



CCHA Newsletter



Volume 20 — Issue 1

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First Quarter 2008

CCHA ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2007

Like it or not, the New Year is upon us, and that is always a good time to look back on everything we did during the old year. We asked the members of the CCHA Board of Directors to come up with a list of accomplishments, so in no particular order, we present some of the highlights of 2007.

CCHA Nutshells from 2007

- Annual meeting started year off with presentation by Anne Landin about Highland Scots.
- Received family historical documents from the Thomas family.
- Partnered with Chatham County United Chamber of Commerce and Pittsboro Merchants Association to increase our visibility in the community.
- Remained involved with the Judicial Building Planning Committee in efforts to save the three houses.
- Availability of the Museum to the public increased as we participated in the First Sunday activities May through October, as well as having Wednesday afternoon hours.
- Museum display changed to Nancy Balasubramanian's interpretation of Chatham County history.
- Researched and responded to inquiries from the website.
- Website format updated and in progress.
- Worked with Chatham County Planning Department in determining possible historical sites of interest in the planning process for developments.
- Fred Vatter did public presentations on our behalf.
- Two Chatham County Journals were printed this year.
- Newsletter editing accepted by Bob Crowley; change in format, method of printing, and mailing.
- A walking tour of Pittsboro was done.
- Supported the Save Mount Vernon Springs group at their fundraiser by displaying there.
- Monthly board meetings moved to the Courthouse; we like calling the Courthouse "home."
- Participated in the Pittsboro Street Fair
- Produced the Chatham History Quiz.
- Moved storage from Pittsboro at the Beal house to Pat Round's garage in Siler City.
- Prepared to publish Fred Vatter's book.
- Rode a mule wagon in the Pittsboro Christmas Parade.
- Provided docents at the Pittsboro Merchants Association Christmas carriage rides.
- Accepted Old Pittsboro exhibit from Pittsboro Reunion Committee for storage and possible future use.
- Pledged \$25,000 pledge to the new Chatham County Library Fund to enhance the local history area.
- Mounted Museum displays for Deconstruction of the Harbison House, Chatham Boundaries, Chatham Courthouse, Chatham migration.
- Received a \$600 contribution of the Chatham Seekers Chapter for a museum intern.
- Received a generous contribution from Harvey Gunter for new shutters for the Manly Law Office
- Participated in the Silk Hope Old Fashioned Farmers' Day.
- The cemetery survey team visited more than 20 sites this year, documenting 16 formerly unvisited sites. Half of the documented sites were "new" sites, not formerly in our inventory of gravesites, showing that much of Chatham's history remains to be discovered.

When she saw this list in preliminary form, CCHA President Barbara Pugh said, "It amazed me how many volunteer hours were given to the Association this year. Our Board had a tremendous amount of personal issues to deal with as well. It's a really good group of folks limping along together."

CCHA NEWSLETTER ARRIVES LATE

This issue of the CCHA Newsletter is rather late, and we apologize for that. Some of the material was just late in getting to us, and we wanted you to have it all

CCHA ANNUAL MEETING

The CCHA Annual Meeting shall be held at 2:30PM on Sunday, 17 February 2008 in the Chatham County Courthouse in Pittsboro. Please see the enclosed flyer for further details of this important and significant meeting.

UPCOMING GENEALOGY PRESENTATION

Bill Dow's presentation on Genealogy and Family History for the Friends of the Pittsboro Memorial Library on April 1, 2008 will take place at the Council on Aging on Rt. 87N in Pittsboro at 7:30P.M.

Mr. Dow notes the combination of his own interest in history and growing up spending time in the summers with his grandmother, who had the time to tell him stories and show him places of interest to the family, led to his devoting a great deal of time over the last twenty or so years to genealogy and history. He combines the two because he has come to learn that each by itself makes for a dull and incomplete picture of the past.

Mr. Dow has been doing research in the US, England and Scotland since 1985, and has been teaching basic genealogy at Central Carolina Community College since the early 1990's. His interest has been in not only finding the people in his family tree, but also learning about their lives and placing them in historical context. Sometimes this was just general background, but at times led to actual stories of involvement in historical events.

