

Chatham County Historical Association

PO Box 93 · Pittsboro, NC 27312 · 919.542.6222 · chathamhistory.org



Volume 31, Issue 2

CCHA Newsletter

Third Quarter, 2019



SEPTEMBER PROGRAM

The Spirit of Harriet Tubman

A wise person once said, “If we ignore history, we are doomed to repeat it.” Retired teacher Diane Faison embraces the truth of that statement, and with that in mind, she has created a one-woman performance that enables her audience to take a step back in time and meet the legendary Harriet Tubman. As a local expert on the life and legacy of Harriet Tubman, Diane lends her voice to “The Spirit of Harriet Tubman.” **Join the**



Chatham County Historical Association on September 29, 2019 at 2 pm in the Chatham County Historic Courthouse at 9 Hillsboro Street, Pittsboro, NC 27312 for Diane Faison’s performance of “The Spirit of Harriet Tubman.” As always, the program is free.

Opportunities to Help the Chatham County Historical Association and your Community

Now that all your students are back in school, you have volunteer time during the day and CCHA could use your help! We have lots going on and there is something here for you!

➡ **Historical Collections** – At the Historic Courthouse in Pittsboro you could help review the history of objects and catalog them, ensure proper storage, create displays and other tasks that maintain the current collection.

Volunteering is done under the direction of the Archivist and others with extensive experience. If you’re interested, please email Collections@chathamhistory.org and we’ll work out the details.

➡ **Fourth Grade Field Trip** – Every fourth grader in a Chatham County public, private or charter school has the opportunity to come to

takes 10 volunteers per visit. The Field Trips happen two Thursday mornings a month during the school year from 8:30 to noon. Training for volunteers is Thursday, September 5th from 10:30 to noon at the Historic Courthouse in Pittsboro, 9 Hillsboro Street. If you’re interested and can’t make that date, let us know by emailing FourthGrade@chathamhistory.org and we’ll figure out a schedule.

➡ We are always looking for **Museum volunteers** who staff the Museum at the Historic Courthouse Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 11-4 and First Sundays from noon to 4:30. Email us at Museum@chathamhistory.org and lets talk.

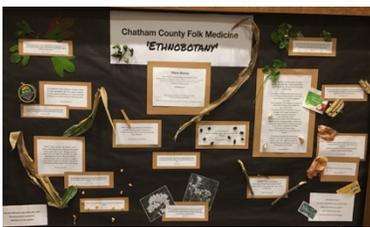
➡ Collections has a wish list of items they’d like to get into the Collection. Right now they’re looking for **Siler City High School**

yearbooks. The yearbooks will be digitized and shared on-line. If you have one, two, or more and would like to share them-please email us at Collections@chathamhistory.org.

➡ **RECORD YOUR HISTORY !!**– 30 or so Chatham County natives have already been interviewed and have recorded their oral history for NCSU’s Language and Life Program which seeks to preserve language heritage and understand how language changes as Chatham becomes more urban and less rural. Think you’d like to be interviewed and tell your stories? Go to our website for more information: click [here](#).

➡ **Chatham County 250th Anniversary in 2021** – hard to believe but in 2021 Chatham County will be 250 years old. Help us plan for the celebration. Send us an email with your thoughts or if you’d like to help organize events. ❖❖

Current Exhibit – Ethnobotany



Alan Russo from the Chatham Council on Aging brought us a book on Ethnobotany he compiled from

information from local residents. Now, it’s our Current Exhibit. Visit the Museum and tell us your own story of using the local flora and fauna and see how it’s the same or differs from the book! ❖❖



THANKS!



Joyce Cotten for her previous work on the Newsletter and Membership. She stepped up when no one else did!

Grimsley Hobbs for working with Preservation NC and Chatham Park on preserving the Griffin-White house on East US 64 Business.

Kenneth Crabtree for coordinating the efforts to preserve and rebuild the Smokehouse.

Luan Harmeson for designing and putting up the temporary exhibits, scheduling the Fourth Grade Field Trip and taking on part of Membership.

Bev Wiggins for maintaining the CCHA website, all the work on CCHA Facebook, and ensuring Chatham County cemeteries, graves, and markers are geolocated for posterity.

