



1780 Council Oak

MUSEUM MUSINGS

History Museum of Burke County Newsletter Summer 2020



Toilet Paper and Face Masks – Signs of the Times in 2020

A tour of the History Museum will show items that represent various periods of time. Burke County history has had the Frankie Silvers trial, a gold rush, establishment of State facilities, and the ongoing mystery of the Brown Mountain Lights.

What will the Museum feature about 2020? Toilet paper? Face masks?

Certainly names like George Floyd will be remembered. The loss of Congressman John Lewis represents the end of an important era in history and a generation that fought for positive change.

We are living history that will long be remembered. The Museum will collect artifacts for display and will use them in a time capsule. There will be shelves in the Annex set aside to hold Covid-19 artifacts for the time capsule. The Museum won't be able to reopen until Phase 3. The Museum will process time capsule donations as if they are regular artifacts. The donor will have to sign a Deed of Gift. Curator Phyllis Wogan or Assistant Curator Wayne Hitt will help receive any time capsule donations.

The Covid-19 items will likely stay in storage for several years. If you are interested in donating items, please contact the Museum with any suggestions at (828) 437-1777 or burkehistory@compascable.net.

Dignity of Work Brick Fundraiser for The “Walk of Honor”

The Dignity of Work Legacy Monument is a commissioned art installation soon to be dedicated on the grounds of the History Museum. This memorial will honor mill and factory workers of Burke County.

You may honor a family member, friend or neighbor with a personalized brick on the walkway around the Monument. The standard 4"x8" brick, available for \$100, may contain up to three lines of text with 18 characters in a line (spaces and punctuation count). Please see the form on page 4 for details. Due to your individual tax situation, donations may or may not be tax deductible.

Admission is free to the Museum. The History Museum is a 501 (c) (3) private nonprofit educational organization. A copy of its solicitation license is available from the NC Charitable Licensing Section at 1-888-830-4989. This license is not an endorsement by the State.



John Greene, Sr. Awarded the Sitton Award for 2019

John Greene Sr., longtime Member of Board of Directors of the History Museum of Burke County, was recently awarded the 2019 Claude S. Sitton Award for exemplary service to the Museum. John has served in numerous capacities. He has served as chair for a total of six years.

This award would have been presented at the March 21, 2020, Annual Meeting, which was not held due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Artifact Donations

Although the History Museum has not reopened yet, it is still able to take in a limited number of artifact donations. An example of a recent donation is a 63-piece collection of cameras and photography equipment that belonged to the donor's paternal grandfather, a traveling salesman for Eastman Kodak during the 1920s-1950s.

If you have something that you would like to donate, please call 437-1777 and leave a brief message. Someone from the Acquisition & Collections Committee will contact you.

The photo shows recent donations of a "Magic Lantern" glass slide projector, top photo, made in Nuremberg, Germany, from the early 20th century. Bottom left is a 1952 Retina 3C 35 mm camera made in Germany for Kodak. Bottom right is a "Baby Brownie" camera sold at the 1939 San Francisco World's Fair for \$1.00.



NC CARES Humanities Relief Grant Awarded to History Museum of Burke County

The History Museum of Burke County is one of 59 museums, libraries, historical societies, and other cultural nonprofit organizations across the state to receive a NC CARES Humanities Relief grant from the North Carolina Humanities Council. This \$10,000 grant will support expenses such as general operating costs which support humanities programming and the digitization of collections and resources to make them available online. NC CARES Humanities Relief Grant funding was provided to the North Carolina Humanities Council by the National Endowment for the Humanities through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act passed by Congress in late March. The North Carolina Humanities Council is a statewide nonprofit and affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Salute to Jeff Stark!

The History Museum salutes Jeff Stark and thanks him for a dozen years of docent work at the Morganton Train Depot. For several hours on the second Saturday of every month for approximately 144 months, Jeff welcomed guests and provided tours of the Depot.

A lifelong train enthusiast, Jeff recalls many trips from Morganton, his hometown, to his father's hometown, New York City, in the 1950s and 1960s. In those decades, individuals and families often traveled by rail. Two trains per day came through the Morganton Depot during that time. Passenger trains had the right of way over steam engines which, by that time, were only carrying freight, and Jeff has many memories of looking out the window from his passenger train seat to watch the sidelined steam engines as his train passed by.

Over the years Jeff amassed a collection of railroad lanterns and eventually donated all but one of them to the Train Depot. He provided tours to people from up and down the Eastern Seaboard and said he especially enjoyed watching grandparents and their grandchildren touring the Depot. One of the special things about the Depot, he said, is that it allows people who visit to get a feel for what rail travel was like from the 1920s all the way into the 1960s, i.e., dining cars with real china and linens, ornate furnishings, and so on.

Even though he is no longer on duty at the Train Depot, Jeff encourages people to visit the Depot and the main facility of the History Museum to discover their unique exhibits and the windows they provide to the past.



The History Museum
of Burke County, Inc.
P.O. Box 416
Morganton, NC 28680
201 West Meeting Street,
Morganton, NC 28655
828-437-1777

burkehistory@compascable.net

Executive Director

Claude S. Sitton

Curator

Phyllis Wogan

Board of Directors

- Waits Gordon, Chairman
- John Greene, Sr. Vice Chairman
- Sandra West, Secretary
- Jim Brinkley, Treasurer
- Louis Asbury, III
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- Albert Dale
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- John Howard
- Winston Lear
- Linda Lindsey
- David McGalliard
- Sarah Owens
- Robert Patton III
- Velma Sanders
- Fred Smith
- Dana Whisnant
- Phyllis Wogan

Veterans' Interviews Available Online

For a compelling and memorable experience, visit the Museum Website by going to thehistorymuseumofburkecounty.org to view a few of the veterans' interviews online.

- Go to "Exhibits"
- Go to "Collections"
- Click on "Veterans' Interview" photos of veterans, one at a time
- Click the "play button" in the center of each photo, first the black and then the red, and watch excerpts of the interviews of

Paul Cash	WW II
Judge Sam McDowell Tate	WW II
Vernon Rader	WW II
Robert (Bob) Pruett	Korean "Conflict"
Gerald Neiters	Vietnam
William "Nick" Palmer	Vietnam

Claude Sitton and Louis Asbury III filmed and Louis edited. Each video will take about eight to 12 minutes to watch.

The first three veterans are now deceased but the last three are living. When you see the family members of the first three or see the living Veterans please **THANK THEM FOR THE VETERANS' SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY!**

If you enjoy the photos and the interviews, ask your family and friends to visit our Website also.

We want stories from our veterans; if you are a veteran or know of one who should be interviewed please contact the Museum.

Visit the website at thehistorymuseumofburkecounty.org. Even though the Museum is closed temporarily, donations can be made through a secure site under the tab for "Support."

History Museum Hours:
Tuesday - Friday 10:00 - 4:00
Saturday 10:00 - 2:00
Rail Road Depot
Saturdays
1:00 - 3:00
R. Douglas Walker
Curator Emeritus

Museum Musings Staff
Debbie Bradley
Linda Lindsey
Pat Page

***The Museum
anticipates
reopening during
Phase III.***

Form for Dignity of Work "Walk of Honor" Brick Orders

Donor/MemberName(s)_____

Address_____

Tel_____

E-mail_____

Brick Information (3 lines, 18 characters per line including spaces)

Please send completed form, with check for \$100 per brick, to the History Museum, P.O. Box 416, Morganton, NC 28680.