

MT OLIVE CEMETERY HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Mar. 2023

Vol 2 Issue 1

Society News

PRESIDENT'S PEN

Written by Nick Nicholson, President

Hello everyone!!! This Newsletter is our second quarterly report of 2023, and Society continues to operate and execute its mission of ensuring that those in the cemetery are never forgotten. To that end, we have discovered one more USCT that is buried in the cemetery bringing the total of USCTs to thirty-two. We congratulate Phyllis Smith (Society Historian) for her great research and discovery of this additional USCT.

One of my goals this year is to increase our membership by 100 percent. That would mean gaining at least twenty more members. We need to increase our membership to continue accomplishing our mission and bring to fruition our goals outlined in our strategic plan, which are many. I always talk organizationally about the committed few that get the job done, but we need more than that to ensure that as an organization we grow on all levels. Becoming a member is as easy as 1,2,3. First, decide to be a part of this great organization. Second, fill out an application (applications can be found on our website. Three, pay annual dues of just \$25 per year.

Being a part of the Society for the last four years has given me a perspective and appreciation for serving and being a part of something great. For me that means being involved in something greater than me. The mission of the Society is inherently greater than any individual that supports it because it is to inspire the engagement of individuals and organizations to partner with MOCHPS in its efforts to preserve the historical significance of Mt Olive Cemetery and those interred there.



WHAT'S IN THIS NEWSLETTER

- President's Pen
- Remembrance of the Month
- Preservation and Restoration Update
- Education and Engagement Update
- African American Legacy Trail Update

Everyone who becomes a member of the Society of course experiences different realities and levels of servitude. And the sheer magnitude of knowing that you are engaged in the preservation of not just a historic cemetery, but also taking care of the souls interred there with respect to their resting places is the tip of the iceberg of serving as a member. Additionally, discovering their plight in life as was lived during and through some exceedingly challenging times in American History, gives rise to respect for their struggle and inspiration for their resilience that is manifested in sharing their stories to all who will listen.

Hopefully, I have enticed you to take a more in-depth look at what we do as a Society. In doing so, may you be inspired to join our organization to help us continue to accomplish our mission and to strengthen our organization with your commitment as a member. I invite you to join and be a part of something great!!!!

Keep your positive responses to our Newsletter, coming, along with any constructive criticism .

In closing, we extend our heartfelt wishes to our partners, families, and friends for remarkable things in 2023.

Thank you all!!!

Nick



Remembrance of the Month

Written by Phyllis Smith, Historian

Shelby Barker Biography

It is hard to tell what year Shelby Barker was born. He is recorded in four censuses and has a different birth year in each one. His death certificate lists his parents as Isham and Jennie Barker. In any case, he was born into slavery in Montgomery County, Tennessee. The first written record that mentioned him was his marriage certificate. He married Jennie or Jane Barker on February 15, 1868.

The 1870 census showed a sixteen-year age difference between Shelby and his bride. They were living in District 6 with a one-year-old daughter Ardelia. Shelby was working as a shoe maker. Ten years later, they were living in Clarksville with Shelby working as a laborer. Ardelia died in between these two censuses, but they now had a two-year-old daughter, Ida.

On March 13, 1889, a deed recording the sale of a city lot on Main Street to Shelby Barker was recorded. Shelby paid \$200 for the lot. The 1900 census showed Shelby, listed as age 64, living with Jennie at 1039 Main Street. According to the Clarksville 1900 Sanborn Map, this would be past 9th Street on the side of Main nearest College Street. Shelby owned the house mortgage free and was working as a shoemaker. Sadly, the couple was listed as having no children.

In 1903, Sue Wilcox, who lived a block away on Franklin Street, wrote Senator William B. Bates a letter inquiring about a bill to grant ex-slaves a pension. There had been men in town who were saying the bill had passed and charging 50 cents to issue new slave certificates. She was worried that her neighbors were being cheated and listed four that she knew had given the men money. Shelby Barker was one of the people she listed. Sue Wilcox was right to be worried because they had been cheated. Between 1890 and 1903, nine bills for pensions for ex-slaves were introduced in Congress but none passed. William R. Vaughan pushed for these bills and organized an association to support the passage. He authorized clubs under this group who were to identify and acquire information on ex-slaves to submit them for pensions when the bill passed. These ex-slaves were given certificates verifying they were ex-slaves. Unfortunately, con artists started to use this idea to extract money from the black population. According to Sue Wilcox's letter, these men were telling people that the bill had passed and they needed new certificates to get the pension. Many sent these certificates into the pension office trying to apply and discovered that the certificates were worthless and there were no pensions authorized.



