

GRAHAM COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



HONORING THOSE WHO PIONEERED THE RUGGED MOUNTAINS OF GRAHAM COUNTY



www.HISTORYGC.org

828.479.5008

grahamcountymuseum@gmail.com

Volume 9, No. 2

April 2025

Tere Moore, Editor



Azalea Mountain View
by Cvandyke

NEWSLETTER

CONTENTS

Vision & Mission Statements	2
Flame Azalea Festival	2
GC Presbyterian Church	3
History of GC Part XIX	4-7
GCHA Fundraisers	8
History Makes Great News	9
Membership & Order Forms	10



Flame Azalea by Les Voss
(See pg. 2)

**GCHA meets the Monday of
each month (except
holidays) at 5 pm at United
Community Bank, 132
Rodney Orr Bypass,
Robbinsville**

**Contact us for telephone
call-in information.**



GCHA VISION STATEMENT

To maintain a heritage center located on Main Street, by focusing on education, history, and community activities, to assure that Graham County's place in history will be secured for future generations. Participate in the revitalization of downtown Robbinsville, NC, and promote cultural tourism and economic development in our area.

GCHA MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to preserve, interpret, communicate, and celebrate the unique culture and rich history of the Southern Appalachian Region and Graham County, North Carolina through exhibition, demonstration, and education. Vital to this mission is our establishing and maintaining a Cultural Heritage Center located on Main Street in Robbinsville, North Carolina, that would further economic development by contributing to the revitalization of the historic downtown area, promoting cultural tourism, and showcasing area artisans and their work.

GCHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EDD SATTERFIELD — PRES CAROLYN STEWART — V. PRES
LAVINA WEST — SEC'Y TERRI PHILLIPS — TREAS'R
DOYLE BROCK MAX BUCHANAN JAMES CALHOUN
TERESA GARLAND JACK B. WIGGINS

The subject of history, particularly academic history, is facing a decline in interest and funding, leading to a potential crisis. This decline is evidenced by shrinking history departments, fewer students majoring in history, and challenges for historians finding jobs.

Reasons for the decline: Reduced emphasis on humanities; lack of financial support; changes in student interests; changes in curriculum.

Consequences of this decline: Loss of historical knowledge; impact on national security; reduced civic engagement.

However, there is still public demand for history content:

Growing popularity of history-related media: A wide array of history-related content, including books, documentaries, podcasts, and historical sites, which suggests that public interest in history remains strong.

Importance of history for understanding the present: Studying history helps us understand how events in the past have shaped the present and provides valuable lessons for the future.

It is crucial to address the factors contributing to its decline to ensure that future generations have access to the knowledge and understanding of the past.

VISIT THE GCHA BOOTH AT THE



Photo by Brad Knight

GRAHAM COUNTY North Carolina is home to a rare native stand of **FLAME AZALEAS** known for their extremely large blossom size. The **HOOPER BALD** Flame Azaleas have beautiful blossoms with the colors ranging from a scarlet red to a brilliant orange to a lemon yellow.

The Presbyterian Church in Graham County

by Rev. Eric Reece, Robbinsville UMC



Presbyterian Church and School

In April 1897, two ladies from Robbinsville, Mrs. M.C. Foute and Mrs. Martha Barker, traveled to Waynesville, NC to attend the meeting of the Asheville Presbytery. They petitioned the group for a Presbyterian Church to be started in Robbinsville. The Rev. Robert Perry Smith, Superintendent of Home Mission Work, came and started a church and school in 1902.

Smith was filled with zeal to start churches and schools in mountain communities. He planted 14 churches and a number of schools. He followed a plan in many communities: start a church, start a school, and go out into the community to bring the children in. Once the Robbinsville Church and school was born the school prospered.

In 1905 Smith wrote, *Some Results of Mission Work in the Mountains of North Carolina*.

