

GRAHAM COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



HONORING THOSE WHO PIONEERED
THE RUGGED MOUNTAINS
OF GRAHAM COUNTY



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NEWSLETTER

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**GCHA meets the 1st and
3rd Mondays of each
month at 5:00 p.m.**

United Community Bank
132 Rodney Orr Bypass
Robbinsville, NC 28771

THE PLEAS BURCHFIELD MURDER

**"SHERIFF OF GRAHAM BACK
WITH ANDY ORR"**

*Asheville Citizen Times
Feb. 5, 1917*

"Sheriff Ammons, of Graham county, passed through Asheville yesterday with Andy Orr, a prisoner whom he brought back from Oklahoma and who is wanted on a charge of murdering Pleas Birchfield. The death of Birchfield occurred about a year ago, but Orr was captured only recently in Cherokee county, Oklahoma.

"After arrangements had been made to bring the prisoner back to this state, Sheriff Ammons started to Oklahoma several days ago. Orr will probably be tried at the next criminal term of Superior court in Graham county."

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GCHA HIGHLIGHTS

GCHA Sustainability Study is complete.

The application for funding for the Bob Plott Presentation has been approved. We have several guidelines to follow and a multitude of forms to complete, however, this is a great paid-for opportunity to further our cause.

A replica and history of the Graham County Railroad will be displayed in the GCHA section at the Travel & Tourism office in January.

MISSION STATEMENT

To preserve, interpret, and convey Graham County, regional, and Appalachian history through exhibitions and educational programs to showcase our history, making Graham County a desired historical destination.

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, N.C., and promote cultural tourism and economic development in our area.

GCHA BOARD

Edd Satterfield- Pres. ~ Carolyn Stewart- V.P.

Lavina West- Sec. ~ Terri Phillips- Treas.

JUNE 1898 WALDO RANCH

An historic Journal provided by Carolyn Stewart

As was a common practice, daily journals were kept by farms, ranches, and businesses as a means of bookkeeping and management.

“Jun. 1: Worked around homestead most of the day. Bought of Robt. Welch of Homestead N.C. two steers 3 years old past \$45.00 extra good ones. Put tags in my sheep ears and drove up to Wolf Cr. I am working hard but buying but few sheep. I am staying with Rev. R.M. Aldridge to-night on Wolf Cr.

Jun. 2: Drove my sheep from Wolf Cr. to Stecoah and bought 25 head on the way. I am staying on the head of Stecoah Cr. with Mr. D. Jenkins. The weather is quite warm and we travel slowly with our stock.

Jun. 3: Left Stecoah at noon and drove the sheep over to Sweetwater Cr. to buy more. I am staying and pasturing our stock with a Mr. McCrackin 3 miles east of Robbinsville.

Jun. 4: Left Sweetwater and drove to Robbinsville by noon. Then we drove up to the head of Atoah in the afternoon and left our stock at Mr. P. Chambers and I came on over to the ranch.

Jun. 5: Jayson Butler and Seymour Aldridge drove our sheep from the head of Atoah to our corral at Birch Springs. I went up to the corral and stayed most of the day. Forrest and Baxter went too. The weather is quite warm just now. Mr. Pullyum is getting along nicely with the sheep.

Jun.6: Paid Baxter Cook on labor \$2.60. Paid Thomas Guffy for labor \$3.00. Paid for meat and other supplies for our herders \$5.00. Paid my father J.H.C. Denton for attending to and driving my cattle last spring \$4.00, boarding and horse feed \$.50 Total \$15.20. I rode down to Robbinsville by P.M. to attend court.

I fell on the grand jury and served there to-day. Our Jury is composed of 18 men. I am staying at Rev. J.A Wiggins' to-night

Jun. 7: Paid Thomas Guffy on labor \$1.00, boarding \$.75. Served as a juror again to-day. We had two murder cases before us. One for Vance Shope of Yellow Creek killing Willie Birchfield who lived near Rocky Point, and the other for Jeff Dean of Stecoah killing a small boy by the name of Sawyer. I drove Prof. Waldo's horse, George, from Robbinsville up to W.W. Fleming's in a buggy this evening. This was the first time he has worked in a single harness. I came up here with a jew, Mr. Sam Levene of Sevierville Tenn. And am staying with Mr. Fleming.

Jun. 8: Court adjourned to-day at noon. I am staying at Mr. Taylor Davis' about 1 ½ miles east of Robbinsville. Called on Miss Kittie Wiggins this evening. Miss Kittie is handsome and an interesting young lady. Received a juror ticket for \$3.00 for my 3 days services as a grand juror. Paid J.L. Denton for 2 bushels seed corn \$1.00. Paid a man for driving in a cow from the head of Sweetwater Creek \$.50. This cow came from Wayside last spring. Bought 3 head of sheep of Eli Guffy of Robbinsville. Boarding \$.50.

