

## HOOPER-HUDDLESTON AND HORNER FUNERAL HOME CELEBRATES 70 YEARS

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**PUTNAM COUNTY** – It all began in January of 1940 with the humble beginnings of ambulance and funeral services. Now, 70 years later, Hooper-Huddleston and Horner Funeral Home has grown to serve the community in a number of ways.

“We feel very blessed,” office manager Jill Horner said. “We feel like it’s a calling – it’s something you do because you have a passion for it.”



However, the business did not start out with this name. It began as Carver Funeral Home under Jack Carver at the location it’s always been – 59 N. Jefferson Ave.

He offered funeral and ambulance services to Putnam County residents for 15 years when he had to give it up for health reasons. He sold it to Ed Hooper and long-time employee Earl Huddleston, who then renamed the business Hooper and Huddleston Funeral Home.

(Pictured is the original home that belonged to the late Dr. Lex Dyer family and was converted into Carver Funeral Home in 1940).

Eleven years later, Hooper and Huddleston bought the Algood Church of Christ and established the Algood chapel, starting the movement that would place one of their funeral home chapels in every community in Putnam County.

Another 11 years later, Hooper and Huddleston’s retirement and the selling of his interest to Hooper, Hooper and Ralph Medley, a Baxter resident, established the Baxter chapel.

Another change came in 1972 as Tech student David Horner joined the staff. He graduated from John A. Gupton School of Mortuary Science in 1976 and the following year renovated the former William Livingston home on Holly Street in Monterey and opened the Horner Funeral Home.

It was 1988 when Hooper and Huddleston Funeral Home was sold to Service Corporation International. Hooper was active in the business until his death in 2000.

In March of 2002, Horner, with his wife, Jill, purchased the funeral home and renamed it Hooper-Huddleston and Horner Funeral Home, returning it to local, family ownership.

To keep it in the family, the Horners’ two sons, Jason and Brad, joined the business.

However, at 70 years old, Hooper-Huddleston and Horner is not the oldest home in the area. It is the second oldest behind Whitson Funeral Home.

“We do have quite the heritage,” Horner said.

The ambulance service was provided through the 1970s. It was quite common for funeral homes to provide that service just to get people to the hospital.

"But one thing that is the same and is important to us is that the community still comes out to support each other," she said. "This is central in helping people get through their loss."



The addition of cremation services were brought in three years ago.

"The fact that this is a family owned business makes people feel more comfortable," she said. "A funeral home is the last place anyone wants to be."

They also team up with local organizations to help connect those who have lost loved ones as part of the grieving process.

"We're always looking for ways to serve the community," she said.

As for the future, Horner says that they are constantly trying to improve their services and looking for new ways to get involved in the community.

"We consistently strive to offer the best and various ways for us to give back to the community," she said.

(Pictured: Jill and David Horner).

To celebrate their 70 years in business, the Horners are inviting everyone in the community for a special viewing of "White Christmas" Dec. 13 at the Cookeville Performing Arts Center. Tickets are free, but space is limited.

Prior to the showing of "White Christmas" will be a short feature on Remembering the Princess Theatre.

"We wanted to feature something else besides an open house," Horner said.

Call 526-6111 to reserve your tickets or to find out more information about Hooper-Huddleston and Horner Funeral Home. You can also visit their Facebook page and their website at [www.hhhfunerals.com](http://www.hhhfunerals.com).

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\*Read more about Putnam Co., TN history at: <http://www.ajlambert.com>