The next year, (1900) a school was organized at Robbinsville and a neat comfortable building was erected; one room being used for the school, the other for church services. The school has grown steadily year by year, and two more rooms have been added to accommodate the increasing patronage. The enrollment of students has reached 350, three teachers are actively engaged, a library of 600 volumes has been installed, a church and a Sabbath school organized, and a pastor employed. The people of the community have helped liberally with this enterprise and refer to this school as the greatest influence for good that has ever been established in that county.

To help tell the story of the Robbinsville and other mountain churches, in 1910 *Our Mountain Work*, a monthly newspaper, was published and soon was in every Presbyterian home in Western North Carolina.

After a great start, for some reason the school was discontinued and the Robbinsville School Committee bought the building to use as a school. The Robbinsville Presbyterian Church was dissolved in 1916.

Not to be forgotten, a new Presbyterian work began in 1938. The Methodist Church was building a new sanctuary (the present Hosanna Baptist) and sold their old building to the Asheville Presbytery and the church was reborn. The congregation was described as "small but ambitious." The minister of Andrews Presbyterian often served the Robbinsville congregation. For a number of years, the preachers of the Robbinsville Presbyterian and Methodist Churches would alternate preaching Sunday afternoons at Fontana.

On January 26, 1942 a Pulpit Bible was presented to the church by Mrs. R.B. Slaughter's Young People's Class and the Sunday School. It was first read by the Rev. R.D. Bedinger, former missionary in the Belgian Congo.



Presbyterian Pulpit Bible

Inscription:

*Presented to the Robbinsville Presbyterian Church by Mrs. R.B. Slaughter's Young Peoples Class and the Sunday School
First used by R.D. Bedinger, D.D. January 26, 1942
(New acquisition in the GCHA Museum Collection)*

The membership of the church was listed as 16 in 1951 and sadly dissolved again in 1959. It is said, strange sounds would come from the old church at night as the wind whistled through the building. This led to the tale the building was haunted. Not to be forgotten, the Presbyterians met at the Methodist Church on Sunday afternoons at 3pm to worship up until the 1960's.

While there is little evidence of the Robbinsville Presbyterian church today, the mission of educating children in the community set an example for all.

HISTORY OF GRAHAM COUNTY - PART XIX

A compilation by Tere Moore

GRAHAM COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

HOW WE GOT SHERIFFS

The United States inherited the office of sheriff from England, where kings appointed them to enforce orders and collect taxes. In the 1600s, North American colonists who wanted to undermine the crown's power began electing their own sheriffs. Many states eventually wrote the position into their constitutions.

On the Western frontier, a sheriff might be the first elected official in a newly settled area, and would enlist citizen "posses" to help him keep the peace internally – and attack outsiders. "Sheriffs often served as the first or only law enforcement representatives as settlers engaged in the genocide of Native Americans and Mexican citizens," Farris and Holman write in a book about sheriffs based on surveys and a decade of research.¹

LAWLESSNESS IN EARLY WESTERN NC

In early Western North Carolina at the turn of the 20th century, a combination of factors, including rugged terrain, limited infrastructure, and a strong sense of independence, contributed to instances of lawlessness and a distinct culture of self-reliance, sometimes bordering on disregard for established laws.

Here's a more detailed look:

Rugged Terrain and Isolation:

The mountainous terrain of Western North Carolina made it difficult to enforce laws effectively, allowing individuals and groups to operate outside the reach of authorities.

Economic Hardship and Resource Scarcity:

The region's economy was often based on subsistence farming and resource extraction, leading to conflicts over land and resources, which sometimes escalated into lawlessness.

Strong Sense of Independence and Self-Sufficiency:

The people of Western North Carolina developed a strong sense of independence and self-reliance, which sometimes led to a reluctance to submit to outside authority or to abide by laws they perceived as unfair or unnecessary.

Smuggling and Bootlegging:

The region's remote location and porous borders facilitated smuggling and bootlegging activities, which further contributed to a culture of lawlessness.

IS GRAHAM COUNTY, NC SAFE TODAY?

