

CCHGA Bytes

April 2007

R.D. Huffines - President
Earl Nixon - Vice President
Judy Mayo - Secretary
Betty Cannon - Treasurer

The annual **Spring Social** will be held **April 26 at 6:30** at the Cheatham County Public Library.

Amber Barfield, a staff member of the Tennessee State Library and Archives, will be the guest speaker. She will give a presentation on **Identifying and Dating Photographs**.

Amber is a native of Florence, Alabama, came to Nashville for college in 1993. She graduated from Lipscomb University in 1997 with a degree in History and Communication and a minor in Journalism. Amber completed her M.A. in History, with the emphasis in Public History, at Middle Tennessee State University. She has worked at the Metropolitan Nashville/Davidson County Archives, as the Historian at the Parthenon in Nashville, taught Public History at Lipscomb University, and is currently the Conservator at the Tennessee State Library and Archives.

Contact Judy Mayo, Lisa Walker or go by the CCHGA office. **Tickets** are **\$12.00** each for the catered meal. Tickets must be purchased by April 20, 2007.

Anyone who would like to donate an item to be given away as a door prize at the CCHGA Spring Social and Dinner may bring it the night of the dinner, April 26. If you would like to donate but are unable to attend, please contact Lisa Walker or the CCHGA office.



Harpeth River Bridge, Kingston Springs; March 10, 2007

submitted by Rick Hollis

Local historians Rick Hollis and Joe Bailey led a guided driving tour along Tennessee's Civil War Railroad, beginning at the Harpeth River railroad bridge in Kingston Springs. Tour stops included an earthen fort at Craggie Hope, White Bluff, a skirmish site at Laurel Furnace (behind Montgomery Bell State Park), Burns, and Dickson.

Prior to the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, the railroad was completed to a point beyond Kingston Springs. Because of successful guerilla warfare executed by civilian Confederate sympathizers, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton ordered the completion of the railroad from Kingston Springs to the Tennessee River in 1863.

The 12th and 13th US Colored Troops Regiment under the direction of General William S. Rosecrans constructed the railroad.

Operational by May 1864, this stretch of railroad had a dramatic impact on the ultimate fight that brought the Civil War to an end, Sherman's Atlanta campaign. Reinforcing its value, Union General William T. Sherman said after the War that he owed his success in the Atlanta campaign largely to the completion of the railroad from Johnsonville to Nashville. In retrospect, General Sherman stated that the "the Atlanta Campaign was an impossibility without these railroads."

For more information, please contact Rick Hollis at 812.2648 or rick.hollis@ghertner.com. The tour was co-sponsored by the Christopher Strong Chapter Sons of the American Revolution and Captain W. H. McCauley Camp 260 Sons of Confederate Veterans.

Happy Birthday
CCHGA, founded
17 April 1994!



David Crockett and Priscilla Hunter Council of Cheatham County – *submitted by Greg Poole*

PRISCILLA HUNTER (MARY "POLLY" GUPTON, ABNER GUPTON, JAMES GUPTON, STEPHEN GUPTON, STEPHEN GUPTON, WILLIAM GUPTON) was born January 15, 1822, and died May 09, 1906 in Cheatham County, Tennessee. She married DAVID CROCKETT COUNCIL February 15, 1841 in Montgomery County, Tennessee, son of DUDLEY COUNCIL and ELIZABETH KNIGHT. She was buried Council Cemetery, Bethel, Cheatham County.

Notes for PRISCILLA HUNTER:

1842 Know all men by these presents that we Abner Gupton, George McCauley, John Teasley, L.J. Pardue and John Pardue, all of Montgomery Cty. are bound for the sum of \$6000 in trust for the benefit of Priscilla, Juda, Mary, Winnie and Thomas Hunter, minor heirs of Thomas Hunter, deceased. *Montgomery Cty. Court Minutes, July Term 1842.*

1906 Mrs. Priscilla Council, who died the ninth of May in the 16th District of Cheatham County was a remarkable woman in a good many respects. Born on the 15th of January, 1812, she had passed the 84th milestone in Life's journey. She was the mother of 14 children, 11 of who are living. In addition to these her immediate descendents include 170 grandchildren, great grandchildren and great-great grandchildren. She lived and died on the land upon which she was born. She had enjoyed good health all through life and often walked a distance of a mile to church, being a devoted Methodist. Within the year just preceding her death she had pieced five quilts and knit a carpet. She said she had never bought but one paper of pins in her life. Thirty years ago, it is said, her husband conceived a notion to move to West Tennessee, she refused to consider the proposition; he thought, however, that she would change her mind when the time came. So he sold everything but beds and began to load up his wagons. All her children climbed in then her husband remarked: 'We have everything in but you and you will starve here. Will you not go?'

