
	<p align="center">FFA Archival Project News Vol. 1, Issue No. 4</p> <p align="center">By Dr. Kevin Cason</p>	
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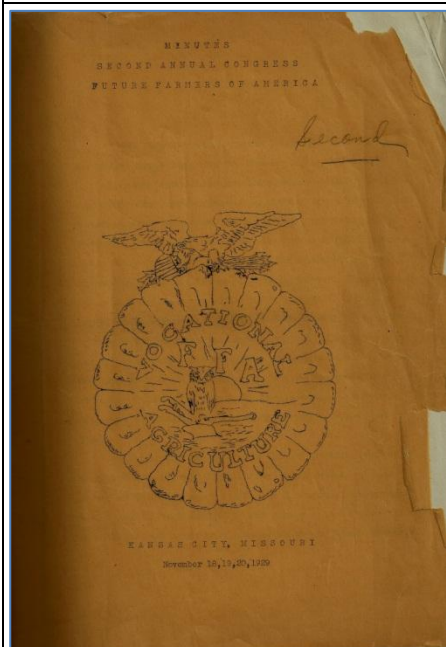
Preserving the Historical Memory

An archive serves as an excellent source of historical memory. It records the activities, people, and things associated with an organization like the Tennessee Future Farmers of America (FFA). Often times people from a particular era can remember people and events, but as new generations emerge and older ones pass away, it is important to have some records that help provide a better understanding about history.

Currently, Dr. Kevin Cason, archivist for the FFA archival project, is working with a wide variety of materials that document the history of the Tennessee FFA from the 1930s to the present. By sorting, organizing, and re-housing the items into acid-free materials, Kevin is helping preserve these important resources for future generations.

Archival Spotlight #1

Since 1928, the Future Farmers of America have held an annual national convention where many state FFA chapters gather to receive honors, awards, and celebrate the significance of training young people for vocational agriculture. In honor of the national FFA convention that was held this month, it seems appropriate to highlight one of the early convention programs.



From November 18-20, 1929, the Future Farmers of America held their second annual convention at Kansas City, Missouri. According to the minutes program, representatives from thirty-three state organizations attended the convention.

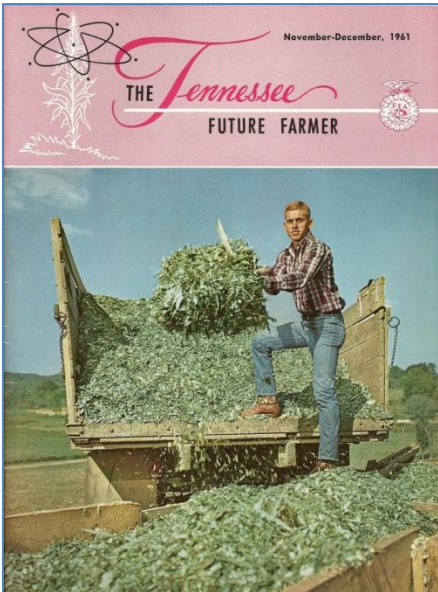
The two official delegates from Tennessee were Kenneth McPherson and Donald Moore. The program also listed W.B. Lollis as the person in charge of the delegates from Tennessee.

In addition to listing the delegates from each state, the program featured some of the early projects that the national organization focused on during this time such as developing a manual or handbook for the organization, recruiting new members, and establishing new state and local chapters.

The Tennessee FFA Archival Collection is fortunate to have programs of past national FFA conventions like this one to remember the events, awards, and activities of the past.

Archival Spotlight #2

At every FFA national convention, one person is selected as the most outstanding Future Farmer among the members of the FFA in the United States. In 1961, a young Tennessee farmer was named the Star Farmer of America.



In 1961, James Issac Messler from Greenback, Tennessee was named the Star Farmer of America at the 34th annual convention of the National FFA in Kansas City. He was recognized as the most outstanding among the 400,000 FFA members in the 50 states and Puerto Rico.

Prior to winning this prestigious award, James held two offices in the Greenback FFA chapter and was State FFA Sentinel for 1958-1959. In addition, he won first place in the State in awards given for outstanding achievement in dairy farming, and soil and water management, and was named Star State Farmer in 1958.

After obtaining the Star Farmer of America award, James was featured on the front cover of the November/December issue of the *Tennessee Future Farmer*. The image depicted James as he unloaded silage to feed his dairy cattle.

Archival Spotlight #3

Since 1928, the Future Farmers of America has been a significant organization that has helped prepare young people for careers in agriculture. In 1977, the FFA celebrated its 50th anniversary and commemorated the milestone by having a special issue of their national magazine.

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Future Farmers of America, the editors of the *National Future Farmer* magazine decided to create a special issue that celebrated the milestone.

On the cover of the October/November 1977 issue, viewers saw a combination of the FFA emblem, traditional blue corduroy, and golden thread that is similar to the jackets that are worn by FFA members. The special sewing was done by Ethel Cave who worked with the FFA supply service during that time.

In addition to the special cover, the issue had a featured section entitled "The FFA Today," that provided an overview of the FFA as a national organization in its 50th year.

The Tennessee FFA Archival Collection is fortunate to have resources like this magazine that document significant events in the FFA's history.

