

James Lee Davis

Local historian, James L. Davis was a true visionary. An avid photographer himself, Jim knew the value of preserving history for future generations. Beginning early in his 43-year career with the C&O Railway Company, Jim began collecting photographs which documented all aspects of railroad life. As he placed each photo in his albums he carefully recorded each name, date and history underneath, creating a priceless treasure of information. This archive grew over the years to include not only railroad history, but local history as well. His collection of hundreds of old school pictures is also fully documented with names, dates and school locations. When Jim acquired a new photograph, he would not stop until he had every person named!

Jim was a charter member of The Summers County Historical Society and a member of The Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, Black Diamond District. Born in Sandstone, WV on March 14, 1926, "Roundhouse Davis" was known for his keen wit and sense of humor. He passed away April 13, 1991 at the age of 65, but left behind a wonderful legacy of historical documentation for his community to cherish. Each year during Railroad Days, Jim would share his wisdom and knowledge with all who would come to spend hours looking through his albums filled with photos and captions.

Born March 14, 1926 at Sandstone, West Virginia, James Lee Davis was the son of Lena (Honaker) Davis and James Riley Davis. He married Wanda Joyce Harvey in October of 1949 and they had four children, Jerry Ray, Rodney Lee, Nancy Lynn and Rebecca Dawn. He was also blessed with five grandchildren, whom he loved to spoil! In his early childhood, medicines had not advanced to the point it has today, so he had everything 'going around' such as the measles, mumps, chicken pox and polio, which left him with a limp in his left leg. But he never let it slow him down! A skilled bowler, he was a member of the C & O Sportsmen Championship Bowling Team in 1952.

Jim and his family lived along the Greenbrier River so he had a great yard and spent as much time as possible outdoors. On any given Sunday, you would find him grilling burgers for picnics and playing basketball or badminton with the kids. And don't challenge him to a game of horseshoes because you would definitely lose! As a family man, he was a member of the Miller Memorial United Methodist Church, and as a sports fan, he loved his Cincinnati Reds, coached grade school basketball and Hinton Little League Baseball.

Jim attended Sandstone Elementary then went on to graduate from Hinton High School in 1943. He began working for the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Company as a call boy at the age of 16. After graduation, he was employed as a clerk and crew dispatcher which is the office he held until his retirement on April 3, 1987 with 43 years of service.

James Lee Davis We Salute You!

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