

# CCHGA BYTES

The Newsletter of the Cheatham County Historical & Genealogical Association

**CCHGA Office and  
Cheatham County  
Museum**

Call the CCHGA office  
615.792.3623 or email  
[cheathamcountyhistory@  
gmail.com](mailto:cheathamcountyhistory@gmail.com) and leave a  
message if needed!

CCHGA newsletters are  
snail mailed or emailed to  
membership in March,  
June, September and  
December.

If you would like your  
newsletter sent to you in  
an email, notify us by  
sending an email to  
[cheathamcountyhistory@  
gmail.com](mailto:cheathamcountyhistory@gmail.com).

Our past newsletters  
are located at [https://  
cheathamcountyhistory.  
weebly.com/cchga-  
newsletters.html](https://cheathamcountyhistory.weebly.com/cchga-newsletters.html)

**Office Hours**

Volunteers staff the  
office, call 615.792.3623  
to make sure someone is  
there!

M, T, W-10:00-200  
Th-1:00-4:00

CCHGA Members,

The Braxton Lee Homestead property is again up for sale. The future of the property remains undetermined. CCHGA will continue to support saving the local historical site.

With that news, we continue to look for a place to move CCHGA and the Cheatham County Museum in the future. The office and general museum are open with no disruption given our planning, organizing and packing.

*Lisa E. Walker*  
*CCHGA President*  
*Cheatham County Historian*

**CCHGA Notes:**

- If you would like to assist in the office and museum in 2022 or help with the quarterly CCHGA newsletter, please email [cheathamcountyhistory@gmail.com](mailto:cheathamcountyhistory@gmail.com).
- If you have had a change in email address or physical address, please call the office at 615.792.3623 or email [cheathamcountyhistory@gmail.com](mailto:cheathamcountyhistory@gmail.com) so we can update our records.

**2022 CCHGA Officers**

- Lisa Walker, President
- Nicole Binkley, Vice President
- Dreama Davidson, Treasurer
- Lisa Walker, Assistant Treasurer
- Rosemary Klein, Secretary
- Jane Crisp, Assistant Secretary
- Clayton Walden, Member At Large

**CCHGA 2022 Meeting and Other Dates**

- March 19 from 10-1 Museum Work Day
- April 14 @ 6:30 Cheatham County Public Library/Guest Speaker Graham Perry - Tennessee Historical Commission
- May 14 @ 6:30 McCullough Community Room
- June 9 @ 6:30 McCullough Community Room
- July 14 @ 6:30 Site TBD/Guest Speaker
- August 11 @ 6:30 McCullough Community Room

- September 8 @ 6:30 McCullough Community Room
- October 13 @ 6:30 McCullough Community Room/Guest Speaker
- November 10 @ 6:30 McCullough Community Room
- November 22 Bake Sale @ Sycamore Square
- December - No Meeting

**Graham Perry, ABD - Historic Cemetery Preservationist Specialist**  
**Guest Speaker**  
**April 14, 2022**  
**Cheatham County Public Library @ 6:30 pm**

**UNDERSTANDING TENNESSEE CEMETERY LAW**

Everyone is invited to attend the Cheatham County Historical and Genealogical meeting on April 14 at 6:30 in the Cheatham County Pubic Library Community Room. Graham Perry, Historic Cemetery Preservation Specialist at the Tennessee Historical Commission, will present *Understanding Tennessee Cemetery Law*, a program designed to educate the public about legal aspects pertaining to historic cemeteries throughout the state. Mr. Perry discusses specific Tennessee Codes from chapters 46 and 39 which lay out duties of landowners, penalties for cemetery desecration and what to do when it occurs, and options for cemetery relocation. In addition, visitation and protection precedents set by the *Walter Hines v. State of Tennessee Decision (1911)* will be covered (especially since many believe that since it is more than 100 years old it is no longer valid—It is)! Although Perry is not an attorney, his primary goal is to help orient the public to facts about Tennessee cemetery law while dispelling common myths.