The 1910 census showed that Shelby and Jennie moved to 1054 Main Street and were renting it. Shelby now owned his own shoe repair shop and Jennie was working as a laborer. On August 1, 1917, Shelby Barker died of grippe of several months' duration. He was listed as 70 years old. Grippe is an 18th Century term for influenza.

Three years later, the 1920 census finds Jennie, now age 60, living with her half-brother, Ed Meninesher, at 1147 Commerce Street. Ed works as a laborer in a snuff factory. The 1922 City Directory lists Jennie living on Commerce Street and working as a cook. On November 27, 1926, Jennie died suddenly. She was an inmate of the poor house and the informant for her death certificate was the Superintendent of the Poor House. She was buried in the poor house cemetery on the same day.

Bibliography

1877 Map of Montgomery County, Tennessee.

1903 Sanborn Map of Clarksville, Tennessee.

Correspondence and Case Files of the Bureau of Pensions Pertaining to the Ex-Slave Pension Movement,

1892-1922. Microfilm M2110, 1 roll. Records of the Veterans Administration, Record Group 15.

National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D. C.

Hill, Walter B., Jr. "The Ex-Slave Pension Movement: Some Historical and Genealogical Notes." *Negro*

Historical Bulletin Vol. 59, No. 4, 7-11.

Clarksville, Tennessee City Directory (1911, 1922).

Montgomery County, Tennessee Census (1870, 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920).

Tennessee Death Records, 1908-1958; Tennessee State Library and Archives; Nashville, Tennessee.

Preservation and Restoration Update

Written by Mike Taliento, Director of Preservation and Restoration

General Update

Weekly Cemetery Preservation & Maintenance Day

Society members, friends and our community partners continue to conduct our weekly clean-up sessions. Unless bad weather or holiday activities occur, we are usually at the cemetery every Tuesday from 3:00 to 5:00pm. The Society invites all interested volunteers to come on out and support our preservation and restoration efforts.

Memorial Day 2023 - Unveiling Ceremony marks the completion of numerous cemetery Projects!

The Society conducted a combined Memorial Day Ceremony and unveiling ceremony for many of the restoration and preservation projects executed throughout the Fall of 2022 through the Spring of 2023 – please [see the Education and Engagement Newsletter articles](#) for details!

We want to again thank all of the stakeholders who supported these projects!

The Predator's Foundation **Bench and Interpretative Panel Projects**

The Daniel Fund/Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee **Trails Signs Project**

The Society's **Memorial Headstone Project (Hutton Monument Company)**

The Tennessee Urban Forestry Council **Tree Sanctuary Project (Karla Gargus)**

The Missing 6 - USCT Memorial Project (South Oak Designs)

Restoration and Maintenance Projects Planned for late Summer-early Fall 2023

July-Oct 2023 – Weekly Clean-up Projects – Tuesdays 3:00-5:00pm

September through December 2023 – Eagle Scout Project (Storage Shed installation, installation of 78 Memorial Crosses on unmarked graves, and topsoil backfill of sunken graves)

29 September 2023 10:00 - 1:00am - AARP and The Wounded Warrior Project and Team RWB join together for the Cemetery Bridge Restoration Project, Headstone Restoration and Cemetery Tour

8 Oct 2023 12:00-3:00pm - Annual Fall Cleanup with CMCSS JROTC – Wounded Warrior Project

11 November 2023 9:00am - Veterans Day Ceremony

Education and Engagement Update

Written by Dr. Tyler Nolting, Director of Education and Engagement

General Update

Since our April 2023 newsletter, the Society has been quite busy with a variety of educational engagements with the Clarksville community and beyond. Please see the below information for descriptions and images of these activities.

TN National Guard Integrated Primary Prevention Team Tours the Cemetery

On 4 May 2023, employees of the TN National Guard Integrated Primary Prevention Strategy Team toured the cemetery.

Thank you all for your interest and time!



Tennessee National Guard Integrated Primary Prevention Strategy Team Tours the Cemetery

4 May 2023

Education and Engagement Update

Friend of the Society, David Dunlop Sr., Passes Away

The Society wants to recognize, honor, and celebrate the life of David Eugene Dunlap Sr., who passed away unexpectedly on May 9, 2023, at his home in Cumberland City.

Mr. Dunlap was a friend of the Society and a close friend of Society member, Robert Spencer. Here is a link to the obituary of Mr. Dunlap: <https://www.navefuneralhomes.com/.../david--dunlap/5189609/>

As his obituary stated, "Rest in peace, David E. Dunlap Sr. Your legacy and impact on the community will never be forgotten, and you will always be remembered as a beloved husband, father, and community member."