So many other volunteers who give their time, energy, and enthusiasm to Chatham County through volunteering with CCHA. ❖❖

Baldwin-Bynum Independent Telephone Company By Corkey Harris

Back in the dark ages, when televisions only had pictures in black and white, not color, there was a TV host named Art Linkletter. One of the practices that he delighted his audiences with was to go into the live studio audience and ask women if they had certain items in their purse. If they had the requested item, they would win a prize. What it did was give Mr. Linkletter an opportunity to see all the “stuff” a woman carried in her purse.

Today, men and women carry a lot of things in their pockets and handbags. Most everyone has a camera, a personal diary, a GPS device and maps, a TV, a computer, a set of encyclopedias, dictionary, electronic gaming device, fax machine, weather alert information, etc.

Oh yes, also a telephone. With pictures of those with whom we are communicating.

So how was it back at the turn of the previous century? The telephone had been around for some time, patented in the U.S. by Alexander Graham Bell in 1876. But it had not yet come to Bynum. That changed in 1916.

The Chatham County Historical Association was recently gifted with a journal containing the minutes and accounts of the Baldwin-Bynum Independent Telephone Company. The journal was presented by Tony Mann. There are meticulously kept minutes in very legible handwriting of the

called meetings of the organization starting in 1916. The opening minutes read:

“On Jan. 31, 1916 neighbors met at Griffin & Baldwins Mill for the purpose of organizing an Independent Telephone Company for the benefit of the community.

Officers elected were as follows:

President, I. R. Seymour
Vice President, W.E. Griffin
Sec-Treas., R.E. Clark

Committee to secure subscribers and subscriptions for telephones and line construction are:

I.R. Seymour - Grove section
W.E. Griffin - Bynum “
J.J. Hatley - Pittsboro “
W.L. Griffin - Bynum “
A.J. Mann - General Collector

Purchasing Committee are:

R.E. Clark
I.R. Seymour
J.J. Hatley

Subscribers for telephones who are regular stockholders by putting into the required number of poles and paying six dollars to the Treasurer are:

J.J. Hatley
W.L. Hatley
I.R. Seymour
L.D. Hatley
A.J. Mann
W.L. Griffin
J.C. Clark
W.H. Faulkner
M.D. Williams
J.W. Neal
D.G. Hatley
W.E. Griffin
W.H. Windham
J.B. Hatley

Dr. Ben H. Hackney paid \$17.00 and in addition to said amount purchased a phone, agreeing to

transfer all messages from this company to places on the line of the Bell Telephone Company.”

What follows is a list of subscribers who “furnished and put up their proportional part of poles in order to have the privilege of later becoming regular stockholders”. The amount paid was \$6.00 (that is equal to \$146.35 today) by each except for J.B. Hatley who “has also to his credit part of a roll of No. 12 telephone wire estimated at 4.00”. (\$97.57 today)

“For full particulars concerning the finances of the company while R.E. Clark was Secretary and Treasurer see bank book entitled ‘The First National Bank of Huntington, Ind,’ which has had the financial features transferred to this ledger.” The next pages are of lists of subscribers and the amounts received with most paying \$6.00 with a range of \$3.00 to \$11.50 (\$280.50). Monies paid out were detailed as to the cost of specific items including telephone wire, batteries (at .70 each), a relief switch from Sears and Roebuck for \$3.71, nails and staples from both Atwater and Lambeth of Bynum and Thrailkill Brothers, Dealers in General Merchandise whose shipping point was Seaforth, N.C. on the D. & S.C.R.R. The mailing address for Thrailkill Brothers was R.F.D. 4, Apex, N.C. The actual location was where the bridge on U.S. Highway 64 crosses Jordan Lake today.

The last entry in the journal was made in May 7, 1924. The minutes reflect a plan for the current lines be cut loose from new lines of another company. There remained \$1.23 in the treasury.

The End

The newsletter will try to have descriptions like this of artifacts, when they’re available!

Chatham County Historical Association

www.chathamhistory.org

 Chatham Historical Museum

Office: 919-542-6222

Museum and Office: 9 Hillsboro Street, Pittsboro, NC

Open: Wed, Thurs, Fri 11-4 pm year round

First Sunday of the month, Mar – Dec, noon to 4:30