Graham Perry, Historic Cemetery Preservation Specialist at the Tennessee Historical Commission, is a native Tennessean, with roots in both Nashville and Memphis. He has a BBA from Belmont University, an MA in African American History from the University of Memphis, an MA in Education from Christian Brothers University, and had completed PhD coursework at the University of Memphis prior to returning to Nashville in 2008 to serve as the Curator of Social History at the Tennessee State Museum. At the museum, he curated several award-winning exhibits, including *We Shall Not Be Moved: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Tennessee's Civil Rights Sit-ins* (2010), *Tennessee's Intentional Communities: Examining The Farm, Nashoba, Rugby and Ruskin* (2014), *I Have a Voice: African-American Music in Tennessee* (2017), *State of Sound: Tennessee's Musical Heritage* (2018), and *Tennessee Transforms: 1945-present* (2018), the latter of which is on permanent display at the new Tennessee State Museum. Since 2019, he has been developing THC's Historic Cemetery Preservation Program, the purpose of which is to provide information, education and other resources to help facilitate historic cemetery preservation throughout the state.

**COME HELP OUT! MUSEUM WORK DAY MARCH 19 from 10:00 - 1:00!**

The CCHGA Membership Form may be downloaded from <https://cheathamcountyhistory.weebly.com>

The Nashville American (Nashville, Tennessee) Tue, July 14, 1896

### PEGRAM

#### **Zealous Lady Centennial Commissioners - Other Mention.**

Pegram, July 13. - (Special.) - Mrs. E. C. Lewis and Mrs. A. P. Jackson, of Sycamore, rode twenty-five miles to attend the meeting of the Cheatham County Board of Lady Commissioners for the Centennial, held at Mrs. G. W. Pegram's. The meeting was well attended, and good work done. Mrs. Lewis remaining several days and organizing committees to help the Commissioners. She was appointed Secretary, already being the Treasurer. The ladies have \$30 now in the Treasury, and a large quantity of produce not yet sold. The ladies are very much interested in their kitchen model, and are working faithfully to make it a success.

Prof. John Smith, of Pasquo, teaches the summer session of the Pegram school, which began to-day.

Miss Florence Kellam, Dr. Jack Greer and Miss Mannie Johnson have returned from Ashland City, where they have been attending the Teachers' Institute. Miss Florence is to teach at Kingston Springs.

Dr. Jack Greer began the South Harpeth school to-day.

Felix Roen, James Kellam and Mr. Henderson, of Nashville, spent the afternoon at Pegrams yesterday.

A party of five postal service men came out to Pegram's Monday to fish. The heavy rain prevented them from catching anything but a ride and supper.

Miss Ella Hale, of Pegram's, and Prof. Joe Dunn, of Dog Creek, were married in Nashville July 6.



The Tennessean (Nashville, Tennessee) Tue, Apr 27, 1897

### **N. A. C. Wheelmen.**

#### **The Pace to Ashland City Was Not so Warm Last Sunday and the Return Not so Dry.**

The run scheduled for the N. A. C. Wheelmen Sunday was Ashland City, and, notwithstanding, the threatening aspect of the weather, the boys started promptly at 8:15, the following men composing the crowd: Lieut. Tom Levy, Lieut. John March, Hucle Meadors, Nat Griffin, Joe Feinberg, Roy Sims and W. R. Herstein. The pace to Ashland City was easy and regular, absolutely no scorching being indulged in. A stop was made at Pegram's, and the boys "tanked up" on sulphur water.

The hotel at Ashland City has the reputation among the N. A. C. Wheelmen of furnishing the best dinner they get on any of their runs, and Sunday was no exception. The boys had left at home everything that was not absolutely necessary, but at dinner time it developed that everyone had brought his appetite along, and what was left over after dinner was far from being "a plenty."

On the way out a slight rain overtook the crowd, but it only served to lay the dust and put the road in better condition. Owing to the ominous look of the clouds, an early start was made for home, and when Dry Fork was reached, two miles from Ashland City, a very severe rainstorm was encountered. The boys took refuge under the thick cedar trees, but every man was drenched. The rain lasted for about half an hour, and at the end of it, despite the muddy condition of the road, a fresh start was made.

After going about five miles, rain again interfered, and the men took refuge in a large barn until this was over. Still undaunted, and with that spirit of determination characteristic of the N. A. C. Wheelmen, they decided not to appeal to the neighboring farmers for transportation to the city.