Education and Engagement Update

Society Featured on Clarksville's Community Corner with Lee Irwin

On May 27th and 28th, the Society was interviewed by Lee Irwin and the Five Star Media Group!

**MT OLIVE CEMETERY HISTORICAL
PRESERVATION SOCIETY AND
FIVE STAR MEDIA GROUP
PRESENT**



**COMMUNITY CORNER
INTERVIEW**



ON AIR. ON SITE. ONLINE.

**5/27/2023 AT 6:00 A.M.
REWIND 94.5 FM**



**5/28/2023 AT 6:00 A.M.
Q-108 FM**

**BEAVER 100.3 FM
Z-97.5 FM**

ESPN CLARKSVILLE 104.1 FM



Education and Engagement Update

**David Davenport, Director of University/APSU Engagement, Nominated for BLK Xcellence 2023
Community Activist of the Year**

The Society is thrilled to see one of our Board members, Mr. David Davenport, nominated for the 2023 BLK Xcellence Community Activist of the Year award. The others on this excellent list are also friends and supporters of the Society. Best wishes to you all!

Congratulations to all of this year's nominees!



**COMMUNITY ACTIVIST OF
THE YEAR**

**Monica Meeks
David Davenport
Zoyie Jackson
Dr Rashidah Leverett**

BLK
Clarksville

Education and Engagement Update

Society Holds Annual Memorial Day Ceremony

On 29 May 2023, the Society held our annual Memorial Day Ceremony at Mt Olive Cemetery at 0900 hrs. Please see the below images taken at the event.

Thank you to all those who were involved in the planning and execution of this event, as well as all of the Society's partners and friends who have contributed to our mission over the last year.



COMMUNITY INVITATION



MT OLIVE CEMETERY HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY
PRESENTS

Tradition - Honor - Community

2023 MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY
AT THE HISTORIC MT OLIVE CEMETERY
29 MAY 2023 AT 9:00AM

In keeping with the Memorial Day Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, an American flag will be placed on each of our Veteran's Graves at Mt Olive. Please join us in carrying on this Tradition as we Honor these Veterans as a Community.

Access to Mt Olive Cemetery is available by parking behind the Ephesus 7th Day Adventist Church at 931 Cumberland Drive, Clarksville, Tennessee.

Education and Engagement Update



Memorial Day 2023
Mt Olive Cemetery
Pre-Ceremony Views

Memorial Day 2023 **Attendees and Participants**

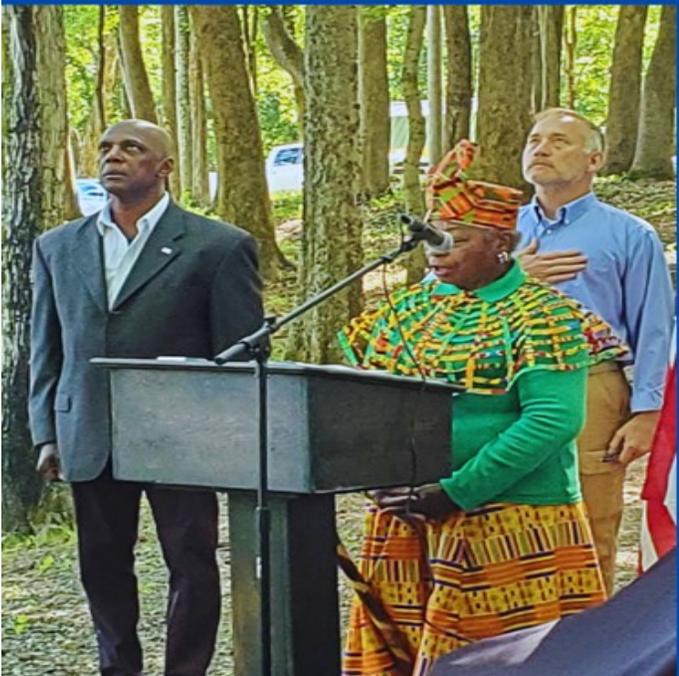


Education and Engagement Update

West Creek High School JROTC Honor Guard *Presented the Nation's colors*



Nettie Thomas, Member of the Women Veterans of America—Chapter 47 *Performed the National Anthem*



Education and Engagement Update

Memorial Day Ceremony Presenters



West Creek High School
JROTC Honor Guard



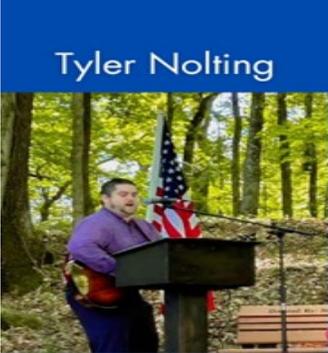
Nettie Thomas



Mike Taliento



Nick Nicholson



Tyler Nolting



Phyllis Smith

Montgomery County
Mayor Wes Golden



City of Clarksville
Mayor Joe Pitts

Memorial Headstone Project Unveiling

Hutton Monument Co. and Jim Hancock made this project possible.



