



A Piece of History in Motion

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We were blessed with the donation of a Civil War era Wheeler & Wilson treadle driven sewing machine which is now on display in our 'sewing room.' One of the most ingenious of the sewing machine inventors was Mr. Allen B. Wilson. Born in New York in 1824, he later moved to Michigan where he made a living as a journeyman cabinet maker. Around 1840 he began the development of a sewing machine, which was independent of the efforts being made by other inventors in New England. In 1849 he devised the rotary hook and bobbin combination, forming what would be the special feature of the Wheeler & Wilson sewing machine. The rotary hook mechanism worked very simply & very quietly. Turning the hand crank caused the bobbin to rotate in circles & during each revolution a hook picked up the top thread from the needle & twisted it with the thread from the bobbin to produce a stitch. Wilson obtained a patent for his machine that same year & in 1854 he patented another sewing machine that included the important & effective four-motion feed for moving the work after every stitch. The four motion feed is still used on all sewing machines today! During an exhibition in New York, Wilson was introduced to the older Nathaniel Wheeler who, at the time, was the manager of the firm Warren, Wheeler & Woodruff of Watertown, Connecticut. They formed a partnership in late 1851 under the name of The Wheeler, Wilson Company to manufacture Wil-

son's sewing machines at Watertown, New York. To start with, production was slow, however, by the early years of the 1860's, it had increased from 20,000 to 30,000 & then 50,000 machines, peaking a decade later at over 128,000 per year. In 1856, the company was renamed the Wheeler & Wilson Manufacturing Company & moved to a new facility in Bridgeport, Connecticut where it began full scale manufacturing of sewing machines. Although Singer sewing machines would eventually become the most popular brand, Wheeler & Wilson machines were the most widely produced (& most widely copied) machines in the 1850s & 1860s. Although sewing-machine prices dropped after the Civil War, a machine was still a sizeable investment (about what a car would cost in today's funds). Some neighboring families pooled their money to share a machine or purchased a machine on an installment plan. The Wheeler & Wilson Company was eventually bought by Singer in 1905, which continued the manufacturing of the D-9 into at least the 1920s. Wheeler & Wilson No. 3 machine is the true precursor of the modern lock-stitch sewing machine, since it incorporates the rotating hook principle & four mo-

tion feed invented by Allen B. Wilson (1824-1888). The under thread is contained in a disc bobbin which fits loosely in a ring-shaped holder that looks like a thin, metal doughnut. Interlocking of the two threads occurs when the loops of the needle thread are caught & extended by the revolving hook & passed under the bobbin. The presser-foot has an inset glass plate which allows the seamstress to observe the seam at the point of stitching. We cannot be certain if the particular machine on display at the museum is a No. 3 or 4. There are a few clues which helped us narrow down the production dates for the sewing machine. It has a slightly lighter, 'waisted' base casting and a narrow section that first appeared in the 1860s & carried on to about 1880. Also, the brass medallion on the base seems to have first appeared around 1870. The serial code on the plate of the machine, along with the clues above, have led us to estimate its date of production, which, keep in mind, was all done meticulously by hand, to 1872 or 1873 making it nearly 150 years old! The same machine is on display in Varina Davis' dressing room in the White House of the Confederacy. If you would like to see this beautiful piece of history, please stop by the Museum!



A drawing of a treadle driven sewing machine taken from a 19th century Wheeler & Wilson advertisement

A Note from the Director's Desk...

As you all know, we are in the midst of a South Carolina summer, with high temps, high humidity and God's own fireworks shows (those summer lightning storms)! Although the Museum took a hit from a recent lightning strike and is working around construction on the 2nd floor of the old Courthouse, we are still managing to have fun, learn new things and introduce the treasures of Dorchester County to our visitors.

The Museum recently offered two DIY Science Summer Camps. The kids had a ball making homemade bubbles, using cabbage juice to test for acidity, making cornstarch goo, launching rockets to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the moon landing and MANY other experiments. They got messy and made a mess, but enjoyed learning and experiencing hands-on science!