According to Overall Crime Grade™, Graham County's crime score is rated: **D+**

Violent Crime **C-** Property Crime **D+** Other Crime **D**

The D+ grade indicates that the rate of crime is higher than that of the average US county. Graham County ranks in the 28th percentile for safety, meaning it is safer than 28% of counties but less safe than 72%. This analysis applies only to Graham County's official city boundaries.

The crime rate in Graham County is 39.39 per 1,000 residents in the typical year.

THE COST OF CRIME IN GRAHAM COUNTY, NC

The total projected cost of crime in Graham County for 2025 is \$3,689,541. This translates to approximately \$479 per resident and \$1,171 per household.

These figures reflect only tangible costs, which include the following:

1. Criminal justice system costs (law enforcement, courts, and imprisonment): 61.4%
2. Direct costs to victims (damaged property, medical expenses, and lost wages): 26.7%
3. Lost economic contribution from offenders (time in prison or repeat offenses): 11.8%

GRAHAM COUNTY CRIME BREAKDOWN

The data below shows which crimes are used to calculate the Crime Grades above. All crime rates are shown as the number of crimes per 1,000 Graham County residents in a standard year.

Violent Crime Rates		Property Crime Rates	
Crime Type	Crime Rate	Crime Type	Crime Rate
Assault	3.177	Theft	14.65
Robbery	0.7333	Vehicle Theft	1.164
Rape	0.5544	Burglary	4.540
Murder	0.0408	Arson	0.2205
Total	4.506 (C-)	Total	20.57 (D+)
Other Crime Rates			
Crime Type		Crime Rate	
Kidnapping		0.1721	
Drug Crimes		6.328	
Vandalism		6.938	
Identity Theft		0.8297	
Animal Cruelty		0.0464	
Total		14.31 (D)	

¹ <https://crimegrade.org/safest-places-in-graham-county-nc/>

James (Jimmy) Hyde, a descendent amongst several Hyde lawmen in Graham County, is one of the county's most well-informed historians in regard to the Graham County Sheriff's Department. Jimmy graciously shared the following photos and articles that are part of his vast collection of Graham County Sheriff's Department history.

Can't beat 'em? Join 'em

Article by Randy Foster, The Graham Star, Jan. 12, 2023

COUNTY'S FIRST SHERIFF INSPIRED GENERATIONS OF LAWMEN



Standing with a portrait of J.S. Hyde, the first sheriff of Graham County in 1872, are law-enforcement 'grandsons' living in Graham County

Back Row L-R: GC Detention Lt. Kenneth Hyde, GC Detention Captain Marlon Jackson, GC Patrol Deputy Justin Stewart

Front Row L-R: GC Lt. Jimmy Hyde, Gary Holloway (Ret'd FBI), Patrol Deputy Logan Howarth (ECBI Tribal Police)

Robbinsville – In 1872, J.S. "Jason" Hyde was named the first sheriff of Graham County, a fledgling county split off from Cherokee County.

Although Sheriff Hyde would later have a spotty record, his role as sheriff would inspire many of his descendants to pursue careers in law enforcement.

Jim Hyde is one of them. Hyde, a lieutenant with the Graham County Sheriff's Office, posted a photo on social media of six of Hyde's grandsons who went on to be lawmen, surrounding a vintage photo of Sheriff Hyde.

The *Graham Star* reached out for Lieutenant Hyde to provide names and details, only to learn that the photo barely scratched the surface.

In addition to the six current and former lawmen who live in Graham County, Hyde has tracked down 11 more who are serving in various capacities in law enforcement. The six who live in Graham County are Lt. Jim Hyde (currently the longest serving certified law enforcement officer in Graham County with more than 41 years

wearing a badge), retired FBI Agent Gary Holloway, Logan Howarth of Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Tribal Police, Lt. Kenneth Hyde of the Graham County Detention Center, former Graham County Detention Center Captain Marlon Jackson, and Graham County Sheriff's Deputy Justin Stewart, and Graham County Sheriff's Deputy Cody George.