Jun. 9: Drove 3 head of sheep and a cow from Robbinsville to Mr. A.B. Moody's. I shall stay with Mr. Moody to-night and try to get up some more sheep tomorrow. Several head of our cattle have come in from Hucleberry and around Mr. Moody's. Some of our cattle are on Santeetla Creek and I hired Mr. Will Davis to drive them back to-day.

Jun. 10: I went over to West Buffalo and bought a few sheep and then up to the ranch to-day. Mr. Cook came in from the mountains and drove a lot of cattle from Dick Branch back to the mountains. He taken the cow that I drove out yesterday. Forrest drove in a cow with a young calf to-day.

Bought of Jake Conesene of Snowbird one hive of bees \$1.00. Bought of Burless Crisp of Robbinsville one heifer about 5 months old \$5.00. Later Conesene did not get in with the bees.

Jun. 11: I went down to Mr. Moody's and he and I drove 18 head of sheep up to the ranch. We castrated some bucks. The weather is quite warm and dry and am afraid that we will lose some of them. I fell and got badly hurt in my back to-day. I came down home to-night. Mr. Pullyum is getting along fine with the sheep. Left Mr. Moody at Birch Springs. Our boys set out a lot of sweet potato slips to-day.

(Cont'd in next GCHA Newsletter)



AKC Photo

PLOTT HOUND PRESENTATION SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 20-21, 2020

Graham County Historical Association plans a presentation on the Plott Hound, our state dog, are based on the research of Plott hound experts Bob Plott (a descendant of Johannes Plott) and John Jackson. in March 2020, at GC Travel & Tourism and the GC Middle School. The presentation explains the history and origins of the dog breed, covers breed characteristics, and describes how Plotts are used to hunt bears, boars and raccoons.

The original breeding stock of hunting dogs was imported to America by Johannes Plott around 1750. The Plott family and their dogs settled in Haywood County around 1800, and both the family and the dogs prospered in the New World. As time passed, the Plott hound's legendary ability to chase bears and boars grew, and Plotts are now raised across the country and around the world.



Graham County Historical Association Sustainability Study Complete

Graham County Commissioner Connie Orr reported that as soon as the GCHA Sustainability Study was complete, we would be eligible to access Department of Commerce funds of \$25,000. Many thanks to our Project Team - Edd Satterfield, Carolyn Stewart, Bob Wehr, Len Sheffield, Kathie Hatton, Terri Phillips, Max Buchanan. Leota Wilcox, Sophia Paulos - and Consultant, Magellan, for getting us through a very lengthy and meticulous process. This study determined that GCHA is a sustainable organization and has a path forward.



GC RAILROAD REPLICA

A replica and history of the Graham County Railroad will be displayed in the GCHA section at the Travel & Tourism office in January 2020.

Graham County Historical Museum Preview now on display at T&T

Thanks to the tireless efforts of the GCHA Layout & Design Committee working diligently with GC Travel & Tourism to set up a Museum Preview to prompt interest in our ongoing efforts to bring an historical museum to life in Graham County, the display is now open for viewing by the public.

Be sure to stop by and check it out!



(Andy Orr Articles submitted by Edd Satterfield from Newspapers.com)

“GRAHAM COUNTY MAN MAY KNOW FATE SOON”

Asheville Times - Nov. 23, 1917

“Andy Orr, of Graham county, under sentence of 20 years in the state’s prison for killing Pleas Burchfield, near Robbinsville, Graham county, last year, and who is being held in the Buncombe county jail for safe keeping, expects to have his case passed on by the Supreme court of North Carolina at the December term.

“Orr had the reputation of being one of the most desperate men in all of the mountain section and following the killing of Burchfield he fled to Oklahoma where he was arrested and returned here for trial. He was tried several months ago, but owing to the feeling against him, he was brought to the Buncombe county jail, where he has been kept since then.”

(More to come on Andy Orr in future GCHA Newsletters)

Keeping Warm at Rocky Point Ferry

All of the books in the 'Little House' series written by Laura Ingalls Wilder are undoubtedly some of my all-time favorites, which I still pull out to re-read to this day. Some of my favorite 'scenes' from these books describe the times when Pa would play his fiddle on cold winter nights, having his girls dance to warm themselves before retreating to their icy bedrooms. I thought you'd enjoy a similar scene from the Rocky Point Ferry, which provided passage across the Little Tennessee River from Graham County to Swain County before the impounding of Cheoah Lake in 1919. Enjoy!