Another start was made, and six miles more pulled off, when the severest rainstorm of all was encountered, lasting nearly an hour. The rain left the roads in a very liquid condition, but as soon as the rain ceased the run was renewed, and the boys reached the club-rooms in a very muddy and thankful condition. A good shower bath soon put them back into shape, and they regret that to-day isn't next Sunday, so that they may take the scheduled run to Murfreesboro. **RAINMAKER.**



### **PEGRAM STATION - The Tennessean, September 28, 1896**

PEGRAM STATION, Tenn., Sept. 27. - (special.) - The first entertainment to raise money for the Woman's Centennial building, given in South Harpeth, was managed by Misses Maggie Thornton and Carrie Pegram, Friday. It was a success financially and socially.

Mrs. G. W. Pegram has returned from a month's stay at Green Brier.



### **Farm for Sale**

On Thursday, October 28, 1858, I will sale to the highest bidder, a Farm containing about 880 acres, known as the Henrietta Hudgens tract of land, situated in Cheatham County, 25 miles from Nashville, and lying on the big Harpeth River, with all the improvements of said land, consisting of a house suitable for a stage stand or a tavern, with all the outhouses necessary for carrying on said business. The said land is heavily timbered with poplar and other valuable timber, and contains several fine and never falling springs; this land is situated immediately on the Charlotte Pike, and consequently of easy access to Nashville. Terms made known on day of sale. Sale to come off on the premises at 12 o'clock; Will be sold in a body, or in lots to suit purchasers, as may be desired. For further particulars require of L. T. Hardy auctioneer; Office 42 P. S. *Nashville Republican, Thursday, November, 1858*

### **Fizer to deliver 'State of County'**

PLEASANT VIEW-The Cheatham County Chamber of Commerce will feature County Executive Linda Fizer, who will deliver the annual State of the County Address at the November membership meeting.

The meeting is scheduled to be held Nov. 19 at the Pleasant View Elementary School, 2625 Church Street in Pleasant View. The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. and will end at approximately 8:30 p.m.

A dutch-treat dinner will be prepared by the Ladies' Auxiliary for \$6 per person. The cost for non-members will be \$10.

Those who attend the meeting can expect a follow-up on last year's address outlining goals and objectives for the next fiscal year.

Fizer will also be introducing Mayor David Davis and Alderman Don Worrel and Morris Bidwell of the newly incorporated City of Pleasant View.

There will not be a meeting for the month of December. Anyone needing more information about this meeting may call the Cheatham County Chamber of Commerce at (615)792-6722 Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 4:30.

Cheatham County Memories: Take Me Back to the Mercantile  
Lisa Walker

The roll-top desk was the mainstay of an office at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th. With all of its cubby-holes, nooks and compartments, its use was to store all types of documents and office items. It was the center of an employee's work space just as computers are today.

Up until 1985, when you walked into the historic Farmers Mercantile building in Ashland City (now Sheye Girl Coffee), the aisle would lead you past small household items, building materials, and paint to the manager's office area with a large roll-top desk. The exact time is not known when the roll-top desk found a home with the Farmers Mercantile, a business which was active for 63 years.

The oak desk was placed on the first floor of that building and was the hub of many sales transactions, tall tales, and memories which crossed its worn surface. Sidney, Bunny, Howard, Shag, Glen, and Mouse were just a few of the men who probably propped their feet up on the desk on slow business days in Ashland City.

When the Farmers Mercantile shut its doors in 1985, a song was written which happened to mention this one piece of furniture among the many memories.

When the Mercantile closed, the desk was sold to Jone LaCrosse, owner of Williams Jewelry store which was located across Main Street from the Mercantile. Upon Jone's death, the desk found its way up "Water Tank Hill" to Valley View Drive to the home of her stepson Chris LaCrosse. For many years the desk held long time Ashland City Council member LaCrosse's council papers and budget sheets, always handy calculator and probably a computer. Upon his death in 2016, per his wishes, his wife Rebecca donated the old desk to the Cheatham County Museum.