The recent developments in genetic testing have added a whole new perspective to genealogy, Dow says, allowing for health related information in addition to finding direct relatives.

This program is free and open to all. Refreshments will be served at the end of the question and answer period following the presentation.

Since this is also the annual meeting of the Friends of the Pittsboro Memorial Library, time will be devoted to the presentation of the slate of officers recommended by the nominating committee, any nominations from the floor and a vote for next year's officers.

CCHA MUSEUM NEWS

FROM JANE PYLE, CURATOR

By participating in the Pittsboro Merchants Association First Sunday, CCHA increased the number of visitors to 300 in 2007. On First Sunday local artists line the downtown streets, musicians play, and families bring out-of-town visitors to savor a small town atmosphere. CCHA started opening the museum for three hours and over a six-month period Barbara Pugh, Candace Burke, Kay Judge, and Fred Vatter greeted at least 116 visitors to the courthouse and museum.

During its weekly opening, volunteers Michael McCormick, Lois Moore, Elsie Cunningham, Margaret Tiano, Carol Hall, Fred Vatter, Jane Pyle, Barbara Pugh welcomed 180 visitors, including two Cub Scout groups, the Snipes family reunion, and the Farrington Questers, who split into two groups to enjoy a walking tour of Pittsboro with Fred and Jane.

The Questers are generously funding an intern position for the museum. Listed with the NC State Department of History, the internship is expected to be filled in summer 2008.

New displays were put on exhibit during the year. Selected items from Nancy Balasubramanian's exhibit prepared for the Pittsboro Memorial Library were mounted on walls in the museum and conference room. A pictorial record of the deconstruction of the Harbison/Pace house was supplemented by items salvaged from the effort and by a history of the house and the people connected with it.

Jane Pyle prepared three new poster/displays about settlement of Chatham County, formation and boundaries of the county, and history of the courthouse. Bev Wiggins's popular "Chatham County History Quiz," prepared for the Pittsboro Street Fair in October, is on display at the museum.

Many interesting items were donated or transferred to the museum in 2007: Thirty-five original documents relating to the Thomas family of north central Chatham County were donated by Mary McKenzie Cox and her daughter McKenzie Cox Miller of Winston-Salem. Richard Siler donated a flyer advertising Mt. Vernon Springs dating from the 1920s. A cast aluminum sign removed from the courthouse in the 1960s was given by an anonymous donor.

Dr. Brooks Gilmore donated a cast aluminum sign, "Isaac Brooks Highway."

Mrs. Daniel Foelker gave "Record Book from New Hope School" that covers the years 1877-1897.

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church donated an unidentified day book, probably from W. L. London's store in Pittsboro, with entries dated 1881 and 1882.

"Pittsboro Through the Years," a compilation of information about historical businesses along Hillsboro St., was a gift of the Pittsboro High School Alumni Association, as well as the 2007 PHS reunion booklet.

Digital photographs: Marvin Lee Snipes in WWI uniform, from Marcia Snipes Carter; and Albert H. Snipes and family, 1886, from Robert F. Snipes.

Reba Gunter Thomas, retiring Chatham County Register of Deeds, presented gifts of photographs of former registers Lemuel Johnson, Fleet Reddish, John Emerson, and herself. She also donated a copy of a "1979 Directory of Agencies & Services Serving Chatham County."

Barbara Pugh donated a 2001 Northwood High School Yearbook and a 1951 "Household Guide" distributed by the Lystra Home Demonstration Club.

Jane Pyle donated copies of selected USGS topographic maps.

Corporate minutes of the Pittsboro Development Corporation and a photograph of the ribbon-cutting ceremony at Kayser-Roth, which was brought to Pittsboro by the corporation, were donated by Ed Holmes.

Britt Norwood loaned for scanning a set of photographs of Pace's Mill just after the tornado of 1924.

Various historical documents and items that were salvaged from the deconstruction of the Harbison/Pace house were donated by Carl Bigness.