These six were pictured with J.S. Hyde in the social-media post. Afterward, Lieutenant Hyde traced down 11 more:

- * Great-Great-Great Granddaughter Vicki Evans, Lewis County, Ky., deputy and corrections officer;
- * Great-Great-Great-Great Grandson Matt Dyer, former Lewis County, Ky., deputy;
- * Great-Great Grandson Donald Oliver Williams, retired Gaston County, N.C., Police;
- * Great-Great-Great Grandson Chris Williams, formerly with Gaston County Police, currently with FBI;
- * Great-Great-Great Grandson Michael Calvin Williams, Gaston County Police captain;
- * Great-Great-Great Grandson Jessie Ray Williams, former Robbinsville chief of police in the 1940s;
- * Great-Great-Great-Great Grandson Daniel Lee Glenn, formerly with the Gaston County Sheriff's Office, currently with the N.C. Department of Revenue;
- * Great-Great-Great-Great Grandson Johnathan Parr, formerly with the Gaston County Sheriff's Office;
- * Great-Great-Great-Great Grandson Camron Williams, K9 officer with the Rowan County, N.C., Sheriff's Office;
- * Great-Great-Great-Great-Great Grandson Tyler Daniel Glenn, attending University of North Carolina, majoring in criminal justice;
- * Great-Great-Great-Great-Great Grandson Cole J. Walsh, N.C. State Highway Patrol cadet.

The late Graham County Sheriff J.S. Hyde wasn't sheriff for long. He became sheriff in October 1872 – but in 1873, he was convicted of being part of a group circulating counterfeit money.

Hyde was sentenced to hard labor in Albany Penitentiary, but was pardoned by then-President Ulysses S. Grant.

Details about Hyde's term in office and his life after he left office are elusive, but one thing is clear: his descendants have followed his path into law enforcement.

For Lieutenant Hyde, it started with trouble over traffic tickets.

Hyde had been heavily involved in fire and rescue in his youth.

"I was getting a couple tickets as a teenager due to a lead foot," Hyde said. "Became friends with one of the troopers at the time, he told me of getting stopped for speeding out of state and how he was let go without getting a ticket due to his profession, so I figured, if I can't beat them, I'll join them."

GRAHAM COUNTY SHERIFFS 1872 TO 2025



Jason Hyde
1872-1874



W. F. Cooper
1874-1876



J.W. Gogdill
1876-1878



Joseph Judson Colvard
1878-1886



Robert V. McElroy
1886-1888



William W. Fleming
1888-1892



Simeon Sherrill Hooper
1892-1894



John A. Ammons
1894-1906 & 1910-1920



Noah E. Millsaps*
appointed to finish
Ammons' last term



George W. Shuler
1906-1908 & 1920-1924



Benjamin Pryor Grant
1908-1910



Riley Orr
1924-1928



Pat Griffin
1928-1938



Roy Garland
1938-1942



G.E. Brewer
1942-1946 & 1962-1966



Booth Crisp
1946-1954

GRAHAM COUNTY SHERIFFS 1872 TO 2025



Jack Shuler
1954 -1958



Boyd Crisp
1958-1962



Arnold Crisp
1966-1970



Melvin Howell**
1970-1978 & 1988-1998



Fred Anderson
1978-1982



A.J. Peterson
1982-1988



Keith Eller
1998



Steven B. Odom
1998-2002



Bob DeBrhul
2002-2006



Russell Moody
2006-2010



Mickey Anderson
2010-2014



Danny Millsaps
2014-2018



Joseph W. Jones
2018-2020



Jerry Crisp
2020-2022



Brad Hoxit
2023-Current

*When Sheriff Ammons resigned sometime in his last year (1920), Noah E. Millsaps was appointed and served three months.

**When Sheriff Melvin Howell died in August prior to the November election, Keith Eller was appointed but did not win the election three months later. Melvin Howell's last term was his appointment when Sheriff A.J. Peterson was convicted of forging private business documents, a felony.

