

JAMES EDGAR EVINS

b. 31 December 1883, Indian Creek, near Smithville, TN

d. 22 March 1954, Nashville, Davidson Co., TN

Wife: **Myrtie Ola Goodson** md 7 July 1907, DeKalb Co., TN

Father: **William Sellars Evins** (1853-1932)

Mother: **Eliza J. Foutch** (1863-1954)

Buried: Smithville Town Cemetery, Smithville, DeKalb Co., TN

Myrtie Ola (Goodson) Evins

b. 8 February 1887

d. 2 May 1967

Husband: **James Edgar Evins** md 7 July 1907, DeKalb Co., TN

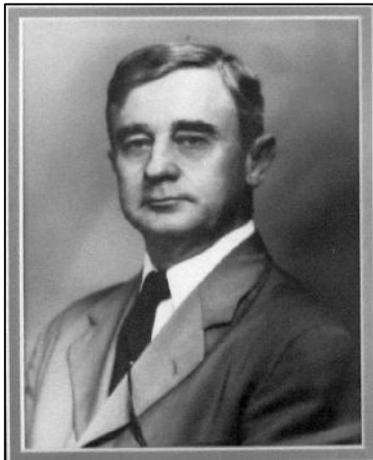
Father: **James Wiley Foutch** (1833-1914)

Mother: **Sarah Jane Tramel** (1841-1922)

Buried: Smithville Town Cemetery, Smithville, DeKalb Co., TN

(**Source:** Tennessee State Marriage record, DeKalb Co., TN, pg. 113 – James E. Evins married 7 July 1907, DeKalb Co., TN to Myrtie Ola Goodson).

Source: Cookeville History Museum, Cookeville, TN: **James Edgar Evins**, one of DeKalb County's most distinguished citizens, was born December 31, 1883 in the Indian Creek community near Smithville, TN. He was the son of William Sellars and Eliza (Foutch) Evins, both of distinguished Middle Tennessee Families.



(Pictured: James Edgar Evins)

Being one of eleven children, he spent his early life on the farm and became a rural school teacher at age of eighteen.

At age twenty-four, he married **Myrtie Goodson** and they had two sons **William Jackson Evins**, who died in 1945 and **Joseph Landon Evins**, also known as Joe L. Evins, who was elected to the United States Congress in 1946 and served 30 years in that capacity.

James Edgar expanded his career and was one of the most successful traveling salesmen for the St. Louis Coffee Company. In 1920 he founded a bus line, which served Smithville and DeKalb County. Later he organized the Consolidated Oil Company and built and operated the Evins Flour Mills. In 1935-1937 and 1945-1947, he served two terms in the Tennessee State Senate. At his death in 1954, he was recognized as one of Tennessee's most progressive and influential citizens.

Source: Wikipedia: Edgar Evins State Park is a [state park](#) in [DeKalb County, Tennessee](#), in the southeastern United States. The park consists of 6,000 acres (24 km²)

along the shores of [Center Hill Lake](#), an [impoundment](#) of the [Caney Fork](#). The State of Tennessee leases the land from the [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#).

James Edgar Evins (1883–1954), the park's namesake, was a [Smithville](#) businessman and [state senator](#) who played a vital role in the development of the Center Hill Dam and Reservoir in the 1940s. He was the father of former [United States Representative Joe L. Evins](#), for whom the nearby Joe L. Evins Appalachian Center for Craft is named. The Evins family began pushing for the establishment of a state park along the DeKalb portion of Center Hill Lake as early as the 1950s.

Source: *Monday, 2 April 1984, Daytona Beach Morning Journal-13B*

Joe L. Evins Obt.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) – Former U. S. Rep. Joe L. Evins, 73, who represented Tennessee in Congress for three decades, died Saturday at a Nashville hospital of cardiac arrest.



Evins, a Democrat from Smithville, died at 8:17 a.m. at Vanderbilt University Hospital after an 11 day stay, Mike Cline, hospital spokesman, said.

Evins had suffered three heart attacks, most recently in February 1982.