'Well,' she said. 'I shall miss you, but you cannot take this spring. I shall remain with that. I shall have good water at least.' And she kept her word. It is said that her husband remarked to the children before going very far that if he had known she wouldn't go he never would have started. Her oldest daughter subsequently returned and lived with her until she died. Her husband married in West Tennessee and had six children by his second marriage. Mrs. Council visited her children three times. On her second visit to West Tennessee her husband died and she attended the funeral. The people who knew these things, her neighbors, sympathized with her, and always treated her kindly. She never in all the years went to bed hungry.

Clarksville Leaf Chronicle, May 12, 1906

Notes for DAVID CROCKETT COUNCIL:

1848 Abner Hunter to David Council. December 21, 1848. \$210, 35 acres in Montgomery County, District 11 being part of land that fell to me by the death of my father, Thomas Hunter, deceased. Wit.: Abner Gupton, Mary Hunter, R.T. Gupton. Reg. August 29, 1850. Montgomery Cty. Deed Book Z, pg. 568-569.

1856 Cheatham County Court Minutes, September Term 1856, pg. 42. It is ordered by the court that Gideon Nicholson oversee the road leading from Gupton's old mill to Newton Warehouse and with all the hands that formerly worked on said road, and keep the same in repair.

1858 Cheatham County Court Minutes, Vol. A, pg. 184. July Term 1858. It is ordered by the Court that Abner Hunter oversee the Lake Road beginning at the lake and work the same to where it intersects the old Clarksville Road near Abner Gupton's and that he with the following hands: Abner Gupton's hands; Thomas D. Hunter's hands; Bony Pool; Abner Hunter; David Council

1858 Cheatham County Court Minutes, Vol. A, pg. 42. October Term 1858.

State of Tennessee vs David Council. Obstructing public road. Ordered by the court that the defendant pay a fine of \$2.50 and the cost of this prosecution.

1858 Cheatham County Court Minutes, Vol. A, pg. 237. November Term 1858. On motion it is ordered by the Court that Abner Hunter oversee the Lake Road, beginning at the lake and work to where it intersects the old Clarksville Road near Abner Gupton and that he with the following named hands: Thomas D. Hunter and hands; Bony Pool, Abner Hunter, David Council and hands; Obediah Knox and Ben Batts.

Annual Spring Social

April 26, 2007

***6:30 p.m. Cheatham County Public Library
in Ashland City, TN***

June Program

**June 28 – LinnAnn Welch – Harpeth River Sites,
Mound Bottom, Pre-History**

LinnAnn is a 1989 Harpeth High School graduate (valedictorian of her class) and a state biologist.

1860 1860 Cheatham Co. Census, Dist. 6, HH # 3488

3488 David Council 39 years old; farming; born TN
 3489 P. Council (female); 38 years old; born TN
 3490 T.D. Council (male); 17 years old; farm hand; TN
 3491 N.J. Council (female); 15 years old; born TN
 3492 James A. Council 13 years old; born TN
 3493 D.C. Council (male); 11 years old; born TN
 3494 P.W. Council (female); 9 years old; born TN
 3495 William D. Council 7 years old; born TN
 3496 M.C. Council (female); 5 years old; born TN
 3497 S.L. Council (female); 4 years old; born TN
 3498 J. Council (female) 11/12 months old; born TN

1870 1870 Cheatham County Census, Dist. 6, HH # 8

David Council 49 years old; born Tennessee
 Priscilla Council 48 years old; born TN
 James A. Council 23 years old; school teacher; TN
 D.C. Council (male); 22 years old; born TN
 Nancy Ventress 25 years old; born TN
 Martha Ventress 5 years old; born TN
 James Ventress 2 years old; born TN
 William D. Council 20 years old; born TN
 Louisa Council 15 years old; born TN
 Judah Council 13 years old; born TN
 Henrietta Council 11 years old; born TN
 Rebecca Council 9 years old
 Babe Council 3 years old; born TN

Children of PRISCILLA HUNTER and DAVID COUNCIL are:

i. MARY ELIZABETH⁸ COUNCIL, b. December 06, 1841, Montgomery County, Tennessee. She married ED. G. CLIFTON May 16, 1859.

