

# Chatham County Historical Association

PO Box 93 · Pittsboro, NC 27312 · 919.542.6222 · [chathamhistory.org](http://chathamhistory.org)



Volume 35, Issue 3

CCHA Newsletter

April 2023

## Chris Palmer

### Chatham County Rock Star!

will be at the Museum **First Sunday, May 7<sup>th</sup> from noon to 4 pm** to identify rocks you bring in! Chris is a retired hydrogeologist who became curious about Chatham County geology and wrote [Outline of Chatham County Geology](#) for CCHA. Ask him about any of the rocks on display or your own rocks! Or go on-line at [ChathamHistory.org](http://ChathamHistory.org) and look thru the *Outline*. Chatham County is fascinating!



## Chicken Fest!!



Join us at Chicken Fest in Siler City on **Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup> from 10 to 6**. CCHA will have a tent there to spread the history of Chatham County. Drop by the tent, tell us your memories of Chatham, and join us in preserving the history of Chatham County.

## Questers and the Collections Committee

[Questers](#) is a national organization that keeps history alive by supporting preservation, restoration, and education. The local Questers chapter, [Preservation Hill](#), has repeatedly provided financial support to keep the Manly Law Office preserved. Their latest gift provided funding to reinforce the foundation of the Law Office to get, and keep, the Law Office level and watertight!



← CCHA accepting the check for foundation work from the Preservation Hill Questers in the Manly Law office.



*The Questers with CCHA at the Manly Law Office.*

After the Preservation Hill Questers helped financially with the Manly Law Office, they asked if there was a non-financial project they could assist with. They are now engaged with the CCHA Collections Committee inventorying some of the Collections. CCHA is so grateful for these wonderful folks who are helping in so many ways with Chatham County history!

## Fourth Grade Field Trip with Home Schoolers

The Fourth Grade Field Trip volunteers had an opportunity to welcome homeschoolers to the Museum in March. Twenty-six students and eleven parents came to the historic courthouse for a morning of history, civics, and government. The parents' evaluations included "wonderful!", "couldn't be better!". The volunteers decided to schedule two Field Trips in the '23 - '24 school year specifically for homeschoolers. Dates will be on the website! We're excited to provide this education to all students in Chatham County. Join us!



## Smokehouse Dedication at the March 25<sup>th</sup> Ag Fest

CCHA was very proud and happy to dedicate the preserved and restored Smokehouse at the Ag Fest on March 25<sup>th</sup>. Ag Extension could not have been nicer in helping with the event!



Walter Harris talking about the history of the smokehouse. Grimsley Hobbs in the background, Brantley Webster, Doug Berg and his wife, and Kenneth Crabtree listen.



Allen Wilson talks to visitors. Kenneth Crabtree, Dennis Brooks, Ray Carney, and Lesley Richardson listen.



A visitor examines the nailing pattern on the restored smokehouse door, after she read the plaque explaining the function and preservation of the building.

# Reclaimed from the Flames – Program April 2<sup>nd</sup>



*The Chatham Courthouse on fire, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010.*



Gimsley and Taylor Hobbs, from Hobbs Architects, had the audience enthralled with the process of rebuilding the Chatham historic courthouse after the devastating fire in 2010.

The 50-minute program was well-attended and ran long due to all the questions. After the program, the Museum Committee had a reception in honor of the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reopening of the Historic Courthouse after the fire that burnt the interior. CCHA is grateful to the people of Chatham County for restoring the building and providing space for CCHA to share the history of Chatham County.

## Daughters of the America Revolution Chapter Meeting



CCHA provides speakers to local organizations about Chatham County history. DAR President Carol Eubanks is presenting a check to Cindy Schmidt at the DAR Deep River chapter meeting where the members heard about how New Hope Creek was turned into Jordan Lake.