We have a number of upcoming events, some of which the details have not yet been confirmed, but should be in the near future. Keep an eye on your e-mails as we will be

sending out e-mail blasts to keep you updated. If you have not yet attended one of our ever-popular Ghost Walks (and if you have attended them in the past), mark your calendars for October 19 and 26. Each year, we feature new stories and tales of the recent "happenings" here at the Museum. They never fail to get the blood pumping and are always tremendous fun!

Volunteer Bettie Berry has generously donated a queen/king sized, hand-made, hand quilted quilt to the Museum to be raffled off. Details are on the flyer here in this newsletter. The quilt will be raffled off on the final day of the 3rd Annual Quilt Show, which will be held from November 2 through 9. Plans for a "Music at the Museum" series are in the works so stay tuned for details on it. The Museum will also be hosting another historical performance by Howard Burnham on November 17 in Summerville. Stay tuned, as well, for more information on it.

Be sure to get your Flags of Honor

before November!! As you know, this is an on-going fundraiser for the Museum. Flags can be purchased in honor or memory of a loved one. Each flag will have a ribbon with the loved one's name on it and will be displayed in front of the Museum during the months of May and November. During the remainder of the year, the flags will be displayed in the hallway of the Museum. This is a wonderful, patriotic way to honor our friends and family members, veterans and civilians alike! Flags are \$25 each and forms can be obtained from the website at www.dca-hc.com or you can e-mail me at contact-us@dca-hc.com.

Consider a memorial to the Museum to honor a loved one who has passed. Don't forget that any donations made to The Heritage Museum are tax deductible! All donations of any amount are very welcome!

As always, thanks from all of the staff and volunteers at the Heritage Museum for your continued support! We hope to see you soon!!

LaClaire S. Mizell



Archivist's Notes...

Still working hard to continue transferring information to the research computers and digitizing the Legare Walker Papers. There are now close to 5,000 digitized pages of the Legare Walker Real Estate done and that's only the contents of one and a half of the of 224 boxes that make up the Legare

Walker Real Estate Collection!! As I'm sure you've deduced, this is quite a collection! I don't know how long it will take to complete the digitization of this collection, but I know this information will be very helpful to researchers and historians once it's available on our research computers. The Research

Library is coming along nicely. At this time, we have approximately 8,000 documents already loaded onto the research computers. Each week, more information is added to the computers and one day soon all will be available to the public for research! *Christine Rice*

Highlighting a Hero



William Calhoun Walters, known locally (Reevesville) as Cal Walters, graduated from St. George High School in September of 1942. The United States had been fighting the Germans and their allies for about two years when Cal

bravely volunteered to join the ranks of the Navy in July of 1943 less than a year after his high school graduation. He was an electrician mate 3rd class assigned to the U.S.S. Mississinewa, a 553 foot auxiliary oil tanker pictured below.



The Mississinewa, commissioned on May 19, 1944, weighed 25,425 tons and supported the ships of the 3rd fleet in Central and South Pacific waters. It was at anchor in Ulithis in the early morning hours of November 20, 1944 with 440,000 gallons of aviation gasoline and a full load of fuel oil when a one-man Japanese suicide torpedo submarine (Japanese Kaiten) collided with her. A secondary explosion, presumably the 5" ammunition magazine, occurred at 6:05 a.m. engulfing the ship in flames before finally sending her and 63 men (3 officers and 60 enlisted men) to a watery grave nearly 3 hours after the initial impact. By 8:30 a.m. the fires were extinguished, but her bow dipped below the surface. Any rescue efforts were abandoned, and the ship slowly rolled to the port. It continued to roll as the stern rose, displaying its twin, four-bladed screws (*pictured right*) and then disappeared.

Veteran John A. Mair recalls:

"I was awakened about 5:45 AM on the morning by a violent explosion forward that shook the ship from bow to stern.

