

The cover of COX QUARTERLY Winter 2024 features a photograph of a large, white, two-story house with a prominent porch supported by columns. The house is set against a clear blue sky with some greenery in the foreground. The text on the cover is as follows:

- Top left: A logo of a tree in a shield, with 'Winter 2024' below it.
- Top center: 'COX QUARTERLY' in large white serif font.
- Middle right: 'YEAR IN REVIEW 2023' in large yellow serif font.
- Below that: 'IN THIS ISSUE: THE COMPLETE INDEX TO OVER 350 YEARBOOKS & SCHOOL DIRECTORIES AVAILABLE AT THE COX LIBRARY' in yellow serif font.
- Bottom: A small line of text: 'The T. Elmer Cox Genealogical & Historical Library is a branch of the Greenville/Greene County Public Library'.

# Cox Library 2023: A Year in Review

## #1 Request: House Histories!

For 2023, we saw an increase in the number of people curious about the old house and property they had recently purchased. They wanted to research the family who owned the house and look for old photographs and deeds. Total requests: 13.

*\*In 2022, we helped three young adults who had recently moved into historic homes — all on West Main Street!*



Historic James Lowry house built in 1828. Located on Asheville Hwy

## Depot Street: Then and Now



Photo from *The Greenville Sun*



Photo from WJHL

BACK TO DEPOT CELEBRATES MILESTONES  
GREENEVILLE

## Buildings in the Historic District

We have helped three residents who have purchased buildings on Depot Street; one building owner on Main Street; and one building owner on Summer Street to research the history of their properties. Their research was to be submitted on their applications to obtain a Tennessee Historic Development Grant. Applicants must show the historical significance of their buildings. Eligible properties include state and nationally accredited Tennessee Main Street communities or Tennessee Downtown communities.

For more information, visit the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development website: [www.tn.gov/ecd/rural-development/tennessee-main-street/tennessee-main-](http://www.tn.gov/ecd/rural-development/tennessee-main-street/tennessee-main-)

## The Cox Library House

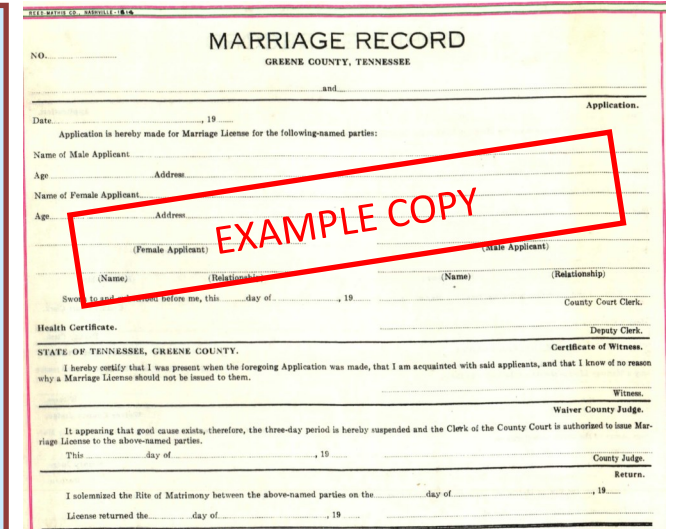
Out-of-towners are charmed by our historic house and often comment on how they wish their towns had a genealogical facility as nice as ours! Librarians and archivists from other counties in Tennessee have come here to tour our library for inspiration in hopes of starting their own genealogical centers.



## Marriage Records

The Cox Library stores Marriage Books 1-27 for the Greene County Courthouse. These records go up to the year 1965. When a Greene County resident (who was married in 1965 or before) needs their marriage license certified (e.g. for Social Security benefits or picture IDs), the County Clerk's Office sends them to us. We must find their Marriage Record in the Marriage Book to send a copy of to the Clerk's Office. We must include the Marriage Book Number and Page Number, as the Clerk's Office then takes this information and will work with the resident to certify the license.

For the year 2023, we assisted the Clerk's Office with 20 of these requests.



## Greene County Genealogical Society Meetings

The Genealogical Society meetings were held at the Cox Library on March 9th, June 8th, and October 12th, with approximately 20-30 attendees each time.

## Most Popular Ancestor

### Zephaniah Woolsey (1740-1807) of Camp Creek

Zephaniah takes this honor for the second year in a row. He remains one of our most researched ancestors, with not only Woolsey descendants contacting us from out of state for research help, but descendants actually travelling here to learn more about him. In 2023, a group of Woolsey descendants visited our library wearing "Woolsey Farm" T-shirts. While in Greene County, descendants often pay their respects at the Zephaniah Woolsey Cemetery off Susong Road. The cemetery is on private property across Mud Creek in a hay field.