Crossing the Little Tennessee River on the Rocky Point Ferry
Source: www.grahamcounty.net

"Nearly one mile below the mouth of Twenty Mile creek is Rocky Point ferry, presided over by that philosopher and musician, who is known far and near as Chris Linn. Chris lives just above the ferry, in a log cabin containing an entire room. The logs afford some resistance to the winds of winter that howl up and down the river, but the spaces between them afford none, and the wind goes shrieking through that cabin in a way to freeze the marrow in the bones of anyone but Chris Linn and his interesting family. Instead of allowing their marrow to freeze, they pile on the logs in the wide fireplace, and huddling around, let her howl. There are six or 7 children, the oldest being a beautiful girl of fifteen summers... There is no superabundance of clothing, even during summer, but that makes 'no differ' to Chris and his family. There is just one possible fly in the ointment of their contentment, and that is the breaking of fiddle and banjo strings. If those strings never broke the even tenor of their way would be uninterrupted. But banjo and fiddle strings will snap at times, and with them snaps happiness at that home. While the strings hold true and strong, the winds may howl and the river rage, but Chris with his fiddle and Miss Julia with her banjo defy them both with 'jig chunes' that would make an elephant dance for joy. As Chris fiddles and Julia strums, the children dance before the fire, and 'joy is unconfined'. The puncheon floor rocks and sags, the shadows play hide and seek with the ruddy firelight upon the cabin wall and the midnights of winter often find the inmates cutting the pigeon-wing and flinging the double shuffle with hearts as free as salvation."

*'Bud Wuntz' in The Morning Post (Raleigh, NC)
16 August 1903*

For more on this article go to:

<https://reflectionsofoldswain.blogspot.com/2016/01/keeping-warm-at-rocky-point-ferry.html>



Chris and Matilda Mary Julia (nee' Farley') Lynn
(probably circa 1910-1925)

Source: "Remembered Lives: A Narrative History of Our Family"
by Duane Oliver

COMMITTEES

Graham County Historical Association is coming into a very active year preparing to renovate and restore the Old Snider Store and create the Graham County Historical Museum. Volunteering for any of the below committees will not only further the success of this endeavor but those that will quickly follow in the future.

As with every organization, there is usually a core group of individuals who step up and fill in the gaps when no one else volunteers. In order to utilize the unique talents of each GCHA member to its fullest, we need more members to step up and let it be known which tasks they would like to assist with and what talents they bring to the table. Only with the entire membership helping can we secure our dream and accomplish our goals.

“We must remember that one determined person can make a significant difference, and that a small group of determined people can change the course of history.” - Sonia Johnson

TERMS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Members of standing committees serve on a volunteer basis for a period of two years. Each Committee shall select a Chairman. The Chairman or a designee is responsible for scheduling meetings, recording minutes of each meeting, and providing a copy to the Secretary. Should a vacancy occur, a replacement is approved by the committee. Members of Special Committees shall serve for one year, or less, specified when the committee is established.

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT/ PUBLIC RELATIONS/OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Educate on the importance of development activities and strong membership base for long-term museum support.

- Solicit new members and community support through Festivals and fundraising events
- Develops social media strategies and implementation
- Reviews and recommends public functions, advising which Association members should attend
- Responsible for newsletters, brochures, fliers, advertisements, etc.

CHAIRPERSONS: Tere Moore/Brian Johnson

ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE

Implements a plan to gather and preserve oral history.

- Identification of individuals from which to gather oral history
- Questions to be asked
- Individuals who will conduct interview, etc.
- Preserving and using information for education
- Equipment to be used

CHAIRPERSON: Leota Wilcox

BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE

To explore and make recommendations for the upgrade of the museum building including but not limited to electrical, structural, insulation, HVAC.

- Makes recommendations on maintenance of the building and grounds.
- When funding is available, makes recommendations for solicitation of qualified firms to do upgrades (sealed competitive bids).
- Consult with layout and display committee

CHAIRPERSON: Nick Nichols

GRANTS COMMITTEE

Responsible for research of potential grants which the association may qualify, implementation and follow through of the grant writing either in house or by sponsors and or partners.

- Explore and make recommendations on associations which the GCHA should be a member
- Communicate with said organizations that help promote and assist the Association. (Examples- Museums in Partnerships, Friends of Mountain History, NC Museum Council, American Association of State and Local History, ARC, etc.)

CHAIRPERSON: Sophia Paulos

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Responsible for contacting officials to promote the mission of the Graham County Historical Association.

CHAIRPERSON: Brian Johnson

MUSEUM LAYOUT AND DISPLAY COMMITTEE

Explores and makes recommendations on the layout of the museum.