FUNDRAISERS

THE GRAHAM COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION IS LARGELY SUPPORTED
BY DONATIONS, MEMBERSHIP, AND FUNDRAISING

Email: grahamcountymuseum@gmail.com

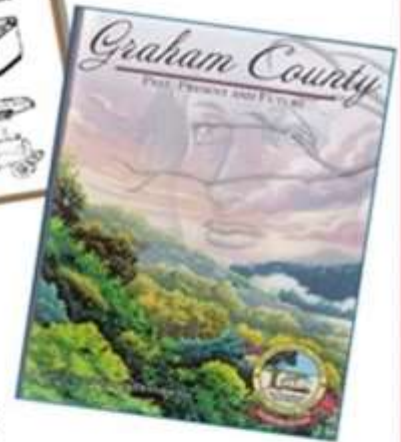


Low Inventory!

Graham County 150th Commemorative Blanket \$50



GC Centennial Book \$35



GC 150th Anniversary Magazine \$5

GC Early Families Shirts \$25



GC Photo Tumblers \$25



SEE LAST PAGE FOR ORDER FORM

History Makes Great News

Honky tonks left impression on county

by Louise Huscusson Stewart, Feb. 9, 2006
The Graham Star History Special

Get a cup of coffee and read these wild stories about honky tonks of "Yester-Years."

The Bloody Bucket honky tonk at the Tipton bridge was a swingin', hopping place on Friday and Saturday nights with plenty of activity goin' on!

There was plenty of booze, smokin', dancin', slot machines and "ladies of the night." You name it and it was goin' on.

Some redneck boys from Robbinsville would speed just to lead the sheriff on a wild goose chase up Tallulah and around the curvy Tipton Road, across the Tipton bridge, where they would be in Cherokee County.

The Graham County Sheriff could not arrest them because the Graham, Cherokee, and Macon county lines joined at the Tipton Bridge.

One Saturday night, a man lost all of his money in the slot machine. After the Bloody Bucket closed, he broke the door open with a sledge hammer and beat open the slot machines and got his money back.

When the sheriff arrived with a warrant for his arrest, he advised the man that it was for breaking and entering, however, the sheriff was glad that he had destroyed the slot machines.

On another occasion, a man was visiting the "ladies of the night" who stayed in a small cabin up on the hill above the Bloody Bucket.

He refused to pay the ladies for services rendered, so one of the ladies slashed him across the behind with a switchblade knife.

The man jumped out the window without his pants and rolled down the hill. One of his friends took him home to get another pair of pants.

The man was so upset that he got his friend, who had a big truck with a log chain, to go back to the house. When they arrived, they tried to fasten the chain around the cabin and pull it down the hill. By this time, the sheriff arrived with a warrant.

Another honky tonk named Red Cooper's was a lively and swingin' place that was below the bridge and across from the post office.

For a quarter, the jukebox would play six records. People poked quarters in it like a chicken eatin' corn. On Sunday nights, the honky tonks could not open until after church services.

Cooper owned Tri-County Music Company. Under his contract, he placed jukeboxes in all of the honky tonks. That sure was a money maker for Cooper.

In 1948, the people of Graham County voted against alcohol being sold anywhere in the county. It was rumored there were many moonshine stills, making and selling white lightning. There was a still in Trammel Holler, close to the Bloody Bucket.

Now, with Graham County being a so called dry county, it was rumored that the owner of the Bloody Bucket moved his business to the Round House in Cherokee County.

At that time, it was legal to sell alcohol, beer and wine in Cherokee County. One man told about going to the Round House at 10 a.m. Two men, who had been drinking and fighting all night, had shot each other and were laying on the floor "deader than a possum."

Rumors were told that a lot of people in the Tipton community bootlegged whiskey. One clever man who was bootleggin' had a drain pipe on one side of his sink that was hooked to a barrel in his basement.

When someone reported him for selling booze, the sheriff would come and make him pour it down the sink. After the sheriff left, he would go to the basement and siphon the booze from the barrel back into the bottles and kept on bootlegging.

On another occasion, an attractive business woman sold booze and made a very good living. She once told the sheriff she didn't drink the stuff, and that she only sold it to make a living.