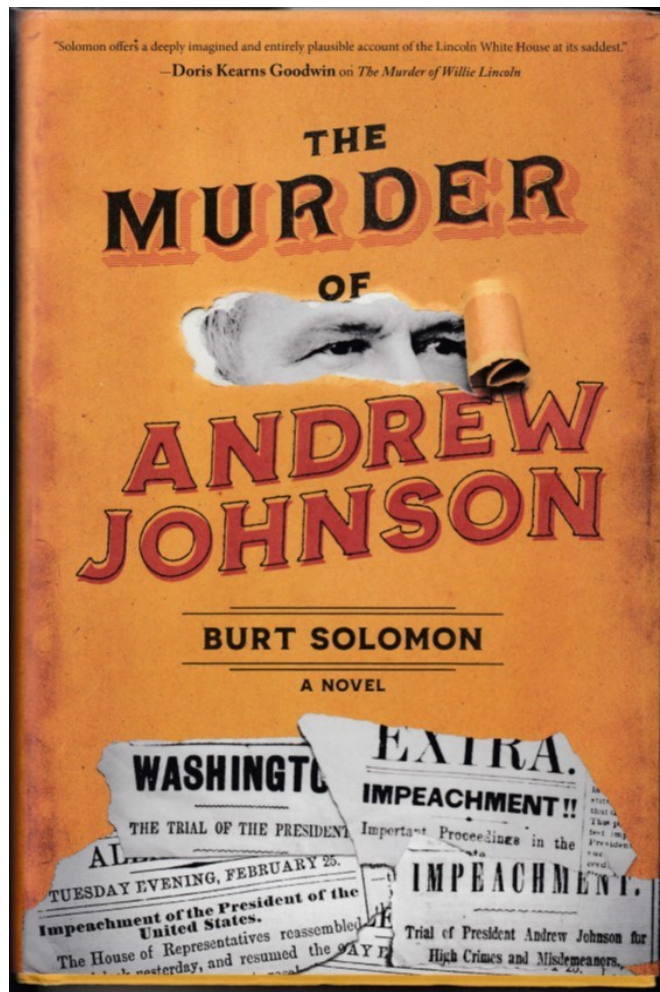


Zephaniah Woolsey's gravestone

Photo from Find-A-Grave by Mountain Traveler

## Honorable Mention

Nelly VanVactor, the first free woman of color to own real estate in Greeneville, deserves an honorable mention for popular requests. We had two out-of-town phone calls seeking information on her, as well as a history major from East Tennessee State University making multiple trips to our library to do research on Nelly for a term paper. The paper got an "A"!



**National Author Recognizes the Cox Library**

Burt Solomon's newest historical fiction novel *The Murder of Andrew Johnson* was released in 2023. Mr. Solomon had high praise for our very own June Pinkston, who in August 2023 celebrated her 20th anniversary as lead archival clerk at the Cox Library.

Acknowledgments page from Burt Solomon's *The Murder of Andrew Johnson*:

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Trying to make the past come to life requires assistance, and I've been fortunate to find it.

In researching my story in Tennessee, I am grateful to Joe and the late Shirley Taylor for guiding me around Elizabethton and to their daughter, Jessica Taylor of *The Cook Political Report*, for instructing me in the town's correct pronunciation. **June Pinkston at the T. Elmer Cox Library in Greeneville tirelessly answered my questions and hunted up materials.** I am much obliged to Dr. Daniel Schumaier for showing me the house in which Andrew Johnson died and for answering my follow-up questions. Thanks also to Joe Penza, the archivist at the Elizabethton / Carter County Public Library; Johnny Blankenship, the Carter County circuit court clerk; Ronald A. Lee at the Tennessee State Library & Archives; and the special collections staff at the University of Tennessee's library in Knoxville, home to Andrew Johnson's papers.

**First Presbyterian Church Book**

The Cox Library assisted the History Committee of First Presbyterian Church with their new book that was released in the winter of 2023. Lead Archival Clerk June Pinkston searched for the history and deeds for Greene County Presbyterian Mission Schools, along with researching the history of local Presbyterian churches and reverends. See article to the left (published in *The Greeneville Sun* on Dec. 12, 2023).