He retired after his 15th term in Congress in 1976, saying he wanted to spend more time with his family and he wanted to “quit on top.”

“I’ve seen some people stay in Congress until they got too old and became inefficient. I’ve also seen some good men get defeated by staying too long,” he said shortly before his retirement.

After retirement, Evins allied himself with then Gov. Ray Blanton, serving as a liaison between the state and Washington.

He is survived by three daughters. His wife, Ann Smartt Evins, died in an automobile accident Jan. 4, 1983.

EDGAR EVINS EXPANDS

Posted Sunday, August 28, 2016 – Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, TN

By LINDSAY McREYNOLDS

DEKALB COUNTY — A state park that was dedicated more than 40 years ago has extended its boundaries, thanks to the persistence of one of the park’s rangers to protect the area alongside the park’s entrance.

Edgar Evins State Park officials recently announced that the 6,000-plus-acre area has expanded by 168 acres more.

Ranger Mark Taylor, who's worked at the park for 14 years, said the addition is the only one he knows of since the park was dedicated back in 1975 on the shores of Center Hill Lake in DeKalb County.

"We have a few other target areas, a few other boundaries we'd like to shore up," Taylor said. "This was the biggest one."

Taylor discovered the importance of the addition in the course of researching the property line between the park and private property.

"I figured out the property line ran to the middle of the road next to the office, so technically we're on private property," Taylor said.

"If the land had sold to a private individual, and they wanted to put a house right there, there would be nothing we could do to stop them," he said. "That would kind of destroy the viewshed."

When Taylor discovered that the property was for sale, he tracked down the owners. One wanted to sell, but it would be several years before he would see the purchase completed.

"The (state) land acquisition committee wanted to go forward, but then there was an administration change, and everyone had to resubmit," he said. "I kept pressing on it. At the end of 2013, I heard they were going to log it. They (property owners) had been logging other properties. I emailed Nashville and the land acquisition committee and said we needed to move as fast as we can."

At some point, a conservancy group was going to purchase the property and hold it until the state could buy it, but that deal fell through, as well.

"The loggers did come in and log it," Taylor said. "I said we would like to have a 50-foot buffer. They could have come to the top and logged it all, but they were reasonable and said there was enough timber."

Then the father and son who owned the property both passed away.

"The family inherited the land and appointed another owner as caretaker, to dispose of it," he said. "The family agreed and the state agreed. After five years, the state finally got to the point where they could purchase it."

The state paid \$255,000 for the property, according to Kim Schoetzow, communications officer for the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation.

“I’m thankful we got it,” Taylor said. “It feels good to have it completed. What’s great about the addition is it’s not Corps property.” The majority of the park is owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

“Before the addition, only 188 acres was actual park land that belonged to the state,” Taylor said.

“This actually brings 6,483 acres including Corps and state property, but now we have almost 400 acres of park land that belongs to the state.”

The advantage of having additional state-owned property as part of Edgar Evins is more flexibility on what the property can be used for.

“We can do what we can’t do in other places because we have to follow Corps regulations,” Taylor said. “There’s a lot of red tape, paperwork.”

Taylor said the purchased area was originally going to be used as a buffer zone between the park and private property along with some trails.

“Now we’re looking at making it a dual-use trail system for bikers and hikers,” he said. “We’ll probably plant some things and make some wildlife viewing areas up on top. One of main things I wanted to do was conserve space for migratory birds.”

In addition to the property purchase, the park has had many updates since park manager Jacob Young arrived, Taylor said.

“We’ve had a lot of updates,” Taylor said.

“The exterior (of the office) was updated. The tower was painted. The interpretive center opened. It’s a hands-on museum.”

Other improvements to the park include an addition to the boat dock and new flooring and artwork in the park’s 34 cabins.

“If we can keep this momentum going, it’s going to be almost like a brand new park,” Taylor said.

The park also features 60 sites for campers, nine primitive camping sites and hiking trails.

For more information about Edgar Evins State Park, visit the website <http://tnstateparks.com/parks/about/edgar-evins> or call (931) 858-2115.

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