

Programs and Events

2019 Events

CCHA Program The Changing Language of Chatham County

Sunday, February 23, 2020, 2:00 pm
Historic Courthouse, Pittsboro
Free and open to the public.



Come find out what the team from the Language and Life Project at NC State has learned so far from their interviews with your Chatham County friends and neighbors!



In the summer of 2019, the Language and Life Project (LLP), in cooperation with the Chatham County Historical Association (CCHA), started conducting interviews to study and archive changing language and life in Chatham County. The team has now completed more than 40 interviews with speakers ranging from 16 to 100 years of age, and plan to complete more than 100 interviews over the next year.



While the main goal of the NC State team is to study the changing language of life-long county residents, the project will also save the stories of those residents about life in Chatham County—providing a rich historical resource for the future.

At the February 23rd program, the LLP team, under the direction of Walt Wolfram, will discuss the progress of the Chatham project so far, offer some samples, and discuss possible ways that the oral histories and other products in this cooperative effort might be shared.



We are fortunate that the Language and Life Project chose Chatham for this intensive study. The 100+ interviews of Chatham residents of all ages and backgrounds will not only preserve Chatham's unique language traditions but also will provide a window into the lives of long-time residents.

The CCHA invites everyone to the program on Sunday, February 23 at 2:00pm in the Historic Chatham County Courthouse. We think you'll be interested in this sneak-peek at the project's progress. You might even decide to sign up to take part!

[Learn more about the project here.](#)



The Spirit of Harriet Tubman

**Sunday September 29,
2:30pm – 4:00pm**

The Chatham County Historical Association (CCHA) hosted of *The Spirit of Harriet Tubman*, a one-person play performed by Diane Faison, Sunday, September 29th at the Historic Courthouse in Pittsboro. Ms. Faison's performance was characterized as 'wonderful,' 'exceeding high expectations,' and 'full of information' by members of the audience, which included more than 130 adults and children.



Ms. Faison was introduced by Grimsley Hobbs, Vice-President of CCHA, and immediately captured the attention of her audience with her emotional performance. Over the next hour, listeners learned the facts of Harriet Tubman's life, but more importantly they could feel the emotional impact of being an enslaved person from Ms. Faison's dramatic portrayal. She earned the standing ovation she received at the conclusion.



CCHA strives to present history via programs like this and the Chatham Historic Museum.

[Program flier.](#)

Manly Law Office Tours

Sunday Jul 7, 12:30pm – 4:00pm

Come take a look inside Charles Manly's Law Office. Learn about this 19th century structure and its famous occupant, Chatham's Charles Manly. Our CCHA docent will be on hand to share its history with you.

Stop by the Museum in the Historic Courthouse first if you need directions. The Manly Law Office is located on Masonic St., behind the Masonic Lodge.

Admission is free.



Chatham County Oral History and Language Study

to be Conducted in Chatham by NCSU's Language and Life Program

This summer, Chatham County natives will be the focus of a new study by the Language and Life Program at NCSU. The research team is looking for Chatham County natives (born and raised in Chatham) who have lived in Chatham for most of their lives to interview. The interviews will be recorded and the team will conduct analyses to look at the question of how language is changing in Chatham as it becomes less rural and more urban. The project will also record and preserve the interviews as oral histories that will be shared with the Chatham County Historical Association—saving a valuable part of Chatham's local history. If you are a native of Chatham who has spent most of your life in the county and might be willing to participate in this project, please get in touch! You'll be helping preserve Chatham's history and language.

For more information, or to sign up, contact Walt Wolfram at wolfram@ncsu.edu or call 919/218-5374.

The Chatham County Historical Association is pleased that the Language and Life Project chose Chatham for this study!

Using DNA to Break Down “Brick Walls”

Sunday, May 19, 2:00pm
Historic Chatham County Courthouse
Pittsboro

Have you wondered how DNA tests might help you explore your family history?

Come hear from an expert! Join us on Sunday, May 19th at 2pm for "Using DNA to Break Down Brick Walls." At this free program, sponsored by the Chatham County Historical Association, biologist and genealogist Ginger Smith will discuss the types of DNA tests that are commercially available, how to choose a test based on what your goals and expectations are, and how the various tests can satisfy your genealogical needs.



She will also present a case study illustrating how DNA testing can be used to break down your “brick walls”—those questions you just can’t find answers to in your genealogical research. Handouts will be provided.

The free program is open to the public and everyone is welcome.

More info: history@chathamhistory.org



Ginger Smith, owner of Your DNA Diva, is a Senior Scientist at North Carolina Central University with a BS in Biology and an MLS in Library Sciences. She sits on the board of the North Carolina Genealogical Society (NCGS), she is an active member of the International Society of Genetic Genealogy (ISOGG), and a project manager of two DNA Surname projects on FamilyTreeDNA.com.