The Bowers honky tonk near Robbinsville was a wild and wooly establishment.

After closing in the wee hours of the morning, some people would sleep in their cars rather than go home. When the café opened they could eat breakfast and then start drinking again!

The owner's daughter was shot and killed, and a short time later the honky tonk closed down.

In the 1940s, the town policeman shot and killed Fred Hyde across the street from the courthouse.

During this time, when Fontana Dam was under construction, there was another wild and wooly, honky tonk near Deals Gap. Several Fontana workers rented rooms upstairs above the honky tonk.

One man's wife suspected her husband was courting one of the waitresses, because he seldom came home.

One sunny morning, she got a friend to drive her to the honky tonk. She found her husband's lover down by the creek washing her husband's cloths on a scrub board. She grabbed a big stick and beat the woman, knocking her into the branch screaming at her "leave my husband alone and get out of town you floozie!"

Believe it or not, but these stories are supposed to be true. Hope you readers have enjoyed the stories about these wild and wooly honky tonks of the Yesteryears.

Join Us Today

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS		Membership Benefits
1-year	\$25.00	Quarterly Newsletter Meetings and Committees GCHA Decal 10% discount on GCHA merchandise
5-year	\$100.00 (1 year free)	
10-year	\$200.00 (2 years free)	
Lifetime	\$1000 or more	All 1-year benefits plus memorial at Museum

Become a Member Today and proudly display your GCHA Window Decal!

Send your payment:

Through PayPal to

grahamcountymuseum@gmail.com

Drop off at **Hometown Tax**, 62 Tapoco Road, Robbinsville

Mail to **GCHA, PO Box 1221 Robbinsville, NC 28771**



If you know someone who loves history like you do...



Gift a MEMBERSHIP!

GRAHAM COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION MERCHANDISE ORDER FORM

GCHA Members Receive 10% Discount

Please Fill in Quantity & Check Color

SHIRTS: Adult \$25.00 - Youth \$10.00

ADULT: S M L XL 2XL 3XL

YOUTH: S M L

Short Sleeve T-Shirt

Youth Short Sleeve T-Shirt

☐ Gray ☐ Red ☐ Cream ☐ Blue

Dark Green T-Shirt with Logo

Long Sleeve Black Shirt with Logo

HATS: 25.00 | HAT AND T-SHIRT 45.00

Dark Green with GCHA Patch

Black Stretch Cap with Logo

BOOKS:

Graham Co. 1972 Centennial Book 35.00

GC 150th Anniversary Magazine 5.00

MISCELLANEOUS:

Tumblers: ☐ Blue ☐ Green ☐ Gray 25.00

Car Coasters 5.00

Tumblers ☐ Blue ☐ Green ☐ Gray 25.00

Graham County 150th Throw 50.00

All merchandise requiring shipment will include a shipping fee.

GRAHAM COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP / DONATION FORM

The work of Graham County Historical Association is greatly assisted by your generous support!

Membership Includes: GCHA Decal / Meetings & Committees / Quarterly Newsletter

Please Check Membership/Donation Option Below

- ☐ 1 year \$25.00 ☐ 5 years \$100.00
☐ 10 years \$200.00 ☐ Lifetime \$1000 or more
☐ One-time Donation \$ _____
☐ Monthly Donation \$ _____
☐ Merchandise Amt \$ _____

Name _____

Company _____

Address _____

City/State _____

Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

* First \$25 of donation goes to 1-year Membership

METHOD OF PAYMENT

Check | Money Order (Payable to GCHA)

grahamcountymuseum@gmail.com

Credit Card: (All major credit cards)

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Expiration Date _____

Cardholder's Name _____

Signature _____

☐ I authorize GCHA to auto-draft my donation from my account

P.O. Box 1221, Robbinsville, NC 28771
 828.479.5008 / grahamcountymuseum@gmail.com
www.historygc.org/ / GCHANC

GCHA is a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(C)(3) organization. Contributions are tax deductible.