Page 4A Tuesday, December 12, 2023

**BOOKS**

**First Presbyterian Church Donates History Book To Libraries**

First Presbyterian Church of Greeneville recently donated copies of its newly published history, entitled "First Presbyterian Church: Doak, Balch, and the Presbyterians Who Followed," to local libraries.

The book was authored by Louise Orr, her brother Frank Robinson and her son, Bob Orr. The book was completed and published posthumously by the History Committee of First Presbyterian Church.

The volume is a 400-page, full color history that spans 240 years from 1780 to 2020. It begins with the Reverend Samuel Doak preaching to settlers at the Big Spring during the Revolutionary War before Greeneville was established.

The book continues with the Reverend Balch and his establishment of Greeneville College, which later merged into Tusculum College, established by the Doaks in 1818.

The Civil War, Reconstruction, the Cholera Epidemic, the Temperance movement, the World Wars, the Civil Rights Movement and even the 2020 Covid Pandemic are all viewed through the lens of multiple Presbyterian congregations that grew out of the first meeting at the Big Spring in 1780.

"For researchers, genealogists and history enthusiasts, we are excited to make the volume available to these libraries as well as others," Sally Causey, the book's editor, said. It is fully documented with an appendix, bibliography, and index, she noted.

According to Erin Evans, the Greeneville Greene County Librarian, "By placing the book in the main library, we can make it available through interlibrary loan."

Anyone interested in purchasing their own copy of the book can place an order through the church website, [firstpresgreenville.org](http://firstpresgreenville.org) or by visiting the church via the "office entrance" behind Andrew Johnson Bank on Church Street during business hours.

For questions or more information about the book, email [firstpresgreenvillehistory@gmail.com](mailto:firstpresgreenvillehistory@gmail.com).

**Court Minutes Books**

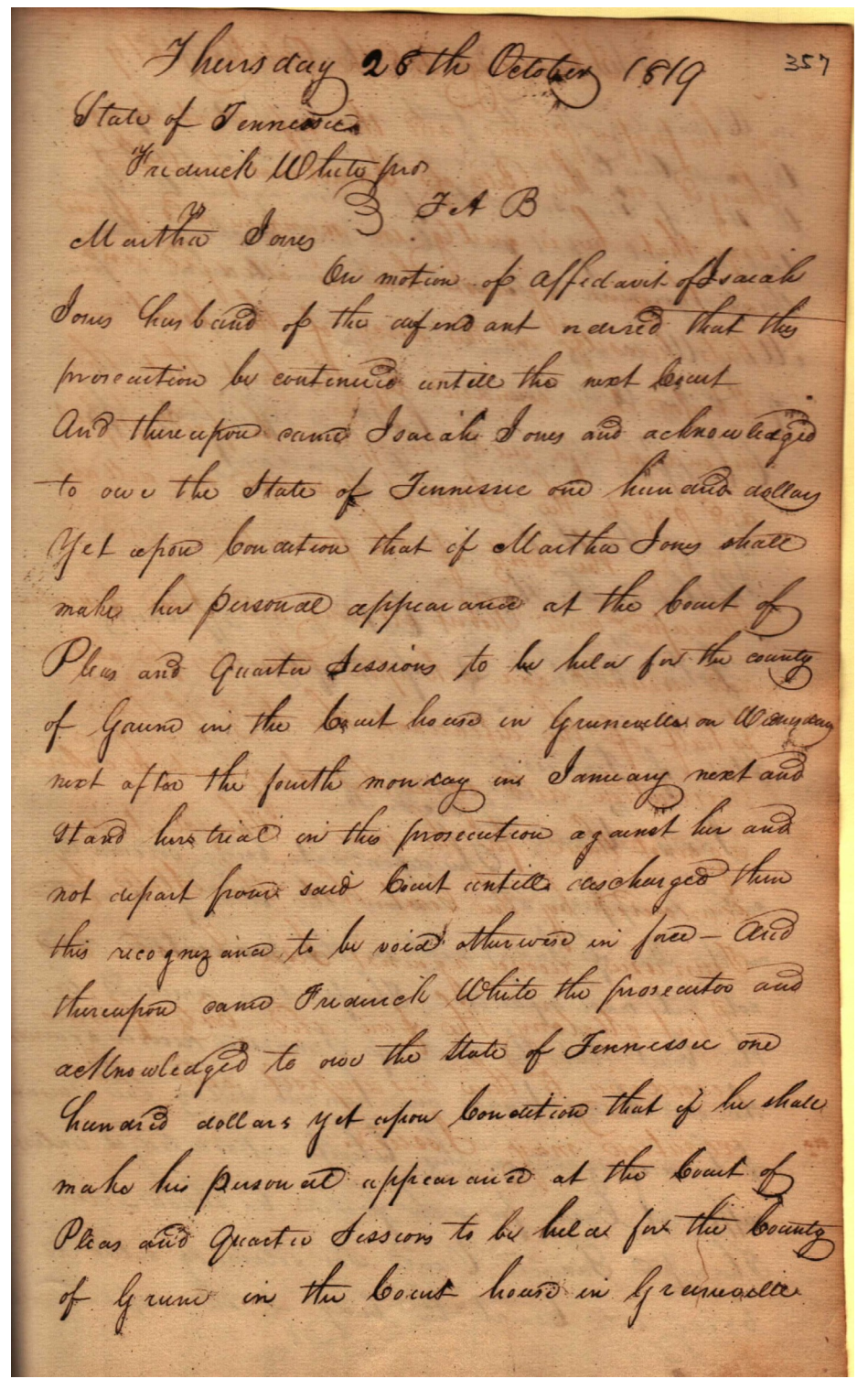
Thanks to a 2022 technology grant, the Cox Library was able to purchase two portable scanner wands. These scanners are being used to digitize the Greene County Court Minutes Books that were not microfilmed at the Tennessee State Library and Archives. Court Book 9A (391 pages) has been scanned and completed. See a copy of Page 357 from Book 9A (recorded on October 28th, 1819) to the right.