[Handout from the program.](#)

Talking Black in America

Sunday, February 17, 2019 ~ 2:00 pm

Historic Chatham County Courthouse

Pittsboro

The Chatham County Historical Association invites you to a special screening of *Talking Black in America*, a documentary about the most misunderstood language variety in the history of American English. Filmed across the United States--from the rural South to metropolitan areas of the North--it examines the historical roots of African-American language, focusing on the speech of everyday speakers, together with the observations of linguists and historians. *Talking Black in America* highlights the rich tradition of language skills of the African-American community-- the tradition of creative oratory performance and rhetoric, ranging from preaching to hip hop and rap—and celebrates the creativity and resilience of people living through oppression, segregation and the fight for equality.



The documentary will be introduced by Dr. Walt Wolfram, who directs the Language and Life Program at North Carolina State University. Dr. Wolfram is William C. Friday Distinguished University Professor at North Carolina State University and has pioneered research on social and ethnic dialects since the 1960s and published more than 20 books and over 300 articles.

A question and answer period will follow the 60-minute film. The program is free and all are welcome.

Questions: Contact us at history@chathamhistory.org

2018 Events



Bells of Peace: A World War I Remembrance

*On November 11, 2018 at 11:00am local time...
Americans across the nation will toll bells
in remembrance of those who served and
sacrificed in The Great War.*

This observance will mark the centennial of the armistice that brought an end to hostilities in what Americans fervently hoped had been “the war to end all wars.” WWI ended by an armistice agreement at 11 a.m. on Nov. 11, 1918.

Chatham County will participate in the nationwide program, which is designed to honor American men and women who served 100 years ago during World War I--especially the 116,516 who died. On Sunday, Nov. 11, 2018 at 11:00 am, the chimes in the bell tower of the Historic Chatham County Courthouse will ring.

The Chatham County Historical Association is encouraging other groups, churches, and individuals to participate. **Wherever you are at 11:00 am on Sunday, Nov. 11, 2018, let a bell sound to honor Armistice Day.**

Other 2018 WWI Commemorative Activities in Chatham:

The *Chatham Historical Museum* will display a special WWI exhibit during the month of November and several WWI artifacts are on display in our permanent exhibits. The museum is open Wed, Thurs, and Fri from 11 to 4, and will be open on First Sunday, November 4 from 11 until 4:30.

A WWI exhibit will also be on display at the *Chatham Community Library* during October and November—a joint project of the library and CCHA—highlighting local WWI resources.

Also on First Sunday, Nov 4, *museum volunteers will scan photographs of Chatham County veterans* (from all wars) for addition to the museum’s Valor display. [More info.](#)

[Learn more about Chatham County’s WWI Experience](#) on CCHA’s website.

Country Brunch Fundraiser to Preserve Chatham County History

Calling on everyone who values Chatham County history to play a part in helping to preserve and share it! Here's an easy and fun way that you can help the Chatham County Historical Association do just that!

Help us complete the restoration of a historic smokehouse, enjoy a great meal, and get some holiday shopping done—all at the same time.
How-When-Where?

CCHA volunteers will be cooking and serving up a hearty breakfast/lunch/brunch of country ham, bacon, biscuits, gravy, grits, pancakes, eggs, and beverage and offering some unique gifts for sale and raffle. Come—enjoy—and give us your support! Take out also available!

We'll have gift-worthy items for sale during the event—preserves from Southern Supreme and Chatham County historical publications and ornaments. Also a raffle for smoked turkey breasts!

Saturday, November 3, 2018

9 am to 1 pm

Kiwanis Building

309 Credle St, Pittsboro, NC

Dine In or Take Out

Tickets \$9 per adult.

Children under 12 free when accompanied by parent.

[Directions](#)

Questions: history@chathamhistory.org



[More info.](#)

Add Your Chatham Veteran's Photo



One of the permanent exhibits in the Chatham County Historical Museum is "A Tribute to Valor," which honors Chatham men and women who have served in the Armed Forces throughout Chatham's history. A photo frame displays photographs contributed to the collection.

If you have not contributed your Chatham veteran's photograph, please do! We do not need to keep your original. We can accept digital images or help you scan your original.

On **First Sunday, November 4, 2018**, Museum volunteers will scan veterans' photos brought to the Museum between noon and 4:00pm. Along with the photograph we will be happy to receive any information you may have about the veteran.

If you'd rather send a digital copy of a Chatham veteran's photo, please email it, along with the [signed release form](#) and other info about the veteran to Museum@chathamhistory.org. If we have any questions about the photo, we'll email you.

