

Woolsey Seeking to Preserve History Through Nonprofit Organization

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WOOLSEY — While a small town, Woolsey is rich in history and heritage that spans decades. Although time continues to pass, members of its community search for methods to preserve its history through conservation and restoration.

Woolsey was founded in 1893 after Dr. Isaac Gray Woolsey bought the land and filed for it to be listed as a town under the Georgia State Legislature. This founding established Woolsey as a town that thrived in agriculture and railroad use in the past.

Now, Woolsey's descendants strive to maintain that history through Friends of Historic Woolsey organization.

Friends of Historic Woolsey is a nonprofit organization founded in 2022 by a group of Isaac Gray Woolsey's descendants and community members who identified the need to protect places of historic and cultural significance.

Jaime Lovett, president of the nonprofit and a descendent of Isaac Gray Woolsey, first sparked the



Back row from left: Dana Sams, Judge Fletcher Sams, Reagan Moscon, Pam Laggis, and Gary Laggis; front row from left: Cindy Griffin, Teresa Roby, Steven Chambers, Jamie Lovett, David Ballard, and Ryan Arvay.

Photo by James Lovett

conversation of preservation at a town meeting in 2019.

"The concept of Friends of Historic Woolsey originated in November 2019 when four descendants of Rev. Isaac Gray Woolsey, MD, held a meeting at Woolsey Baptist Church in Fayetteville," Lovett said. "The church's leadership wanted to honor Woolsey's wishes that specified if the church no longer used the historic building, it would revert to Woolsey's descen-

dants. After consulting with relatives, Mayor Laggis, and community members, the descendants decided to form a nonprofit to preserve the historic church, cemetery, and other properties in and around Woolsey, Ga."

The organization has two initial projects on which to build. The first is the upkeep and maintenance of Historic Woolsey Cemetery and the second is the restoration, rehabilitation, and preservation of

Historic Woolsey Church.

For Woolsey Mayor Gary Laggis, establishment of the organization meant more than just preserving the church, but it also was to save the history of the town for generations to come.

"The primary motivation for my involvement is the appreciation I have for the history of our town and the importance of preserving it for future generations," Laggis said.

Mayor Laggis has lived

in Woolsey since 1985 and was elected mayor in 1988. Since then, he has made plans to not only preserve the history, but also work with council to implement the town's first planning and zoning regulations to ensure that the town can "maintain its rural and pastoral appeal."

"As our slogan states: 'Where life is slower and simpler,' residing in Woolsey is a refreshing pause to the conundrums of today's world. Serene neighborhoods and friendly locals are reasons we look forward to coming home," Laggis said.



Reverend Isaac Gray Woolsey, MD