Children of MARY COUNCIL and ED. CLIFTON are:

- i. JAMES R.⁹ CLIFTON, b. Abt. 1860.
- ii. ANN CLIFTON, b. Abt. 1865.
- iii. MARY CLIFTON, b. Abt. 1868.

- iv. JOSEPH F. CLIFTON, b. Abt. 1870.
- v. CHARLEY L. CLIFTON, b. Abt. 1875.
- vi. WILLIAM OTHO CLIFTON, b. Abt. 1878

ii. THOMAS DUDLEY COUNCIL, b. March 10, 1843, Montgomery County, Tennessee; d. June 29, 1911. He married SARAH.

Notes for THOMAS DUDLEY COUNCIL:

1870 1870 Cheatham County Census, District 6, HH # 9
 Thomas Council 27 years old; born Tennessee
 Sarah Council 27 years old; born TN
 William Council 3 years old; born TN
 Elizabeth Council 1 year old; born TN

Children of THOMAS COUNCIL and SARAH are:

i. WILLIAM⁹ COUNCIL, b. Abt. 1867.

ii. ELIZABETH COUNCIL, b. Abt. 1869.

iii NANCY J. COUNCIL, b. August 05, 1844, Montgomery County, Tennessee; d. September 01, 1940. She married (1) THOMAS W. "YANKEE TOM" HUNTER She married (2) THOMAS R. VENTRESS August 13, 1864. Buried Williams-Shearon Cemetery, Cheap Hill, Cheatham County.

Notes for NANCY J. COUNCIL:

1870 Cheatham County Census, District 6, HH # 8
 David Council 49 years old; born Tennessee
 Priscilla Council 48 years old; born TN
 James A. Council 23 yrs old; school teacher; TN
 D.C. Council (male); 22 years old; born TN
 Nancy Ventress 25 years old; born TN
 Martha Ventress 5 years old; born TN
 James Ventress 2 years old; born TN

William D. Council 20 years old; born TN
 Louisa Council 15 years old; born TN
 Judah Council 13 years old; born TN
 Henrietta Council 11 years old; born TN
 Rebecca Council 9 years old
 Babe Council 3 years old; born TN

Children of NANCY COUNCIL and THOMAS HUNTER are:

- i. ADAM⁹ HUNTER. | ii. MARY RUTH HUNTER.

Children of NANCY COUNCIL and THOMAS VENTRESS are:

- iii. MARTHA⁹ VENTRESS, b. Abt. 1865. | iv. JAMES VENTRESS, b. Abt. 1868.

iv. JAMES A. COUNCIL⁴⁴, b. March 06, 1846, Montgomery County, Tennessee. Was a schoolteacher; went to California

v. DAVID CROCKETT COUNCIL⁴⁴, b. March 16, 1849, Montgomery County, Tennessee; d. February 21, 1918, Rives, Tennessee; m. NANNIE J. FELTS. Buried West Hill Cemetery, Rives, Tennessee.

vi. PRISCILLA WINIFRED COUNCIL, b. November 26, 1849, Montgomery County, Tennessee; d. February 13, 1935, Cheatham County, Tennessee.

She married ELIAS WALTON MURPHY¹⁸², son of ELIAS MURPHY and NANCY WILLIAMS. ELIAS Walton Murphy drown in the Cumberland River.

Children of PRISCILLA COUNCIL and ELIAS MURPHY are:

i. CALVIN T.⁹ MURPHY, b. January 21, 1890; d. February 15, 1891, Cheatham County, Tennessee. Buried Council Cemetery, Bethel, Cheatham County

ii. CORA LEE MURPHY, b. April 02, 1888; d. April 10, 1907; m. ROBERT BENJAMIN HUNT, Abt. 1906. Buried Council Cemetery, Bethel, Cheatham County.

iii. NANNIE MURPHY, b. January 25, 1877; d. March 06, 1963; m. JESSE G. PAGE. Buried Council Cemetery, Bethel, Cheatham County

vii. WILLIAM DREW COUNCIL, b. January 27, 1851, Montgomery County, Tennessee; m. MOLLIE. Lived in Dallas, Texas.

viii. LOUISA COUNCIL, b. Abt. 1855.

ix. JOSEPH L. COUNCIL, b. June 07, 1857.

x. JUDAH T. COUNCIL, b. August 20, 1859, Cheatham County, Tennessee; d. Abt. 1923, Obion County, Tennessee; m. J. FRANK RIVES. Buried Antioch Cemetery, Obion County, Tennessee.

