

SPRING STREET LAUNDROMAT

Cookeville, Putnam Co., TN

By Lindsay McReynolds | Herald-Citizen

Posted Sunday, June 3, 2018

Cookeville drivers who regularly pass the old laundromat building at Spring Street and Walnut Avenue saw something a little different there Friday afternoon.



Cars that have been sitting for decades just inside the large glass windows next to the old washing machines were being towed out, and a for sale sign was posted on the corner.

(Pictured: The old laundromat that has sat unused for many years at the corner of Walnut

Avenue and Spring Street is now for sale.

The building was owned by JL Watts, who operated Spring Street Laundromat and North Side Laundry for many years. Prior to that, it was a Pepsi plant.

"My dad was a car fanatic," Watts's son, Tim, said of the reason the cars were inside the building. "He meant to start a car lot."

The building has remained unused for many years, but the cars and laundry equipment remained.

Watts passed away back in 2016 at the age of 84. Tim said it was time to move the cars and sell the building, which has been part of his family for several decades.

Brent Webb of Finish Line Muffler & Auto in Cookeville was asked to come move the cars, including a 1971 Ford LTD and a Ford Grenada.

In the trunk of one of the vehicles, Webb found two old Wilson footballs. It turns out that Webb's grandfather, Aaron Webb, had worked at the Wilson factory and regularly came

to the Watts's laundromat to hand out footballs to kids. Tim was probably 7 years old at the time he received those footballs from Webb's grandfather.



"This man made my entire year," Webb said of Tim. "I'm tickled to death."

Webb said he grew up on Cedar Avenue.

"This was where we came and washed our clothes," Webb said of Tim's family's laundromat.

The cars parked inside the laundromat building have started many conversations among drivers who've passed by the building, Tim acknowledged.

"People are staring through the window," Tim said Friday after the cars were removed.

Will Tim be sad to see the building sold?

"In a way," he said. "But I'm happy because somebody will be doing something with it."

The old laundromat is listed as two buildings according to the Putnam Property Assessor's website and is zoned commercial.

Potential buyers may call (931) 310-8883.

J. L. Watts Obt.

b. 23 February 1932, Smith Co., TN – d. 10 August 2016, Cookeville, Putnam Co., TN, (US Army Korea), md on the 14th of September 1961, Livingston, Overton Co., TN to **Jewell Helen (Randolph) Watts**. J. L. Watts, s/o **George Losco "G. L." Watts** (1900-1949) & **Bessie May Waller** (1902-1988).

*See Bessie May (Waller) Watts Obt.

(**Source:** Tennessee State Marriage record, Overton Co., TN, pg. 456 #3056 – J. L. Watts married 14 September 1961, Overton Co., TN, age 29, address: Chestnut Mound, TN to Jewell Helen Randolph, age 27, address: Rt. 2 Cookeville, TN. Name of parent, guardian or next of kin of female: Stella Mae Randolph).

COOKEVILLE — Funeral services for Mr. JL Watts, 84, of Cookeville, will be held at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 14, from the Cookeville chapel of Hooper-Huddleston & Horner Funeral Home. Interment, with military honors, will follow in Cookeville City Cemetery.



The family will receive friends from 5-8 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 13, and from 2 p.m. until time of services on Sunday at the funeral home.

Mr. Watts passed away on Wednesday, Aug. 10, 2016, in Bethesda Health Care and Rehabilitation Center in Cookeville.

He was born Feb. 23, 1932, in Smith County to the late George Losco (GL) and Bessie Waller Watts.

Mr. Watts was an Army veteran of the Korean Conflict.

He graduated from Tennessee Polytechnic Institute (TTU) in 1963, with a bachelor of education degree. He owned and operated Spring Street Laundromat and North Side Coin Laundry in Cookeville. He later worked many years for the Postal Service, where he retired.

Mr. Watts was a lifelong collector. His interests were tools, old cars, tinkering with electronics, bluegrass and classic country music.

He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Jewell Helen Randolph Watts (whom he married Sept. 14, 1961, in Livingston); three sons, Darrell, Tim (Donna Certain) and Kevin Watts; two daughters and a son-in-law, Sherri (Craig) Davis and Tammy Watts; and one granddaughter, Holly Davis, all of Cookeville.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a sister, Evelyn Stout.

The family will serve as pallbearers.

Philip Luna will officiate at the services.

Hooper-Huddleston & Horner Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements, (931) 526-6111.

You may share your thoughts and memories at www.hhhfunerals.com.

Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, TN: 12 August 2016

*Read more about Putnam Co., TN & surrounding areas at: <http://www.ajlambert.com>