The explosion threw me off the cot and I landed on the well deck with a thud! My view forward was obscured by the cargo deck over my head but I knew something terrible had happened! My first thought was that a crew member had

been smoking a cigarette over the forward aviation gasoline storage tanks and caused a tremendous accident. I did not realize that the explosion was a result of a Japanese attack!"

I did not realize that the explosion was a result of a Japanese attack!"

There is a memorial on Mangejang Island, at Ulithis, for those lost in the sinking of the U.S.S. Mississinewa including our local hero, Cal Walters. He was survived by his mother and father, Mr. & Mrs. W.A. Walters, two sisters (Gladys Ruth & Adell) and three brothers (Richard Louis, David Lloyd and Ernest Edward), at the time, all of Reevesville. Cal was awarded the Purple Heart, Navy Good Conduct Medal and the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal for his bravery and ultimate sacrifice. Our country is forever indebted to him and his family for the same.

References

California Dive Team Finds USS Mississinewa

Bent Prop - The Search for USS Mississinewa

© Pacific Wrecks - USS Mississinewa AO-59

Source: <https://www.pacificwrecks.com/ships/usn/AO-59.html>



This photo captures the last seconds above water of the U.S.S. Mississinewa before it was sunk in 103 feet of water by a Japanese Kaiten manned torpedo on November 20, 1944. It was the only US Navy ship to be sunk by Kaiten attack alone.

**Mark Your Calendars
for these upcoming
events this Fall!**

- *October 19th — Ghost Walks*
- *October 26th — Ghost Walks*
- *November 2nd thru 9th — Quilt Show*
- *November 9th — Drawing for Quilt Raffle (see flyer on next page!)*
- *November 17th — Howard Burnham performance of Lord Cornwallis, Doar Hall of Saint Paul's Anglican Church in Summerville*

August 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
A Date in History: On August 5, 1914 the 1st electric traffic light installed in the USA was erected on the corner of East 105th Street and Euclid Avenue in Cleveland, Ohio.						
4	5 	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

September 2019



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 	3	4	5	6	7
8 	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Dorchester County Archives & History Center

Quilt Raffle



King / Queen sized quilt created, handmade & hand quilted in
the Royal Star of South Carolina pattern

Hand quilted with the feather pattern for the Royal History of South
Carolina, with hand embroidered state seal, South Carolina State emblem,
enlargement of the SC quarter and a
Carolina Wren with Jessamine in each corner

Donated to the Heritage Museum by Bettie Berry

Tickets are \$5.00 each or 5 for \$20.00

Drawing will be held on November 9, 2019

CONTACT (843) 931-1021 FOR TICKETS!

All proceeds will benefit the Dorchester County Archives & History Center

SAVE THE DATE!

**THE DORCHESTER COUNTY
ARCHIVES & HISTORY CENTER AND
THE SUMMERVILLE-DORCHESTER MUSEUM
PROUDLY PRESENT**

HOWARD BURNHAM



Noted English writer and performer of literary and historical dramatic monologues in a moving portrayal of

LORD CORNWALLIS

In full costume, Mr. Burnham will recreate the time and personage of Charles, Earl Cornwallis, as he revisits the scenes of his historic campaign through the Carolinas and, with resignation and humor, gives the British perspective of the final phase of the American victory in the Revolutionary War.

Sunday, November 17, 2019 at 6:00 pm

Doar Hall of Saint Paul's Anglican Church
316 West Carolina Avenue
Summerville, SC

For more information, contact the DCA&HC at (843) 931-1021 or
the SDM at (843) 873-1991

Volunteer of the Month

Frances Metts has been volunteering at the Heritage Museum since its “grand opening” in January of 2017 when we hosted the traveling Smithsonian Exhibit. Throughout the years Frances has continued to be a faithful Tuesday morning volunteer. In addition to working her “normal” hours, she is always willing to help out for

special occasions and events whenever they might fall throughout the week. Frances, I know I don’t say it enough but — **THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU for all that you have done for the Museum!** We appreciate your positive attitude and ever present smile each week!

