



WEST FELICIANA RR BUILDING . 1834
THE WILKINSON COUNTY MUSEUM 1991

THE WOODVILLE CIVIC CLUB

FOUNDED IN 1971

PO BOX 1055 WOODVILLE MS 39669



THE BANK OF MISSISSIPPI . 1819
THE AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM 2004

www.historicwoodville.com

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St. Paul's Episcopal Church...1823-2023...200 Years

The first Episcopal services in Woodville were held on October 4, 1823 in the court house with the Rev James A. Fox, and this quickly led to a congregation being formed, with Rev. Fox, and the present church building being raised in September of 1824. It is believed to be the oldest Episcopal Church west of the Allegheny Mountains.

It is a classic frame structure with an octagonal belfry with fine Federal pilasters. and a small carpenter Gothic entrance porch with board-and-batten siding.

It houses an amazing organ installed in 1837, built by Henry Erben of New York City, and it is known to be the oldest of its kind in the Deep South.

The rectory dates to the same period as the church building whereas the parish hall dates to 1883.



Photograph by Blake Leblanc

Sometime about the founding of Woodville in 1811 we suspect that the first building to be built on the block where the museum is today was a home built by Colonel Thomas H. Oswald. He was a mover and shaker in those early days and it would have been fitting for a man of such prominence to be near the court house square.

He owned the west half of that block, and at the south end, where once there was a brick walled burial ground, are the tombs of his first two wives; he had three. In 1834 he had sold a lot at the north end to Judge Edward McGehee to build the The Office and Banking House of the West Feliciana Railroad.

There are still many Oswald descendants in town today . and several with the Oswald name, notably in the Sessions and Whitaker families.

Lee Harvey Oswald, another Colonel Oswald descendant, achieved questionable fame as the alleged presidential assassin.



Beth Israel Cemetery Established in 1848 On Sligo Street in Woodville

Pictured are Trent Lewis, The Cemetery Doctor, of Terry, Charlie McCarty of Summit, Aubrey Everett of Brookhaven, Kevin Bigner of Bogue Chitto and Neil Randall of Slidell.

Photograph courtesy of Andrew Jackson Lewis, The Woodville Republican

The Friends of Beth Israel Cemetery were able to have The Cemetery Doctor, Trent Lewis, and his crew of assistants back to the cemetery for another two days of restoration work. If you go by to take a look you will be pleased to see how much landscaping has been done as well . . . with just removing unwanted growth and clearing fence lines.

Attorney Paul Sullivan, of Natchez, a founder of The Friends, is working on a project whereby the cradles in front of some the graves, such as the one pictured, will be filled with different perennial ground covers. Local volunteers are welcome to help and can contact Russell Fry or Attorney Sullivan by writing to them at info@historicwoodville.com.



Jody Sessions, pictured above, one of six siblings, son of the late Thomas Oswald Sessions, is a descendant of Colonel Oswald.

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