Several items that were in the historical files of the CCHA at Wren Memorial Library were transferred to the museum collection for security, because of fragile condition, or as a more appropriate place:

"An Informal History" of St. Bartholomew's church written in 1960 by the Rev. Charles Green

History of Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church, 1928

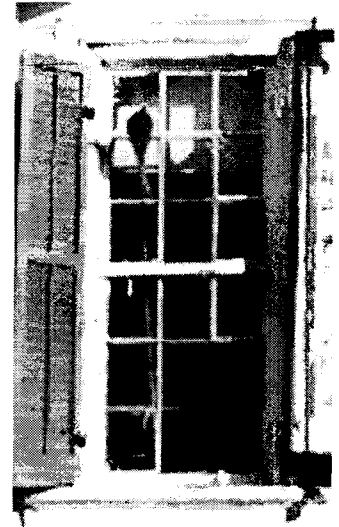
Several brochures related to Chatham County; 1979-80 North Carolina highway

map; a map fragment from Will Heiser's first cemetery survey map, 1995

Adequate though not ideal space in Siler City was found for the storage of publications, CCHA files, and museum artifacts. We are grateful to Pat Rounds, branch librarian at Wren Memorial Library, for use of an outbuilding at her home. In another context, we are also grateful to Pat for supporting the local history collection at Wren and her encouragement of organizing family history files (by Edith Calhoun) and clippings files (by Jane Pyle). Both these projects were virtually finished by the end of 2007.

VANDALISM AT THE PATRICK ST. LAWRENCE HOUSE IN PITTSBORO

Vandalism was discovered on Thursday, 13 December 2007, at the Patrick St. Lawrence House in Pittsboro. Several windows had been broken by the vandals, the worst of the damage shown below. The house has been vacant for over ten years, and this is the first sign of vandalism.



Pittsboro Chief of Police David Collins and County Manager Charlie Horne agree too few people have respect for property, especially historical properties.

The house, built in 1787, is scheduled for removal to make room for a new judicial center. CCHA has been pursuing preservation since the county purchased it in 2000. With public donations, the roof was repaired and several windows were replaced after weather damage. We have recommended covering all the windows to protect the old glass from more damage.

CCHA BOARD OF DIRECTOR AND OFFICER ELECTIONS

An election shall be held at the CCHA Annual Meeting on Sunday, 17 February 2008, at 2:30PM in the Chatham County Courthouse in Pittsboro, NC. These will fill Officer and Director positions.

The nominees for officer positions are: Barbara Pugh, president; Bob Crowley, vice-president; Beverly Wiggins, treasurer; and Jane Pyle, curator. Fred Vatter is past president.

No nominee has been named for the office of secretary, and volunteers for this position are eagerly sought by the Board. If you have interest in serving this way, please contact us as soon as possible.

Returning board members are Candace Burke, Edith Calhoun, Bill Dow, Kay Judge, Walter Harris, Judith Peterson, and Jane Smith.

Three new members of the CCHA board of directors have been nominated, and additional nominations may be presented before the election at the annual meeting. The new nominees are:

Tommy Emerson is well-known in Chatham County, having worked in the county's farm credit system for 32 years, and served as county commissioner from 2002 to 2006. Tommy's family has been in the county since 1760, when his ancestor,

James Emerson settled here. James fought in the battle of Alamance in the war of regulation and later received a land grant for revolutionary war service. Tommy and his wife Anna live on the family's small farm near Siler City. Tommy says he inherited his interest in Chatham history from his father and older brother. He hopes the CCHA will help document and publicize the contributions of early agricultural pioneers in the county.

Barbara Perry also has deep roots in Chatham County. Born and raised in Pittsboro, she moved to Weldon, NC, where she taught for thirty years. But Barbara says she never "left" Chatham. While she lived in Weldon, she returned almost every weekend to practice and sing with the Mt. Sinai AME choir. She continues to play and sing-most recently as part of the Alston Chapel service. Barbara's interest in history was nurtured by her uncle, Bishop Leach, who taught history at Northwood High School. She hopes to help the CCHA recognize African-American contributions to Chatham County history.

Raeferd Bland says he lives in Chatham County on the same land his family has since the 1700s. After continuing his education at Guilford College, he returned

to Pittsboro to teach in the public schools for a number of years and then spent some 16 years working at OWASA in Orange County before he retired in recent times to build his home where he lives with his wife, Ellen and son, Tristan. Talented in many areas, he is a most entertaining storyteller as he relates interesting stories of past residents and little known events of Chatham County.

