

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: JEFF JERNIGAN

Jeff joined us as an archive volunteer in March 2023. Proving that the archives attracts individuals of all backgrounds and interests, Jeff came to us after retiring from a career as a physician. Born in New Orleans, while his father was doing his residency at Tulane, Jeff grew up in Kingsport and graduated from Dobyns-Bennett High School and the University of Tennessee.



After graduation, he held a variety of jobs in television and media but decided he wanted to become a doctor like his father. He graduated from medical school at the University of Tennessee at Memphis in 1986. A career as an anesthesiologist then began. He worked at the Regional Medical Center at Memphis until 2005, then went on active duty with the United States Navy. He served for three years at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. While stationed there, in 2007, he was deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Upon completion of active duty, Jeff moved back to East Tennessee and worked for ten years in Johnson City with an anesthesia group here. He retired in 2019.

He and his wife Carol married in 1982, the same year he started medical school. Jeff enjoys history, especially military history, and doing family research. He enjoys the outdoors, hiking with his wife and walking their beagle. Jeff also is interested in filmmaking, video, and photography. This goes back to his days as a news photographer in Knoxville in the 1970s. He is also interested in film and video archiving of various subjects. He likes following the UT Vols in all sports. Fly fishing is becoming an interest. He is a member of Jonesborough Presbyterian Church.

“I am interested in local history and that’s what got me interested in volunteering. One of the interesting things I found is a notice about the 1898 reunion of the Grand Army of the Republic that was perhaps mailed to a local Union veteran. It is a glimpse of national history that showed up in Washington County, Tennessee. This is a very interesting area in terms of history, and I enjoy coming across tidbits of our local history and placing it in the context of our national history,” Jeff said.

We feel very lucky to have Jeff’s diligence, perception, and pleasant personality available to us in the archives.

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