to work at Alcoa in the forties and fifties became our "middle class." More teens and young adults had attended college preparing to be teachers, preachers, doctors, and lawyers. The farmers began to sell their produce, milk, and animals. In our area, horses were prized for fun and horse shows were common.

In the eighties, while baseball and basketball were our major sports, football began to "take over." The Volunteer games at UT were well attended as were the Lady Vols. Johnny Majors and Pat Summit were common names. We were able to go to the Tennessee Theater for movies and the Clarence Brown Theater for plays. Sometimes Broadway Shows, such as the ones that had only been available in Nashville, came to Knoxville.

Knoxville and the surrounding area began to grow and offer more opportunities in the nineties. Peyton Manning became a common name! Young men, graduating from High School, were getting scholarships to play ball. Others were beginning to get careers that had been unknown for many years. What were those common things named computers? They no longer sat like big monsters on the floor. One could actually have PC's or even tablets to carry around.

In 2000, disaster loomed! All of the world's computers were predicted to crash!!!! What were we to do? As with many predictions and forecasts of doom, it didn't happen! The world survived and all knowledge was not forgotten or destroyed!

I'm nearing ninety. Though it is getting quite wrinkled, I'm still in the skin that God gave me. I keep thinking that God must still have something for me to do or I would not still be here. What wonders are we still to see? We just sent another crew into space. No longer is the moon considered to be our destination. It might be Mars, Jupiter, or others unknown. The military has finally acknowledged that there really are UFOs being spotted "up there." What kind of beings are in them?

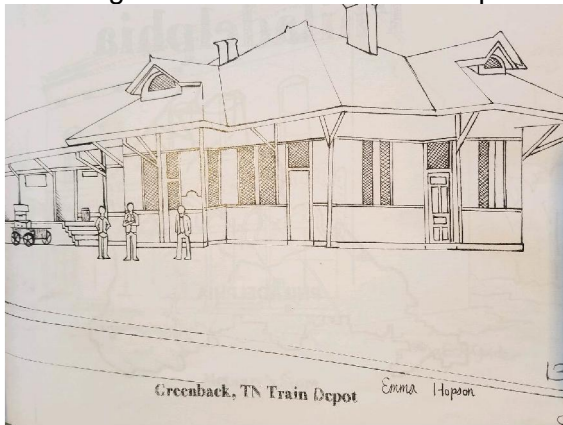
Will we still become that "Shining City on the Hill" as Ronald Reagan saw us? Can we come together in "Peace and Love" as Martin Luther King asked us to do?

Carolyn Melton Peck

Inspired by a project of Joe Spence and Nancy Majors while teaching at Lenoir City High School in 1979, the Sesquicentennial Committee decided to have a second edition of the Historic Loudon County Coloring Book in honor of our county's 150th birthday. In the first book all artwork was by Jessie Marley who honored his past by dedicating his drawings to his grandfather, Clyde Chrisman.

For the second edition the committee worked with Kris Peterson, the Digital Art and Design Teacher of Loudon County High School. Kris reached out to all schools in the county for updated art work. When we place articles in the 2020 time capsule, a copy of the coloring book autographed by as many of the contributors as possible will be included. This will include assisting teachers, artists, and the sesquicentennial committee.

Here's Greenback School's Emma Hopson's rendering of the Greenback Train Depot.



YOU TUBE'S LOUDON COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

will furnish hours of entertaining interviews. To date there are 57 postings with more popping up every week due to the diligence of Loudon County Historian Darrell Tuck. Darrell asked the questions while videographers, Emily Cardwell Deaton and Kate Clabough, filmed. Our own Bobby Anderson is featured in 3 videos. You can also see tours of the Lenoir City and Greenback Museums. It's a great way to learn history: right out of the mouths of people who experienced those times or listened carefully to their elders who did.

GraveConcerns – WHAT DO DAR RECORDS, SHIRLEY HALL, VIOLET WOLFE, AND CAPTAIN ROBERT WEAR HAVE IN COMMON??



When GbHS President Shirley Hall gave GraveConcerns custody of the DAR applications from the Coytee Chapter, Anita was elated when the first application she pulled out, dated 1985, was that of former first grade teacher, Mrs. Wolfe. Violet Kirkpatrick Wolfe taught for 28 years and had hundreds of Greenback children in her classes, so of course, this was of interest. At first glance, the name Wear jumped right off the page! Can it be?! Can it?? Grace Reid Wear, Frank Decatur Wear, John Milburn Wear, Isaac Decatur Wear.....and there they were....Robert Wear and Lucretia Thomas Wear! It was Captain Robert Wear, the broken stone we had located under a tree and 3 inches of soil. His father was Sevier County's Col. Samuel Wear, and his mother was Mary Thompson Wear. They're all on Mrs. Wolfe's straight-line application!!! Captain Robert is her grandfather x3, and Col. Samuel Wear, her grandfather x4. Wow! We called her to confirm this discovery and asked if she would like to visit the Wear Cemetery. Of course, she would! After a hot hike around a wheat field leased from TVA, famous relatives were united! Just look at them! Love that smile! . . . And that's why we restore pioneer cemeteries!

Lanny & Anita King McCollum

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Stamp

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UPCOMING EVENTS by Cindy

July 4, 2020 – The town of Greenback will celebrate the 4th of July in a big way! At a new time, 2:00 P.M., the parade will have floats, tractors, antique cars and trucks, and plenty of candy. The depot will feature a craft show from 1:00-3:00.

July 11, 2020 – The Greenback Historical Society’s Quarterly Meeting. We will gather at 2:00 P.M. for an ice cream social (no competition this year) under the trees at Craig’s Chapel Church, 3630 Craig’s Chapel Road. Get those award-winning ice cream recipes out and bring a cooler to share. Also, bring chairs for those in your party. You may want to tour the cemetery or look at the many pictures of former Craig’s Chapel members in the fellowship hall. A business meeting will begin at 2:30, then Rev. Dr. Willa Estell will address the group at 3:30 on the topic “The Past and Future Plans of Craig’s Chapel AME Zion Church.” Dr. Estell is the Presiding Elder of the Maryville District of AME Zion Churches and oversees eight area churches. Additionally, she is active in a variety of community organizations, most notably, she organized Blount County United: We Are Stronger Together. Due to declining membership, regular services at Craig’s Chapel had not been held for about two years. Dr. Estell was contacted by a newly formed Greenback church to use the building as their meeting location. An excellent article describing the faith journey that ended in this shared historic church appeared in the June 20, 2020 edition of the Daily Times. Thanks to Dr. Estell and Stevie Evans of the New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church for allowing us to meet at the chapel for our July Quarterly Meeting.

July 2020 – The Greenback Heritage Museum’s limited reopening will be on Tuesdays from 10:00 to 2:00 P.M. and by appointment. To schedule a special time, text 865.789.0026 or 615.533.9587.

October 25, 2020 – The Combined Membership/Quarterly Meeting of the Loudon County Historical Society and the Greenback Historical Society is scheduled for October, so that we can celebrate the Sesquicentennial together. We will meet Sunday afternoon, October 25th at 3:00 P.M. at the Greenback Museum for the walking tour. We’re really going to walk!!!