CCHA 2008 BUDGET

The Treasurer has filed the following CCHA Budget for 2008:

Income:	
Donations	\$ 1,000
Membership Dues	3,600
Publication Sales	4,200
Sales Tax Refunds	250
Interest Income	<u>1,500</u>
Total Income:	\$ 10,550
Expenses:	
General Operating	\$ 2,650
Publications	4,155
Manley Law Office Maint.	150
Museum and Archiving	300
Programs	1,350
Special Projects	850
To Reserves	<u>1,095</u>
Total Expenses:	\$ 10,550

These items were reviewed by the Board of Directors at their January meeting, and the budget was approved.

WHERE ARE YOU?

Please ensure we have your correct address, telephone number, and **EMAIL address**, at all times. Send a note by regular mail or to the email address on the first page of this publication, and we do the rest.

CCHA 2007 EVENTS

Museum Wednesdays

The CCHA Museum in the historic Chatham County Court House is open every Wednesday from 12:00PM to 3:00PM

First Sundays

The CCHA Museum in the historic Chatham County Court House will be open from 1:00PM to 4:00PM the first Sunday of each month during 2007.

CCHA Lecture Series

Plans are being considered for future lectures and presentations on the various facets of Chatham County History.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Our last newsletter mailing went to 85 members with Pittsboro addresses, 29 to Siler City, 34 to ZIP codes beginning 272, 51 to 275 codes, 20 to 276 or 277, 52 outside North Carolina, and 9 others, for a total of 283 mailing pieces.

Please check your mailing label for our record of your membership status. The letter indicates the category (I=individual, F=family, L=life, P=patron, C=complimentary [institutional or exchange]); the number refers to the year in which you last paid dues. With 2008, the individual and family categories will be replaced with a single "basic" membership, for which the dues are \$12 a year. We continue to consider a member contributing \$35 or more to be a patron.

Enclosed with this mailing is a letter from the Board of Directors about the importance of membership support. Please take a look at it and send your 2008 dues while the need is fresh in your mind. An addressed envelope is included for your convenience, and we thank you for the donation of your stamp.

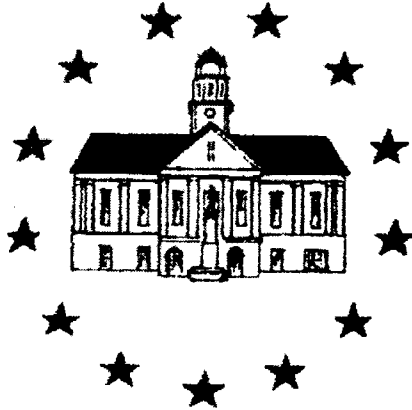
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

County subdivision ordinances require developers to contact CCHA when a 50-year-old or older structure is on the property. Any evidence of human occupation is of potential historical interest, and our involvement has been well-received by most developers. Bev and Jim Wiggins and Jane Pyle research properties proposed for subdivision and attend Planning Department work sessions and board meetings.

In 2007 thirty-seven subdivision applications were researched, with two unrecorded cemeteries located and records begun for preserving historical information. Linda Carnes-McNaughton and Britt Norwood have given valuable assistance.

CCHA serving on the county advisory Judicial Center Planning Committee is our attempt to preserve historical houses on county property. Construction on the center is slated to start in summer 2008 and while the county is still determined to divest itself of the houses, we hope to see the houses preserved in a new setting – not an ideal solution but better than their being bulldozed and hauled to the landfill.

**CHATHAM COUNTY HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION, INC.**



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Published by the Chatham County Historical Association, Inc.
Post Office Box 93, Pittsboro, NC 27312
Email: HISTORY@CHATHAMHISTORY.ORG
Web: [HTTP://CHATHAMHISTORY.ORG/](http://CHATHAMHISTORY.ORG/)

Published four times per year. Subscription is included with membership.

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Secretary: Edith Calhoun

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POST OFFICE BOX 93
PITTSBORO, NC 27312**

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