xi. HENRIETTA COUNCIL⁴⁴, b. June 03, 1861, Cheatham County, Tennessee; m. CAL OSBORNE, December 19, 1882. Living in Louisiana at time of death of mother in 1906. Buried at Sanders' Chapel, Obion County, Tennessee.

xii. REBECCA COUNCIL, b. April 20, 1863, Cheatham County, Tennessee; m. JOHN OSBORNE, Abt. December 1883. Lived in Birmingham, Alabama.

xiii. PERTHENIA COUNCIL, b. November 19, 1867; d. Abt. 1959; m. SCOTT GREEN.

THE PEOPLE OF MOUND BOTTOM: THE MISSISSIPPIAN CULTURE *submitted by Greg Poole*

Archaeologists have found that Mound Bottom is a palisade civic/ceremonial center occupied from around 900 AD to 1300 AD give or take 100 years or so. The site is also part of a larger area, known as the Mound Bottom Archaeological complex, which includes another mound center 1 1/2 miles upriver and an interconnecting trail.

Around 750 AD to 800 AD life our Harpeth Valley was about to change. Previous to this time, the natural resources of this area had been utilized by Native peoples of earlier cultural periods. The nomadic big game hunters of the Paleo culture (15,000 BC - 8,000 BC), the hunter-gatherers of the Archaic culture (8,000 BC - 500 BC) and the hunter-gatherer-farmers of the Woodland culture (500 BC - 800 AD). all came through this alley to hunt and to gather nuts, fruits and other wild plants. In some areas temporary camps and small seasonal settlements were established.

During the 8th century AD, the people of the Harpeth Valley were about to undergo more culture change in a shorter time than any other period in our prehistory. It was these late Woodland People whose descendants were to become the Mississippian People. The catalyst that initiated such rapid, intense cultural change was the introduction of corn agriculture. The significance of corn agriculture to our prehistoric peoples could be compared to the discovery of electricity to our present technological culture.

Current research indicates that the rudiments of agriculture and the domestication of certain indigenous plants goes back to the late Archaic period, being further refined during the ensuing Woodland Period. With a preexisting agricultural system in place, the introduction of corn allowed for a surplus crop which further hastened the cultural evolution from the Woodland to the Mississippian Period.

The Mississippian culture is thought to have arisen in the American Bottoms area of the Mississippi Valley near St. Louis, around the same time corn agriculture appeared in the area. The ideas, art forms, and life ways which comprised this culture spread throughout the Mississippi Valley and major tributaries quite rapidly. The size of the Mississippian cultural sphere is about the size of Western Europe. Archaeologists have defined three major areas of distinct but interrelated development: the central Mississippi or American Bottoms with Cahokia as its center; the Caddoan area of Eastern Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana with Spiro as its center; and the Tennessee-Cumberland area with many large sites, one of which is Mound Bottom.

The People who lived at Mound Bottom and throughout the Valley lived in similar ways to other groups of people with the cultural sphere. After the introduction of core agriculture, the surplus crop allowed for a decrease in time spent on food procurement which in turn facilitated social and cultural evolution. The social structure that evolved is called chiefdom by anthropologists. The chiefdom was headed by a "priest-elite" or "shaman-chief," who influenced as a leader widespread farming populations. He also directed the construction of monumental public works such as the mound/plaza configuration and palisades, regulated trade, and conducted warfare. Current research suggests that the range of influence from Mound Bottom may have stretched from the Cumberland River up the Harpeth to somewhere past the Bellevue area. The next mound center upriver from Mound Bottom is Old Town on Natchez Trace Road in Williamson County.

In addition to the leader of the chiefdom, notable warriors and other community officials held positions of influence within the society and formed the social nucleus of the mound centers. The majority of the population were farmers, some living within the walls of the town and others living in secondary villages, family based hamlets= and isolated farmsteads for miles up and down the river valley. It's believed that the people in these outlying settlements came to the large mound centers for seasonal ceremonies and other functions of social importance.

The Mound Bottom people lived in square-to-rectangular wattle and daub houses usually averaging 4 meters in length. These houses were constructed by placing large upright timbers in the ground and weaving smaller branches or sometimes cane between them (wattle). A clay plaster was then applied to the walls (daub), and the whole was covered with a thatch roof. A circular-to-elliptical structure was found during the 1974-75 excavations, commonly called a beehive style house. In the Tennessee area this usually represents a later style of architecture. The radiocarbon date for House #14 at Mound Bottom was found to be 1320 AD, plus or minus 75 years - the terminal date for Mound Bottom occupation.