The Chatham Historical Museum is located in the Historic Chatham County Courthouse.

[Directions and parking info.](#)

Questions: Museum@chathamhistory.org

CCHA Program

Voices of North Carolina

The Legacy of Tar Heel Talk

Sunday, October 7, 2018, 2:00 pm
Historic Courthouse, Pittsboro
Free and open to the public.

One of the under-recognized traditions of the Tar Heel State is its linguistic heritage, from the historically isolated Outer Banks dialects of Ocracoke and Harkers Islands to the mountain dialects and Cherokee language of the Smoky Mountains. On Sunday, October 7 at 2:00pm, in the Historic Chatham County Courthouse in Pittsboro, Dr. Walt Wolfram will profile the regional and ethnic traditions of language and dialects through a series of video and audio vignettes that have come from more than two decades of extensive research, documentary production, and preservation activities. No state has a richer tradition of language variation than North Cackalacky. Join us to celebrate the voices of North Carolina as an integral part of North Carolina's historical and cultural legacy.

Walt Wolfram is William C. Friday Distinguished University Professor at North Carolina State University, where he also directs the Language and Life Project. He has pioneered research on social and ethnic dialects since the 1960s and published more than 20 books and over 300 articles. Over the last two decades, he and his students have conducted more than 3,500 sociolinguistic interviews with residents of North Carolina extending from Murphy to Manteo. He has received numerous awards, including the North Carolina Award--the highest award given to a citizen of North Carolina.



The Chatham County Historical Association program is free and the public is welcome! Join us to learn more about another aspect of North Carolina's rich and varied history.

Questions: history@chathamhistory.org

Look for CCHA at Chatham County's Spring Ag Fest

CCHA will be at Chatham County's Spring Ag Fest to help celebrate Chatham County Agriculture, Forestry, and Natural Resources. This year we'll highlight our Smokehouse restoration project. Come see our progress on restoring the mid-1800s smokehouse which was found on the Ag Center property and is being reconstructed in the courtyard of the Agriculture and Conference Center to preserve a reminder of a time-honored agricultural tradition.

We had a great time at last year's grand opening and look forward to sharing the smokehouse story with you this year!

Saturday, March 24, 2018
10:00 am – 2:00 pm
This is a FREE Event!

**Chatham County Agriculture
& Conference Center**

**1192 US 64 W Business
Pittsboro, NC 27312**

[Learn more about Ag Fest.](#)

[Learn more about the smokehouse.](#)



Last year at Ag Fest the only indication of the smokehouse was the excavation for the foundation in the Ag Center courtyard. Come see our progress!

Chatham County's Involvement in the Revolutionary War



Chatham County's involvement in the American Revolutionary War and associated issues will be the topic of a three-part educational series sponsored by CCHA in January and February 2018.

Celebrated local historian [Gene Brooks](#) and historian and author [Carole Troxler](#) will be our presenters.



Reenactors at Chatham County event honoring Patriot James Emerson, 2011

Our programs are free and everyone is welcome.

More info: history@chathamhistory.org

Mark your calendar now to save these dates:

Sunday, January 28

Gene Brooks
The Revolutionary War in North Carolina,
part 1.



Sunday, February 11

Gene Brooks
The Revolutionary War in North Carolina,
part 2.



Sunday, February 25
(also CCHA annual meeting)

Dr. Carole Troxler
The Regulator Movement
and the Revolution in the North Carolina
Backcountry

All three programs will begin at 2:00pm
and be held in the Historic Chatham
County Courthouse.



Gene Brooks is a respected local historian whose profession was and avocation continues to be history. A native Chathamite, Brooks taught history at Pittsboro High School and Northwood High School for thirty years. He also served on Pittsboro's Town Board for thirty years. His community work has included teaching GED classes at Central Carolina Community College as well as teaching his Sunday school class. Brooks was a leader in reactivating and energizing the Chatham County Historical Association in 1988, after a hiatus of several years. His expertise has been recognized by several generations of Chatham citizens, and he has been called by his many admirers the “dean of Chatham County history.”



Carole Troxler is Professor emerita of Elon University, where she taught history for 33 years. She is the author of five books, including the 2011 work, *Farming Dissenters: The Regulator Movement in Piedmont North Carolina*. The North Carolina Society of Historians has honored Professor Troxler with a 2017 Historical Book Award for her newest book and first work of fiction, *The Red Dog: A Tale of the Carolina Frontier (Lizzy's Yarn)*, a work also set in the 1760s in the Piedmont region of central North Carolina. Dr. Troxler delights in the study of “obscure people”--people who left little in the way of letters and private papers and who haven't been considered “important people.”



[CCHA Events 2017 and Older](#)