## Museum Updates

- The census data in the Museum is from 2010. New census numbers are out and we're changing the 'Chatham Today' panel. Population of the County in 2010 went was 63,505, now is 76,285. The population of Pittsboro went from 3,743 to 4,537, Siler City went from 7,887 to 7,702, and Goldston 268 to 218. Look for these changes in the Museum soon.
- The Geology and Soils exhibit remains up due to overwhelming interest. Come in and see the wide variety of rocks and soils that make up the land of Chatham County.
- The Frank London Art Exhibit shows the art of a local artist who made it in New York and contributed special art to his native Chatham County.



• Two reenactors, Gary Simpson as John Brooks and Connie McAdams as Lucy Worth Jackson, continue to invite visitors to Pittsboro First Sundays

into the Museum as they wander the crowds. The Museum will see anywhere between 50 and 150 visitors in the four hours it's open. We're thrilled there are so many people seeking out Chatham history!

## Kelly Gomez - Cemetery Project

Long-time Cemetery Project Coordinator, Bev Wiggins, is turning over leadership of that project to new volunteer Kelly Gomez. Kelly has previously photographed and inventoried several cemeteries for CCHA. In the last few months, she has led a cemetery documentation training session for members of the Rocky River DAR chapter, consulted with family who are cleaning up the historic Willcox cemetery near Gulf, and worked with a group interested in developing plans and funds to repair, maintain and increase access to the Jesse Mason cemetery. Kelly is also representing CCHA in an effort to require mitigation of damage to a cemetery in NE Chatham that was plowed over by a developer. We'll be reporting more on that situation. For now, we wish to thank the Chatham County Sheriff's Office and Surveyor Van Finch for their handling and invaluable assistance.



*DAR ladies with Kelly in the back center at Ebenezer United Methodist Church Cemetery.*

## Opportunities for you to make a difference:

- Find a Cemetery or gravestones while wandering on your property or in the woods? Tell us so we can get them documented!
- Genealogy research – if you'd like to do it for others, we're always looking for volunteers. Contact us!
- [Spirits Tour in October](#) – we're looking for a few dramatic people who'd like to reenact real and unreal Chathamites from the past. Email us!
- Become part of history by joining an advisory board for the County or town.
- Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ChathamCountyHistoricalMuseum> Daily Facebook posts highlight various aspects of Chatham County history. The page has more than 5,500 followers who contribute photos and information that adds to the knowledge base and connects community. Join us!

## New on the CCHA Website:

### ChathamHistory.org

- [Coal Glen Mining Disaster](#) materials from Paul Wilson's collection.
- Kelvin School, a well-known Pittsboro school for girls, is described in [Kelvin Teenagers](#) by Dav Robertson.
- [Clyde Farrell: A Man Called to the Earth](#), written by Benjamin McAllister is the story of the small farmer from Mt. Pisgah Community in Chatham County.
- Visit our website: [ChathamHistory.org](http://ChathamHistory.org) ! ❖❖

## MEMBERSHIP

Chatham County Historical Association is an all-volunteer organization--which means we don't have expenses for staff, but we do have expenses. The phone and internet, the newsletter email application and the copies that are mailed by USPS, and the website are all expenses. CCHA depends on your membership and financial donations to continue to be able to do the mission of *"preserve and communicate the history of Chatham County, North Carolina."*

Membership levels are:

Individual membership: \$18

Family membership: \$20

Student: \$10

Patron: \$50

Friend: \$100

Corporate membership: \$100

Lifetime Individual: \$1000

Lifetime Corporate: \$5000

Join on the website:

<https://chathamhistory.org/CCHA-Online-Membership-Application>

Or USPS to:

CCHA

PO Box 93,

Pittsboro, NC

27312



Chatham County Historical Association



Chatham Historical Museum

919-542-6222

[www.chathamhistory.org](http://www.chathamhistory.org)

[history@chathamhistory.org](mailto:history@chathamhistory.org)

9 Hillsboro Street, Pittsboro, NC

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

Tours by request -> email [museum@chathamhistory.org](mailto:museum@chathamhistory.org)