It took several people to disassemble the desk and move it to the museum, and it took time to reassemble the piece of furniture many of those same people had probably never seen or used before.

The desk has a lot of mileage, but the memories surpass the wear and tear.

Stop by and see the desk at the Cheatham County Museum and reminisce about memories you may have of the Farmers Mercantile or your own family memories which may include a roll-top desk.

"Take Me Back to the Mercantile"

P. Dulberg, J. Roberts, J. McGlaughlin

"Born way back in' 22,  
"The great depression she got through,  
"She watched our boys go marching off to war;  
"She must have thought it was strange,  
"To see how much this world could change,  
"She changed too but she can change no more.

CHORUS

"Take me back - when things were real,  
"Take me back to the mercantile.

"Sidney at the roll top desk,  
"Mr. Howard at his best,  
"Taking time to serve us all so well;  
"Uncle Bunny's friendly grin,  
"Shag stood with you until the end,  
"If those walls could talk the stories they could tell.:

CHORUS

"Things are different now she's gone  
"Since she left us all alone,  
"The sky on Main street doesn't seem as blue,  
"Folks don't seem to smile as much,  
"Everybody's losing touch,  
"Goodbye good friend - we'll be missing you."

## Demonbreun Origins in Cheatham County

Contact Sue Ellen Watts - [suebet43@aol.com](mailto:suebet43@aol.com)

Timothy Demonberegun Heritage Society [timothydemonberegunsociety.com](http://timothydemonberegunsociety.com) [tdhs1747@gmail.com](mailto:tdhs1747@gmail.com)

Many Demonbreuns can trace their roots to the Demonbruns of Cheatham County, TN. Now, many still live there and others have moved all over the United States and other parts of the world. Some have the surname Demonbreun or a spelling variation. Many have other surnames, or surnames in their lineage that were and are common to the area. Some of the surnames are: Binkley, Carney, Simpkins, Abernathy, Cagle, Felts, Harpers, Allens, Boyds, and Nichols. There is a strong possibility, if a person that can trace their lineage back to early descendants living in Cheatham County in the mid 1800's and early 1900's, they are related to Timothy Demonbreun, who is recognized as the "First Citizen of Nashville".

When the Demonbreuns first came to Cheatham County it was actually Davidson County. It became Cheatham County in 1856 with land taken from Robertson, Dickson, Montgomery and Davidson. When the first Demonbreuns came to the area, which is northwest of Nashville, to plant their roots in what is now called Demonbreun Valley, along the Little Marrowbone Creek, it was wilderness. Why did they come to this particular location? The answer involves Timothy Demonbreun, Elizabeth Hensler Bennett, Joseph Durard and their relationship. Elizabeth was Timothy's consort and they had children. Joseph was a close friend of Timothy's for many years. There are many stories, some are factual and some are not. There are also documents that give us a clearer picture. The two legal documents that relate to why they located along Marrowbone Creek are:

1. Elizabeth and Joseph married on 12<sup>th</sup> of March, 1793
2. Timothy sold 92 acres, which were located along Marrowbone Creek to Joseph Durard, 14<sup>th</sup> of March 1797.

When Elizabeth and Joseph Durard left Nashville to settle along Little Marrowbone Creek, Timothy and Elizabeth's children went with them. John Baptiste was 9 years old at the time when Joseph bought the 92 acres from Timothy. It is unknown when they actually moved and began a permanent settlement. In several documents about Cheatham County, John Baptiste is recognized as being the first settler along the Marrowbone Creek.



Richard Strother Demonbreun

I am a descendant of Timothy Demonbreun my 4<sup>th</sup> great grandfather, through his son John Baptiste, my 3<sup>rd</sup> great grandfather. Richard Strother Burk Hollis Demonbreun (24 May 1833-06 Jun 1919), is my 2<sup>nd</sup> great grandfather. He married Sarah Linsy Binkley. He lived and farmed in Demonbreun Valley. In his will, signed by him on 25 Aug 1909, he willed his "large family bible, never to be sold", to his son Melvin (Mellie) Jackson Demonbreun.



