

Chatham County Historical Association

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



Volume 32, Issue 3

CCHA Newsletter

Fourth Quarter, 2020



Museum Reopens October 7th, 2020

The Museum reopened October 7th, adhering to the governor's COVID requirements of masks and social distancing. After the Museum closed on March 18th due to the governor's orders to close because of COVID, the Museum Committee continued to meet online to be ready to reopen when allowed.

The Museum was fully staffed by enthusiastic volunteers in October and November. There have been visitors almost every day! ❖❖

New in the Museum

❑ The
Manly table
was used in
the dining



room at Ingleside, the Charles Manly country home. The table was donated by the families of Finley and Louise Gay Williamson. Mrs. Williamson is a descendent of Charles Manly. You can see the table and get more information when you see it in person in the Museum or on the CCHA website:

chathamhistory.org.

❑ The **Tribute to Valor** exhibit in the Museum has been updated. More than 225 Chatham County veterans' photographs have been shared by their families for display in the Chatham County Historical Museum's "Tribute to Valor" exhibit. A photo frame presents a slide show of the donated photographs. We encourage you to share this part of Chatham's history. The names of included veterans are listed on our website. If your family member's photograph is not included, see our website for eligibility and how to submit.



❑ Cemetery Project Update

Our cemetery volunteers have been busy. Photographs and documentation for four Chatham cemeteries have recently been added to Chatham's listings on CemeteryCensus.com — Fall Creek Baptist, Philip Siler, Ezekiel Hilliard, and St. Andrews Congregational Christian. You can link to all of these from our webpage:

<https://chathamhistory.org/pdfs/CemeteryProjectUpdateSep20.pdf>



We all owe our thanks to the volunteers who work to document Chatham's cemeteries. Without this documentation our children and their children could not know their ancestors' resting place. To help, contact us at

CemeterySurvey@chathamhistory.org



OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE BACK TO CCHA

⌘ We're looking for **Board Members**—Have you always wanted to participate in local history and preservation? The Board meets once a month, the second Tuesday at 11 am at the Historic Courthouse. If being on the Board appeals to you, as a member of CCHA, this is your chance! Email us at history@chathamhistory.org with your qualifications and we'll be in touch.

⌘ We are looking for someone to **design temporary displays** for the Museum. The general topics are defined, and the Collection is available to make up the display.

⌘ We are looking for **volunteers to staff the Museum**—we provide all the training. You will learn about the history of Chatham County, get to meet people from all over the world and give back to your community.

⌘ We're looking for **writers**. If you'd like to research and write about Chatham history, email us with a topic. We'll be in touch to talk about resources.

⌘ We are looking for speakers who want to share their knowledge of Chatham County.

⌘ Email Museum@chathamhistory.org for any of these opportunities. ❖❖

NEW on the WEBSITE:

www.chathamhistory.org

1. Sheriff Mary Myrtle Siler Thompson:

On October 4, 1920, Myrtle Siler was appointed 'high sheriff' of Chatham County—becoming North Carolina's first female sheriff. In this article, Jennifer Gillis recounts how that came to be and tells us more about Myrtle's life.



2. Family Letters Reveal Personal Side of Manly

Family: Charles Manly, Governor of North Carolina from 1849 to 1851 is a



favorite Chatham son. Two letters—one from Charles Manly to his daughter Ida, and a second, from Governor Manly's wife, Charity Haywood Manly, to Ida's future husband, J. H. Baker—provide a rare glimpse of the Manly's family life. The letters, donated by the Williamson family, have been transcribed by CCHA volunteer Cindy Schmidt.

3. My Memories of Tobacco: Bill Sharpe's



Chatham County homeplace was on an ungraded dirt road that is now Polks Landing Rd running west from US 15-501. [In this article](#), he describes the various aspects of tobacco growing and

his memories of working in his neighbor's tobacco field as a boy.

4. **Walter D. Siler's History of Chatham**

County: Judge Walter D. Siler's 1931 and 1932 historical sketches of Chatham County form the basis for much of what we know about the early history of the area. Steve Brooks has transcribed Siler's works and notes that they should be read as much as reflective of the worldview of a prominent citizen of the 1930s as for its detail of the political and military life of the county in its early years.

5. **Architectural Update for New Hope Township:**



CCHA volunteer Kimberly Steiner has [photographed and documented](#) New Hope Townships older structures.