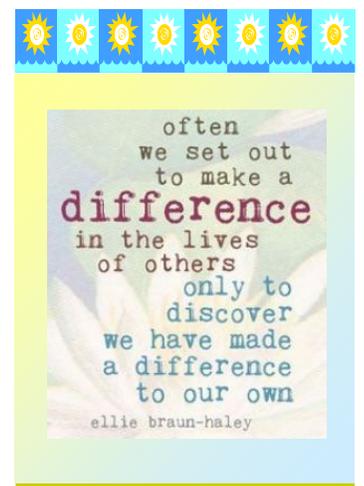


Don't Let This Opportunity Pass You By!!!

Would you like to join the Volunteer Team at Dorchester County Archives & History Center’s Heritage Museum? If you volunteer only 12 hours per month, you and a guest can get in FREE at amazing venues throughout the Lowcountry! These locations include

— Audubon Center at Francis Beidler Forest, Charles Towne Landing, Charleston Harbor Tours, The Charleston Tea Plantation, Drayton Hall, Gibbs Museum of Art, South Carolina Aquarium, Boone Hall Plantation, Magnolia Plantation & Gardens, Mid-

dleton Plantation, & many, many more! If you would like to volunteer, please contact LaClaire Mizell at 843-931- 1021 or go to our website and complete & return the Volunteer Agreement Form to LaClaire Mizell at 101 Ridge Street, St. George, 29477.



Paleographic Highlights

Curator/Paleographer Patrick Scally has finished transcribing the letters, wills, and estate inventories belonging to Jacob J. Moorer (1799-1835) and his sons,

President Pierce Moorer (1830-1896), Pickney L. Moorer (1832-1887), and Emmanuel D. Moorer (1835-1852), and is now working to finish the St. George

Town Council meeting records from 1915 - 1926. After that project has been completed, there’s a batch of Civil War-era letters waiting to be transcribed.



Image of one of the original documents in the Moorer collection that Mr. Scally recently finished transcribing.

Summer Camp 2019!!!

This year's summer camps had a 'science' theme to them. One was held in June and one just ended in July. Despite the heat and humidity, the kiddos had a blast learning how science works and how sometimes an experiment is just that...the outcomes are not always what you would anticipate, but that doesn't mean you can't learn

something from it and go back to the drawing board with modifications that will get you where you want to go! As we all know, some of our most important discoveries were scientific 'mistakes'! Please take a gander at some of the photos below to see the fun had by all!



Dorchester County Archives & History Center



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E-mail: contact-us@dca-hc.com
Website: www.dca-hc.com

This newsletter highlights the activities & current events at the Heritage Museum at the Dorchester County Archives & History Center. The DHA&HC is a Non-Profit Organization that was chartered in 2014. We believe that 'History is Perishable' and that the best way to care for the past is to tend to our future.

Mission - Preserving today for tomorrow.

Our mission is to preserve the county's heritage for future generations through innovative leadership, education, and programs by redefining the effort of preservation as a future-oriented, proactive set of behaviors engineered to intelligently and continually weave our values, stories, lands, and culture into the fabric of future growth.

Vision – Every man, woman and child mentally and emotionally engaged in the effort of preservation.

We believe that the stories of the people and places of Dorchester County should not be lost. We want families to document their roots and we want to interpret how our county has developed. We will base our public programs on research and documentation. We believe history is inclusive and will strive to keep a diverse Board of Directors and offer programs that appeal to all citizens. We will provide preservation oriented education and engagement opportunities and assistance to the people of Dorchester Co. by working with and through existing organizations and institutions.

Values—Our Stories, Our Families, Our Land, Our Culture & Our Future Learning local history helps children build connections to their community.

Similarly, the only way we can understand others is by studying their past. We will provide opportunities for the community to engage in systematically archiving and retelling the story of Dorchester County.

Preserving Today for Tomorrow



Dorchester County Archives & History Center Board of Directors & Staff

Phyllis Hughes, Chair
Rudd Smith, Vice Chair
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