Education and Engagement Update

Wayside Exhibits and Benches Unveiling



This project was made possible by a \$10,000 Helper Grant from the Nashville Predators Foundation.



Trail Signs Project Unveiling

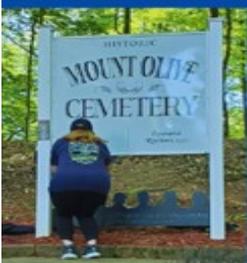
Made possible by a \$1,500 grant from the Grateful Daniel Fund of the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee



Education and Engagement Update

Missing 6 USCT Project Unveiling

Thanks to South Oak Designs for this beautiful addition to the cemetery!

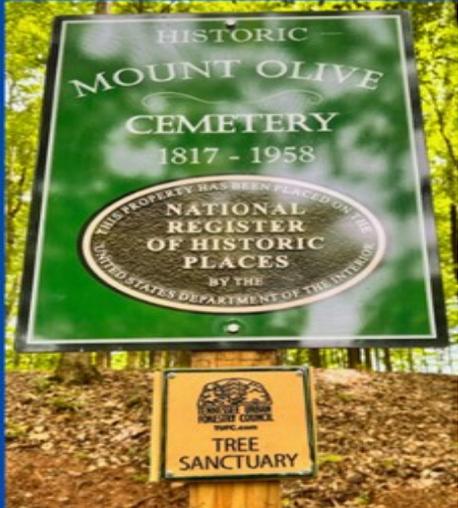


Karla Gargus (Extension Agent for UT and TSU) helped create the tree sanctuary, and without her help, this project could have not been possible.

Tree Sanctuary Unveiling



TENNESSEE URBAN FORESTRY COUNCIL



Education and Engagement Update

Altra Federal Credit Union

Provided \$2,500 Community Assistance Award for the Memorial Grave Marker Project



Alexander Manufacturing Company Inc. is fabricating 62 Corten steel cross that are 1/4" thick, 30" inches tall, and 10" wide, to mark those interred at Mt Olive Cemetery with no grave marker.



Women Veterans of America—Chapter 47

Donated new American flags for all Veteran graves at Mt Olive Cemetery



Education and Engagement Update

Tyra Garlington, Virginia Radio Talk Show Host and Podcast Host of Frankly Speaking with Tyra G, Visits Mt Olive Cemetery

Tyra Garlington, radio talk show host, author, inspirational speaker, business owner, and gamechanger, of the international podcast, "Frankly Speaking with Tyra G," came to visit Mt Olive Cemetery on Friday, June 23, 2023. A few Society members were present to provide her with an extensive tour, as they visited the first burial (James Hunt, 1817), the last burial (Oscar Jasper Holmes, 1958), and many notable individuals in between. Some of these individuals were the following:

- Jordan Barksdale: Clarksville's first African American entrepreneur
- Martilla Frazier: enslaved to Cave Johnson, who was the U.S. Postmaster General to President James K. Polk
- Sterling Campbell: served in the 16th USCT
- Robert Vass: served in the 101st USCT
- William H. Harris: served in the 24th U.S. Infantry Regiment (Buffalo Soldiers)
- Joe King Bailey: served in World War II for the 25th U.S. Infantry Regiment
- William Logan: served in the 12th USCT; the local newspaper noted that his funeral was one of the largest-attended funerals ever for an African American in Clarksville
- Chesterfield Dabney: served in the 16th USCT and who has one of the largest family plots in the cemetery

To complete the tour, a Society member performed an original song titled, "You Won't Die Twice," which is a tribute to Mt Olive Cemetery.

The Society wishes to thank Ms. Garlington for traveling all the way from Fairfax, Virginia to tour Mt Olive Cemetery and learn about those interred.

The primary reason for her visit was because the Society was featured on "Frankly Speaking with Tyra G" a couple times in 2023.

So, if you would like to listen to those podcast episodes, please visit "Frankly Speaking with Tyra G" on any podcast-streaming platform, and view the following episodes:

- May 2, 2023 episode titled, "Mt Olive Cemetery Historical Preservation Society Honors the Memory of African Americans in Clarksville, Tennessee Whose Struggle Was Real!"
- February 28, 2023 episode titled, "Black History Month: Stories that Need Telling with Guest Colonel Arthur Nick Nicholson Retired, and Current President of the Mt Olive Cemetery Historical Preservation Society."