6. **Richard B. Paschal Diary Now Online:**

R. B. Paschal (1820-1870) was elected sheriff of Chatham County in 1854 and served six successive terms. A transcription of his 1860-1861 and 1863-1864 diary entries is now available online. The entries record very brief notes about the weather and his daily activities, mostly related to farming or business, fishing and hunting, church services and funerals, and sometimes news of the Civil War.

7. **The Justice Brothers and Justice**

Motor Company: In Chatham, the name "Justice" has long been associated with automobile sales—specifically Justice Motor Company in Pittsboro and The Justice Motor Company and then Chatham Motors in Siler City—and with two Hickory



Mountain born brothers—Frank N. Justice and

Fred C. Justice. Margaret Hamlet Bingham, the granddaughter of Fred C. Justice, has [shared the history](#) of the brothers and their automobile dealerships, and given us a walk-through of the Justice Motor Company Building in the 1950s.

8. **Searching for Jones Ferry Crossing:**

Have you ever wondered where a road, mill, or ferry that was mentioned in old Chatham records might have been located? Doug Berg set out to discover the location of Jones Ferry. Its existence is suggested by Jones Ferry Road, which comes from Carrboro toward the Haw River. But where was Jones Ferry Crossing? [Doug used old deeds to come up with a very probable location.](#)

9. **Reconstruction and Black Rights in Chatham 1865-1900:**

[In this paper](#), Jim Wiggins focuses on how these events played out in Chatham County and the role that Chatham County leaders and voters played in these developments. He also documents little-known acts of violence against both blacks and whites in the county during this period. ❖❖

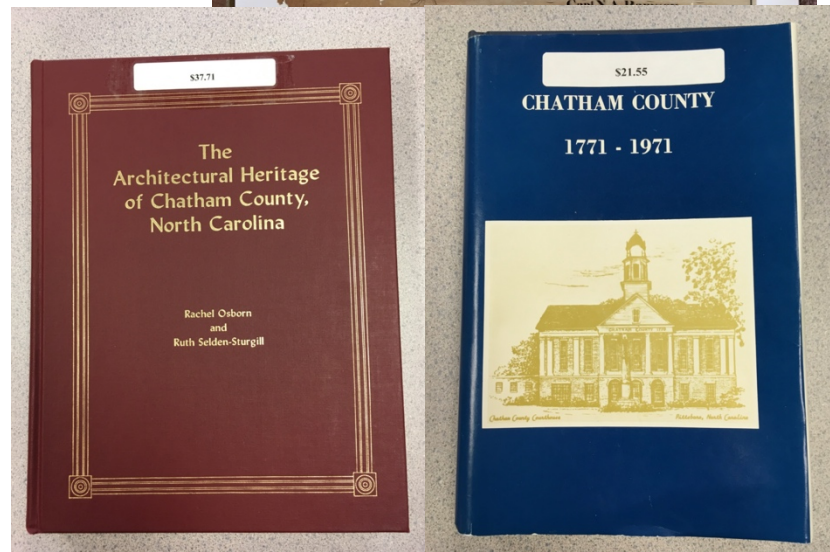
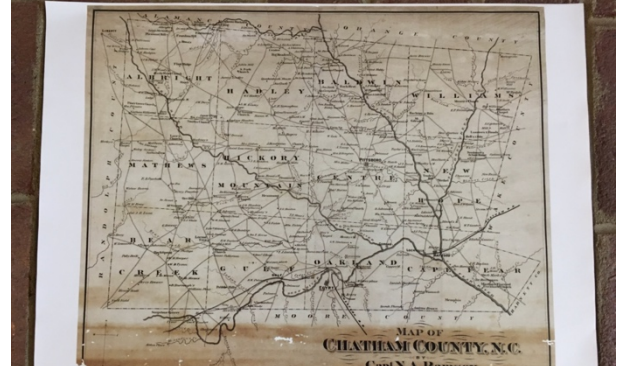


Chatham County is 250 years old in 2021!


Chatham County Managers Office is organizing the Committees for the

anniversary year. The events and activities will be organized around five themes: Creative Arts, Diversity & Community, Growth & Change, Agriculture, and Natural Environment. To get involved contact [Hilary Pollan](#) in the County Managers Office.

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"*. Consider a [membership](#) to CCHA as a gift this Christmas. There are also books about Chatham County for sale at the Museum. There are two Chatham County maps that make wonderful gifts. The unique Chatham County ornaments look well on any tree. Christmas is a great time to show your support for CCHA!



Chatham County Historical Association

 Chatham Historical Museum 919-542-6222

9 Hillsboro Street, Pittsboro, NC

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

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

www.chathamhistory.org

history@chathamhistory.org