

# Oconee Heritage Center's General Store Museum opens Thursday

THE JOURNAL STAFF

WESTMINSTER—A ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Oconee Heritage Center's General Store Museum will be held at 5:30 p.m. Thursday. The museum is located in the Barrett Jones building just across from the Depot on Main Street.

The museum is opening as the first Mayberry Days are held in Westminster.

The General Store Museum is a satellite of the Oconee Heritage Center in Walhalla and is a joint venture with the Westminster Area Historic Preservation Society. Several years ago, WAHPS purchased the contents of England's General Store. The artifacts have been in storage at the Heritage Center until renovations are complete.

It is said that Dub England, who owned the original store in the early 1900s, never sold the last of anything. There are lots of treasures waiting to be placed in the "new" building, according to Leslie White, curator of the Heritage Center.

Lee and Joyce Jones Barrett of Westminster donated the building,



JESSICA NELMS | THE JOURNAL

**Leslie White organizes merchandise at the Oconee Heritage Center's General Store Museum in Westminster. The museum, which will open Thursday, is located in the Barrett Jones Building just across from the Westminster Depot.**

Both of their fathers had owned the building at different times and they wanted to honor their memory. On the outside of the building are two quilt blocks painted by the Upstate Heritage

Quilt Trail organization, depicting wedding ring quilts from both the Barrett and Jones families.

On the inside, lumber reclaimed from the Oconee Farm and Garden Center in Walhalla has been used to create

shelving on both sides of the building. Greg Fowler from Foothills Reclaimed was in charge of this phase of the renovation. Stephen Morrison of MoreSun Custom Woodwork restored an

original store counter and cash register stand that will be featured. Various antique glass cases from England's Store will also be used in the museum. Area residents have donated funds for new lighting in honor

or memory of loved ones.

Many area residents have been involved in this endeavor and are excited to see the project coming together. In addition to the General Store Museum, there will be exhibit space specific to the history of the greater Westminster area.

Both WAHPS and OHC members have spent countless hours raising money and renovating the space. Complete renovation of the store and exhibit spaces is expected by late summer. If you are willing to help finish the project or volunteer at the museum, contact White at 864-638-2224 or WAHPS President Deanna DeFoor at 864-710-6554.

The General Store Museum will be open every Saturday from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. with the help of volunteers beginning April 16.

Grant funding for the project was provided by the South Carolina National Heritage Corridor, the South Carolina National Heritage Corridor - Mountain Lakes Region, the Oconee County ATAX Commission, the Oconee County ATAX - Arts and Historical Commission and Schneider Electric.