You can also find and listen to these episodes on Ms. Garlington's website at the following links:

May 2, 2023: tyrargarlington.com/mt-olive-cemetery-historical-preservation-society-their-struggle-was-real/

February 28, 2023: tyrargarlington.com/black-history-month-stories-that-need-telling-with-guest-colonel-arthur-nick-nicolson-retired-and-current-president-of-the-mt-olive-cemetery-historical-preservation-cocietyreaerd-and-president-of-th/

Education and Engagement Update



Tyra Garlington of the Podcast, "Frankly Speaking with Tyra G," Visits Mt Olive Cemetery
JUNE 23, 2023



Education and Engagement Update

Check Out Our Website and Facebook Pages

In order to view the Society's activities in more detail, please visit our website at <https://mtolivechps.weebly.com/> and our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/mtolivechps>.

Looking Ahead

The Society is exploring the opportunity to create a historical marker through the Tennessee Historical Commission to honor Mt Olive Cemetery. Also, in December of 2023, the Society will be awarding the first-ever Genevia Ann Bell Leadership Award. We are excited for these opportunities and others that may arise throughout the year.

Interested in Contributing to our Organization?

The Society has ambitious objectives in 2023, and any monetary contributions are appreciated and will help advance our organization's mission of emphasizing the influence and contributions of African Americans regarding the history, education, development, growth, and culture of the Clarksville area.

The money you contribute will be utilized in funding the following: operating costs, gift-wrapping supplies, historical interpretive panels, grave markers, commercial waste receptacles, printing costs for ceremony programs and African American Legacy Trail brochures, and flower planting supplies. See the image below for the Society's 2023 needs.

Education and Engagement Update

MT OLIVE CEMETERY HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

2023 Needs



Memorial Day

Printing Costs for Ceremony Programs



Veterans Day



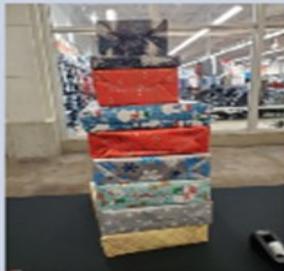
Wreaths Across America



Flower Planting Supplies



Fundraising Supplies



Headstone Cleaning Supplies



Printing for African American Legacy Trail Brochures



Historical Interpretive Panels



Grave Markers



Operating Costs



Commercial Waste Receptacles

Education and Engagement Update

In order to contribute to the Society through our Giving Matters.com profile, please use the following link: <https://givingmatters.civicore.com/mtolivechps>, or you may also click on the Giving Matters icon on our website's homepage at <https://mtolivechps.weebly.com/>.

MT OLIVE CEMETERY HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

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Mt Olive Cemetery Historical Preservation Society

Clarksville/Montgomery County African American Legacy Trail

Written by Terry Morris, Director of African American Legacy Trail

This summer has proven to be hot and exciting for the African American Legacy Trail! We at Mt. Olive have been engaged in our weekly clean ups, cemetery grounds projects, educating while giving tours and creating an Alexa audio experience of the Legacy Trail!

Mt. Olive has teamed up with Dr. Paul McNeil/MBUsable Security to develop this one-of-a-kind experience that anyone anywhere can enjoy just by using a cell phone or Fire stick and saying: Alexa, CMC African American Legacy Trail please!

This rich history told as you transverse the county and city to learn about 35+ people and places will enlighten and educate all who experience it with you. The listeners will learn about the contributions that stand the test of time by African Americans in this County. The audio version enhances the educational information while Narrators, Kimberly Wiggins and Nick Nicholson, sooth us with their beautiful voice and fluidity of diction while reading each entry along the trail with passion for telling the stories of this county's Vibrant African American community.

This endeavor will help facilitate cemetery grounds preservation/restoration, fund planned projects on the grounds and possible set up of an endowment fund to enrich the community, its young learners, leaders, and education seekers. Sponsorships are available for each stop along the trail at twenty-four hundred dollars a year and can be driven by your company logo with traffic data to provide you with the best rate of return all while driving patrons to your place of business.

Mount Olive Preservation Society has already secured the funding for the project as well as a google ad grant for non-profits to help with advertising visibility and consumer awareness of your company, club, organization or your own non-profit!

For more information on how to contribute, join Mt. Olive and or both J Contact Terry Morris, Director of the Clarksville African American Legacy Trail. mo-chpstrail@gmail.com, 931-614-1903.