- Makes recommendations on displays of museum items
- List categories the museum should display such as early Graham County Pioneers, Logging, Railroads, Lakes, Healthcare, Early Farming, Sports, History, veterans, etc.
- Interpretive plan

CHAIRPERSON: Leota Wilcox

ACQUISITIONS AND COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE

Once it is determined what the museum will house and display, this committee will be responsible for exploring, finding, and locating items.

- Make recommendations on the acquisition of items and collections. Including but not limited to documenting, cataloging, labeling, number of items to collect, etc.
- Design form for items gifted to the Museum
- Develop acquisition plan

CHAIRPERSON: Mary Ritter

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Shall have the responsibility to advise Board on appropriate budgeting and accounting practices as a non-profit corporation.

- Propose an annual budget
- Monitor income and expenditures
- Recommend an auditor to conduct the annual audit
- The Treasurer of the organization shall serve as a voting member of this committee

CHAIRPERSON: Terri Phillips

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Design and create a three-year plan for the Organization's goals, objectives, and activities

- Assessment of current resources
- Strategic Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)
- Update as necessary

CHAIRPERSON: Leota Wilcox

ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE (After Museum has opened)

- Special events, speeches, programs
- Workshops
- Educational programs

CHAIRPERSON: Bob Wehr

PROJECT TEAM – SUSTAINABILITY STUDY (CONSULTANT – MAGELLAN)

- Conduct a sustainability study to determine if GCHA is a sustainable organization and path forward.

CHAIRPERSON: Consultant, Edd Satterfield



Mighty New Exhibit at Mountain Gateway



MOUNTAIN GATEWAY MUSEUM

As part of the *She Changed the World* experience happening across North Carolina, the Mountain Gateway Museum in Old Fort will open an exhibit entitled **Mighty Mountain Women**. This exhibit will feature women who contributed to government, arts, culture, and more.

Curator Brittney Bennett Joachim is excited about the research she's been doing, "Perhaps you have heard of Lillian Clement the first female in the state legislature. Or Nina Simone, the influential singer and songwriter. But what about Lula Gloyne, one of the first registered Eastern Band of Cherokee nurses or Frances Goodrich, who helped established the oldest operating craft shop in the United States?"

You can find out all about these and other mountain women from this new exhibition that runs from March – October 2020.

Gateway Museum is located off Interstate 40's exit 73, at 24 Water Street, Old Fort, N.C. 28762

National History Day in North Carolina April 25, 2020

<https://www.ncdcr.gov/education/history-day/this-year>



North Carolina History Day is a program designed to promote an interest in history among students, and to assist teachers in teaching history more effectively. The program helps students develop skills in historical research, analysis, critical thinking, organization and presentation, as well as improve reading and writing skills.

The 2019-2020 Theme is: Breaking Barriers in History. Countless events and people in history connect to this theme, which makes it seem quite broad. While this means you can connect it to many different topics, it is always good to start with a definition.

Barrier (n) 1. something material that blocks or is intended to block passage. 2. a natural formation or structure that prevents or hinders movement or action. 3. something immaterial that impedes or separates.

Students use these skills to design an exhibit, write a paper, produce a documentary, create a performance or develop a website centered around the annual theme.

To get started with NHD, please get in touch with the state coordinator at karen.ipock@ncdcr.gov or (919) 814-6639.



<p>THE GOAL IS TO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a museum of Graham County located at the Snider Building. • An education center for our schools. • A place to learn how our community began, how industry changed the mountains, how families survived and made a living. • A wealth of knowledge with stories of our founding families and artifacts from earlier generations. <p>WE VALUE YOUR INPUT AND HELP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GCHA meets the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month at 5:00 p.m., United Community Bank, 132 Rodney Orr Bypass, Robbinsville, NC 28771 • This is a community effort to transform Snider's Building into a museum and share our history. <p>GRAHAM COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION </p> <p>www.historygc.com info@historygc.com 828.479.7971 PO Box 1221, Robbinsville, NC 28771</p>	<p>DONATION FORM GRAHAM COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION</p> <p>The work of Graham County Historical Association is greatly assisted by your generous support.</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Company _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>State _____ Zip Code _____</p> <p>Phone _____</p> <p>Email _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thank you for your donation!</p> <p>Please mail to: PO Box 1221 Robbinsville, NC 28771 Phone: 828.479.7971 Email: Info@historygc.com</p> <p style="text-align: center;">GCHA is a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions are tax deductible.</p> <p>METHOD OF PAYMENT</p> <p>Check Money Order (Payable to GCHA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PayPal (Send to: info@historygc.com) • Credit Card: (All major credit cards) <p> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> </p> <p>Expiration Date _____</p> <p>Cardholder's Name _____</p> <p>Signature _____</p> <p>One-time Donation \$ _____ Monthly Pledge \$ _____</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I authorize GCHA to auto-draft my donation from my bank account.</p>
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