The houses within the walls of the town were laid out in rows. This was noted for the Pack site in the field notes for the 1936-3 excavations and demonstrated at Mound Bottom, where a row of houses was excavated to the west of the platform mound during the 1974-75 field work.

In addition to corn as a staple of the Mississippian diet, other cultivated plant foods included squash, gourds, sunflower, sump weed, and the common bean. Although agriculture became more intense, the people continued to utilize, to a large degree, local wild plant foods including lambs quarter, passion flower (which happens to be the Tennessee state wildflower), knotweed, may grass, nuts, berries, and so on. Plants were collected for use as medicine also, and are far more numerous than can be listed here.

Hunting also remained an important activity and food source for the Mound Bottom people. The products of the hunt were not only used for food, but also supplied the raw materials for tools, clothing, and adornments. Data from the 1974-75 faunal remains shows that the remains of white tail deer were the most numerous, comprising 95% of the meat yield. Turkey was also an important meat source, second only to deer. A small enclosure attached to a house was found at Mound Bottom and has been identified as possibly being a turkey pen. To quote archaeology Dr. Kevin Smith, "Certainly a live turkey in a pen would be worth a deer in the bush..."

Other hunted species included grey squirrel, fox squirrel, rabbit, and raccoon, as well as ducks, geese and pigeons. Of the reptiles, box turtle was the most represented utilized as a food source and supplying the material for rattles and other adornments.

It appears Black bear and elk may have held a special place in the Mound Bottom diet. The remains of both were found only in the area to the west of the large mound which is presumed to be an area of craft specialization and/or an area reserved for the leaders.

Fishing was also a source of food but less important than agriculture and hunting, which provided the dietary mainstay. Drum, red horse, catfish, and bass were all used, as well as shellfish for food and the crushed shell used as temper in pottery. An archaeological survey of the area conducted in the 1970s identified the remains of a stone "fish trap" in the Harpeth River close to the towns.

Craft specialization was also an aspect of Mississippian culture that reached previously unattained heights and relied on the extensive trail networks that had developed over hundreds of years. By the late Mississippian era pottery, shell engraving, stone carving, copper work, and other art forms reached a level of refinement that in some areas remains unparalleled today. Soapstone, marine shell, mica, copper, flint, and pottery pieces all were traded extensively and usually associated with the leadership.

What became of these people has been a burning question since the remains of this culture was first discovered. Many years ago wild theories were put forth to explain the emergence and disappearance of these people. The culture than was called the Mound Builders and was generally viewed as a mysterious race of people who invaded this area, built large earthen works, and then abruptly abandoned their large towns and disappeared. A common theme in the disappearance usually included warfare and annihilation with conflict on the level that would have been like a world war to these people. These theories have been disproved by modern archaeology.

Current archaeological and anthropological thought now recognizes a probable multitude of factors which lead to the abandonment of the large centers. As the local populations grew, they may have overextended the carrying capacity of the environment. Hence, the game may have become depleted and the local wood supply diminished, requiring longer trips to procure the same. Although there are no published population estimates for the Mound Bottom area, it must have numbered in the thousands, having a possible density 5 to 10 times greater than today's population in the valley. The thousands that lived in and around the mound center occupied this valley for some 400-600 years, roughly half the time we have been here.

Soil exhaustion may also be another factor after hundreds of years of intensive corn agriculture. Climatic change, not favorable to agriculture has also been suggested. A period of cold known as the Little Ice Age occurred around 1250 AD when the mean temperature dropped by 1 degree Celsius resulting in a drop in the average temperature by 34 degrees. All of these factors could have resulted in a diminishing population which would have in turn weakened the social system until the chiefdom failed and the site was eventually abandoned. Current research indicates that in Late Mississippian times the population grew in the area of the outer Nashville Basin where soil types are suited to agriculture. Perhaps the last of the Mound Bottom people left this area and helped to form new towns in this area. *From The Advocate February 7, 1998*

CCHGA BYTES

Cheatham County Historical and Genealogical Association

P. O. Box 703, Ashland City, TN 37015

Phone 615-792-3623

cchga007@bellsouth.net

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~tncchga/>

***Spring Social April 26, 2007
6:30 p.m. at Cheatham County Public Library in Ashland City. TN***