

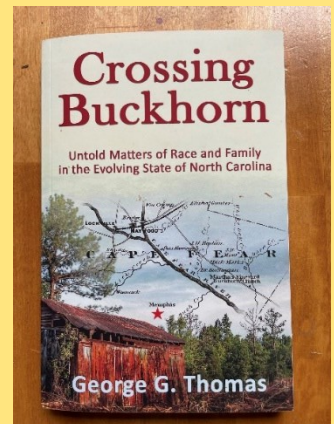
Chatham County Historical Association Newsletter

Volume 36, Issue 2

April 2024

Our Next Program Sunday, May 5th 2 pm At the Historic Courthouse

Encountering Untold Matters of Race and Family in Chatham County



Join us at the historic courthouse the **First Sunday in May ~ May 5th at 2 pm** to hear George Thomas, a North Carolina native, family historian, writer and mapper discuss his discoveries of his family and Chatham County. As

the recently retired Director of the Crafts Center at NC State he has always loved history. On learning of a yDNA connection rooted in old Chatham County, his research led him to write *CROSSING BUCKHORN: Untold Matters of Race and Family in the Evolving State of North Carolina*. George Thomas's presentation will introduce us to his ancestors and their involvement with the community of Buckhorn. Join Us!

Surnames mentioned in this talk include Thomas, Avent, Glover Roberts, Walden, Archer, Dungeon, Lindley, Dickens, Harris, and Hester!

The program is free, and everyone is welcome! Please invite those who may not get this newsletter.

The Museum is open Saturdays!!

11-4 pm on all Saturdays, except the Saturday adjacent to First Sunday. This means every weekend the Museum will be open either Saturday or Sunday!

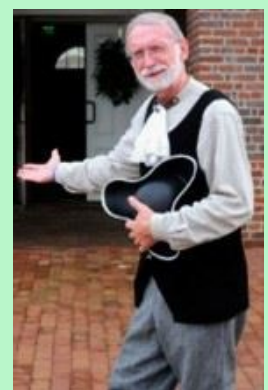
Opening on Saturdays **Thanks to....**

Karen Vaca, one of CCHA's newest volunteer leaders, who recruited enough volunteers to staff the Museum on Saturdays.

Don and Myrtle, Michael, Crystal, Susan, Tabatha, and Nelson! These are just a few of your neighbors that have attended the Volunteers Orientation and started volunteering to collect, preserve, and share the history of Chatham County! Especially on Saturdays!

The County Commissioners and County Staff. The Museum is in a county building, so the County Commissioners were asked to approve the additional hours the Museum could be open to welcome visitors and share all of Chatham History. At the April 15, 2024 Commissioners meeting, the new hours were approved! Many thanks to the Chatham County Commissioners and the wonderful county staff that made this possible!

If you'd like to join us in staffing the Museum contact Museum@chathamhistory.org!



Cemetery Project Update ~ The Work Continues

Cemetery team member, Julie King-McDaniel held a workshop on April 9 for volunteers interested in documenting Chatham County cemeteries. Seven participants learned about CCHA's process for documenting and photographing sites for inclusion on .com. Julie will be working with the new volunteers to get them familiar with the process. We plan to offer another workshop soon. If you are interested in helping us document Chatham cemeteries, let us know at CemeterySurvey@chathamhistory.org.



Over the more than 35 years of CCHA's cemetery project, dozens of volunteers have spent thousands of hours recording grave marker information and, more recently, photographing grave markers to preserve the data they contain. Several hundred Chatham cemeteries still have not been documented – some have not been located -- and more volunteers are needed to complete this important task. If you are interested in helping –

either by photographing markers; putting together a group to document and photograph a large cemetery; helping us locate and get access to remote sites; or with some of the clerical work that is essential, but does not require being outdoors; please contact us at CemeterySurvey@chathamhistory.org to discuss how you can help.

CCHA's cemetery team is in the process of completing Citizen Survey Forms for Chatham cemeteries. As these are forwarded to the State Cemetery Specialist in the Office of State Archaeology, these forms will be added to the state database. Sharing this information with the state will make it easily accessible to property owners and developers and should provide an added level of protection for these sites. We will be filing more of these citizen survey forms with the state as additional cemeteries are documented and will continue to create the forms for the more than 600 already-documented sites in the county. If this kind of behind-the-scenes work appeals to you, let us know! We can use your help.

Another way that CCHA's Cemetery Team works to protect historic cemeteries is to collaborate with developers to make sure they are aware of the cemeteries and other historic features on their properties, as well as the state and county regulations and guidelines for protecting those historic resources. Almost every year, several previously-unrecorded cemeteries are discovered—often when the land is looked at closely prior to development. Our cemetery team has been working with a developer in Cape Fear Township to learn more about one such site and to make recommendations before the developer's plans are created.

The team has also been involved with a developer in Hadley Township where a recorded cemetery has been damaged by maintenance activities. We are working with the developer and the County Planning Office to encourage some restoration of the site and to ensure that measures are taken to provide protection for the cemetery in the future.