Sarah Linsy Binkley

His son Henry Edward Demonbreun, Executor. In 1887 his son, Henry Edward, my great grandfather, compiled a booklet, titled, "R. S. Demumbrans Book". It contained a beautiful document of R.S and Sarah's marriage and a poem that has survived. When he could no longer farm, he lived with his son, Melvin (Mellie) Jackson Demonbreun. He and his wife are buried at the Carney/ Demonbreun Cemetery.



Henry Edward Demonbreun

Henry Edward Demonbreun (19 May 1863-06 Mar 1915), my great grandfather, married Ellen Carney (13 Sep 1863-21 Nov 1925). In his youth he worked on his father's farm. Shortly after his and Ellen's marriage they bought a house and farm in Joelton, Davidson County, TN. He was a farmer and a Retail Merchant at his General Merchandise Store. He died at home at age 51 and was buried at Greenville Methodist Church Burial Grounds. After Ellen died in 1925, his body was moved to Springhill Cemetery in Nashville and buried beside Ellen.

Lurton Edward DeMontbreun, Sr, my grandfather (20 Oct 1889 - 12 Oct 1957), married Ora Janette (Nettie) Bracey. In his early years he worked on his father's farm and later years he was a car salesman. His wife Nettie died in the 1918 Spanish Flu epidemic,

leaving her husband and 3 young children. My uncle Lurton Edward, Jr age 5, my aunt Nelda Euree age 20 months and my father, Mavis was 1 month old. This caused a huge change in the lives of my grandfather and the children. Shortly after Nettie's death my grandfather and the children moved to his mother Ellen's house. She was widowed; she and Henry Edward's daughters, Linna and Mattie still lived there. Sadie and Ida Willie were married. About 1922, Lurton Sr., Linna, Mattie, and their mother Ellen, decided to sell and move to Nashville. They bought a house on Howard Ave in the Inglewood area. The house was big enough for them and the three children. Linna and Mattie worked at the Baptist Sunday School Board, and my grandfather sold cars. When their mother Ellen died in 1925, Linna bought several lots at Spring Hill Cemetery and their father Henry Edward's body was moved and buried next to his wife Ellen. Linna, Mattie, Lurton, his two sons and their wife's are buried there.



Lurton and Nettie Demontbreun

Varna Mavis DeMontbreun, my father (26 Sep 1918- 22 Jul 199), married Frances Marie Warren. In his early years he worked at area gas stations and other odd jobs. Later, he was a welder and worked many years at Avco where airplane wings were made. When he and my mother married they lived with the Demonbreun family on Howard Ave, in Nashville. When I was born I lived there until I was 4 years old, but visited at least every weekend. During WWII, daddy served in the Army Air Force as a nose gunner. When flying over Europe the lead plane, in their formation, right wing came under my daddy's plane's left wing. The lead plane went down and all were killed. My daddy's plane dropped their bombs and barely made it back to base. My daddy's brother, my uncle L.E. was in the Army and fought in the Battle of the Bulge. He and his wife Isabelle Agnew had no children and were like second parents to me. My aunt Nelda married Robert Massey Duncan, Sr. They lived in Nashville then later made Cookeville, TN their permanent residence. Their son Robert Massey (Bob) Duncan, Jr is my only cousin on my father's side of the family. I was blessed to have good caring parents, aunts and uncles. My grandfather and all of his sisters were also a very big part of my life.



Varna Mavis DeMontbreun

**James T. Lenox** - submitted by his son CCHGA member Jim Lenox

A celebration of life was held recently for James T. Lenox Jr. He was the son of James Lenox Sr, a native of Ashland City and Cheatham County.

James was born in Cleveland Ohio in 1929. After graduating high school, he enlisted into the Army, served, and was Honorably Discharge in 1950. He enrolled and obtained a Forestry degree from Purdue University. He was hired by the State of Ohio, where he was employed by the Division of Forestry and Reclamation for 35 years. In his retirement, he moved to Florida and enjoyed sailing in the Gulf of Mexico and genealogy. He was very proud of his family connections to Ashland City and Cheatham County. His great grandfather James Jackson Lenox was instrumental in the formation of Ashland City.

James passed away January 19, 2022. Like his forefathers he will be missed but never forgotten.

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