Court Book 12 is currently in the process of being scanned.

**TEL**  
TENNESSEE ELECTRONIC LIBRARY  
[www.tntel.info](http://www.tntel.info)

FREE RESOURCES FOR TENNESSEANS

We have shown dozens of patrons how to use and access the Tennessee Electronic Library, a free resource to all Tennesseans that includes Newspapers.com Southeast Edition. The Tennessee Virtual Archive (TEVA) also contains digitized photo collections and maps.



**Extra! Extra! Read all about it!** No matter if the year is 1923 or 2023, we continue to see locals and out-of-staters looking for Greeneville and Greene County newspapers. Patrons may seek articles about their families, communities, and churches for fun (like the "Week-ender" write-ups published by the late Bob Hurley), but we have also assisted residents who need articles as evidence to present in court cases or at various civic meetings. Along with our extensive newspaper microfilm collection, we also have an online subscription to *The Greeneville Sun*.



## Best-Selling Books

It's too close to call! There are two books in particular that have been very popular.

1. *The Journal of Annah E. Snapp (1864-1866)*, published by the Greene County Heritage Trust, not only sold well in our library's bookstore, but also on our website.
2. There has been a renewed interest in T. Elmer Cox's *Pocket Note History of Greene County, Tennessee*. We sold numerous copies in 2023.

*The Journal of  
Annah E. Snapp  
(1864-1866)*



Greeneville Heritage Trust

Article and photos published in *The Greeneville Sun* on Sep. 13, 2023.



Members of the Tennessee SAR color guard fire a rifle volley in honor of the Seaton family at the conclusion of the cemetery dedication.  
Photo By Carolina Blanks



Greene County Mayor Kevin Morrison, Tim Massey and Ashley Lynch visit following the Seaton cemetery dedication.  
Photo By Carolina Blanks

## Greene County Cemetery Preservation

During the summer of 2023, the Cox Library assisted members of the Seaton family who were seeking information on who to contact about the desecration of their ancestors' cemetery in the Cedar Creek community. Gravestones and the protective fencing around the Benjamin Seaton Cemetery had been removed for cattle to use for pasture. The family reached out to the Tennessee Historical Commission in Nashville for guidance, as cemetery desecration is a felony offense in Tennessee (Tennessee Code Title 46, Chapter 8).

Thankfully, the family was able to get the cemetery restored. A dedication was held in September at the cemetery and Solomon Lutheran Church. Greene County Mayor Kevin Morrison and Greene County Historian Tim Massey were in attendance.

*Not only do locals have an affinity for their ancestors' final resting place, but numerous people from all over the country and the world come to Greene County to see where their ancestors lived and died. At the Cox Library, we consistently aid patrons with finding old deeds and land grants, as well as finding directions to old family cemeteries that may be well off the beaten path!*

# YEARBOOKS!

## Search memories and lost friends in the Cox Library's collection of old yearbooks.

When the Cox library opened its doors in the fall of 2000, it had already amassed a sizable collection of yearbooks. More than just nostalgic keepsakes, they offer a unique window into the evolving lives of students and the community.