You can help us protect Chatham's historic burial places by keeping an eye on the ones you know about and immediately reporting any damage to us at CemeterySurvey@chathamhistory.org. *Damage in progress should be immediately reported to local law enforcement.* Please tell us about any cemeteries that we may not have on our maps and help us get access if you can. If there's a cemetery on your property, or your neighbor's, please document it for us. We can tell you how. If your church cemetery hasn't been photographed and updated, help us recruit volunteers to make that happen. There are many ways to help. Please join our efforts to preserve these irreplaceable markers of Chatham's past.

You can read more about CCHA's Cemetery Project on our website:

<https://chathamhistory.org/Cemetery-Survey>

National Historic Register: Bynum Update

As you recall from earlier newsletters, there are some dedicated folks working to preserve Bynum's rich heritage and cultural significance of this 19th century mill village by getting Bynum on the National Historic Register. If you've donated, THANK YOU! The initial \$30,000 to hire the consultant to develop the nomination to put Bynum on the National Historic Register has been raised via many small donations and a \$15,000 Marion Stedman Covington grant and a \$10,000 allocation from Chatham County. Mdm Historical Consultants (<https://mdmhc.com>) has been hired to develop the nomination. The goal is to submit the nomination to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) by May 29, 2024. If you have questions, please reach out to Susie Crate: scrate1@gmu.edu. Stay tuned for more updates!!



Outreach:



- Siler City History Club** meets every First Friday at the Wren Library from 10:30-11:30. Our goal is to document as much Siler City history as possible before it changes too much! Who remembers the Feedwell Cafe in Siler City? Join us for coffee, tea, water, and cookies to share and document and preserve the Siler City history of Chatham County. Join us!

- The Siler City Chicken Festival** will be Saturday, May 4th from 10-6. If you haven't been to Siler City recently, you should go and enjoy the Chicken Fest and the downtown. Look for us there!

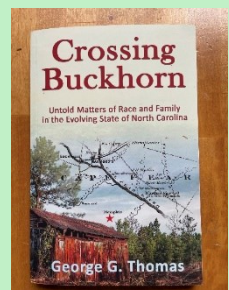
Museum Update



Dorothea Lange Documents 1939 Chatham County - Dorothea Lange was a famous FSA documentary photographer. She came through Chatham County and documented life here in 1939. Come and see the exhibit and learn more about Chatham County.

The Museum and all exhibits are always free. Donations accepted!

First Sunday, May 5th George Thomas program: *Encountering Untold Matters of Race and Family in Chatham County*, 2 pm at the Historic Courthouse courtroom. The Program, as always, is free.



Change in a Permanent Exhibit:

The Schools exhibit could be more current. The Museum Committee will be discussing what that will look like in the next few months!

Join us on Facebook if you have suggestions: <https://www.facebook.com/ChathamCountyHistoricalMuseum>

2024 Fourth Grade Field Trip Update



The Chatham County Historical Association Museum volunteers started in September providing 14 half-day field trip experiences for the fourth graders in our county, 9 public and 2 charter, and a homeschool group (multi-age). We have three more field trips scheduled through the first of May including 2 more public schools and a private school. The field trip opportunity is provided to all our public school fourth graders and is developed in collaboration with the curriculum department of the public school system to meet state standards.

Approximately 1000 students, 25 school staff, and 80 school volunteers have engaged in the rotation of 4 hands-on experiences. These experiences cover the early history of our county highlighting life experiences and important people, a comparison of Chatham County from the 1700s to now as well as an investigation of stone artifacts used by first peoples, an inquiry investigation of household items used about 100 years ago, and a visit to the courtroom learning about legal documents and engaging in a mock trial. At the end of the four rotation experiences, all students return to the courtroom where a special visitor/re-enactor provides a "real-life" sharing of the early times in our county.

School staff and volunteers are asked to complete an evaluation tool to provide feedback to the museum team on the experiences of the day. These evaluations are used as collective data for improvements and planning forward. The most common comment shared with us - *more time please!*

Recent Events



UNC Chapel Hill Professor Dr. Eliza Richards presented a wonderful program on George Moses Horton's Life in Poetry. Dr. Richards is collecting all GM Horton's writings in one collection. Her talk was based on what she's discovered. Because she's in the process, the presentation is not available on the CCHA YouTube channel.

We'll invite her back when the book is ready!



CCHA had a booth at the **Chatham Spring Ag Fest**, March 23rd. Tours of the Smokehouse were a hit with adults and students. Many were fascinated to learn how their ancestors smoked meat for quick consumption or for long term storage. The rest of the Ag Fest was great as well. The food was wonderful! The plants outstanding, the baby goats adorable and the day in the great weather couldn't be beat!

MEMBERSHIP IN CCHA:

The 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 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 carry out our 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

Please consider supporting CCHA with your membership and donations.



Website: chathamhistory.org Email: history@chathamhistory.org

9 Hillsboro Street, Pittsboro, NC

919-542-6222

Museum Open Year Around:

Wed, Thurs, Fri. 11-4