These primary sources brim with firsthand accounts of major events, from world wars and protests to local school transformations and presidential elections. Beyond documentation, they come alive with student perspectives and aspirations, capturing not just what happened, but how it felt.

Students and editors experimented with how to capture their accomplishments and aspirations through creative writing, graphic design and photography, and editorial design choices. From global headlines to neighborhood happenings, yearbooks are themselves an archive of lived experiences, stating hopes for the future while echoing the past. In delving into these pages, you will unlock a fresh perspective, one filled with the voices and emotions of those who were there.



Find your parents, grandparents or your own graduation photo to bring back the nostalgia! Here's our entire list of yearbooks and alumni directories in alphabetical order, waiting for you at the Cox Library:

**The Andrew Johnson (all the county yearbook)**  
1930

**Baileyton High School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1942, 1947, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953,  
1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1962

**Bulls Gap School (Hawkins Co., TN)**  
1949, 1986

**Camp Creek High School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1953, 1957, 1959, 1961

**Carson-Newman College (Jefferson Co., TN)**  
1927, 1928, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1947, 1964,  
1990, 1991, 1992, 1995\*, 2002

**Chuckey Elementary School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1967, 2002, 2003, 2004

**Chuckey-Doak High School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1968,  
1970, 1971, 1972, 1983, 1993

**Debusk Elementary School (Greene Co., TN)**  
2002

**Doak Elementary School (Greene Co., TN)**  
2002

**Doak High School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1940, 1942, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1958

**East Tennessee State College (Washington Co., TN)**  
1945, 1949, 1950, 1952, 1954, 1955, 1956,  
1957, 1958, 1961, 1962, 1963

**East Tennessee State University (Washington Co., TN)**  
1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972,  
1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1977\*, 1978, 1979,  
1980, 1980\*, 1981, 1985, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1990,  
1990\*, 1995\*, 2000\*, 2006\*, 2011\*

**East Tennessee State Normal School (Washington Co., TN)**  
1925

**East Tennessee Teachers College (Washington Co., TN)**  
1928, 1929, 1937, 1959, 1983

**Eastview Elementary School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1962, 1963, 1965, 1968, 1972, 1974, 1984

**George Clem High School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1938, 1948, 1961

**Greeneville High School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1920, 1921, 1923, 1928, 1929, 1931, 1937, 1938, 1939,  
1940, 1941, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1951, 1952, 1954,  
1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963,  
1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972,  
1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982,  
1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1995,  
1998\*, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008,  
2010, 2011, 2014, 2015

**Greeneville Junior High School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1965, 1966, 1968, 1969

**Greeneville Middle School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1976, 1986, 1987, 1988, 2001

**Jonesboro High School (Washington Co., TN)**  
1960

**McDonald High School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1950, 1955

**Milligan College (Carter Co., TN)**  
1925, 1928, 1929

**Mosheim Elementary School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1999, 2006

**Mosheim High School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1938, 1957, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963,  
1964, 1965, 1966

**North Greene High School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1963, 1964, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1972,  
1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1981,  
1983, 1986, 1988, 1990

**Ottway High School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1954, 1962

**Saint/St. James High School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1961, 1962

**South Greene High School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1966, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1980,  
1983, 1991, 1992, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997,  
2007, 2008

**State Teachers College (Washington Co., TN)**  
1930, 1932, 1936

**Steed College (Washington Co., TN)**  
1970

**Tusculum College (Greene Co., TN)**  
1920, 1921, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932,  
1933, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943,  
1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952,  
1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961,  
1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970,  
1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979,  
1981, 1982, 1982\*, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988\*,  
1989, 1992, 1992\*, 1994, 1995, 1997\*, 1999, 2002\*

**Tusculum View Elementary (Tusculum, TN)**  
1980\*, 2017\*

**University of Tennessee (Knox Co., TN)**  
1939, 1953

**Warrensburg High School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1924

**Washington College Academy (Washington Co., TN)**  
1978, 1979

**Washington College High School (Washington Co., TN)**  
1942

**West Greene High School (Greene Co., TN)**  
1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976,  
1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986,  
1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1994, 2004

Have an old yearbook and don't want it anymore?  
**Donate it to the Cox Library!**



\* indicates Alumni Directory