

GRAHAM COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



HONORING THOSE WHO PIONEERED THE RUGGED MOUNTAINS OF GRAHAM COUNTY



www.HISTORYGC.org

828.479.5008

grahamcountymuseum@gmail.com

Volume 6, No. 1

January 2022

Tere Moore, Editor



NEWSLETTER

Contents

Vision & Mission Statements	2
Board of Directors	2
Welcome Kirstyn Waller	2
Raffle Fundraiser	2
Yeti Cooler Raffle Winner	2
Cherokee Matriarchs Mural	3-4
Progress Report	5
Mountain Medicine Bits	5
Kathy Wilson Collection	6
History of GC - Part VI	6-8
Chinquapins and Paw Paws	8
History makes great news	9
GC COVID Statistics	10
Membership Application	10



GCHA meets the 1st & 3rd Mondays of each month at 5 pm at United Community Bank, 132 Rodney Orr Bypass, Robbinsville.

At present, due to COVID protocols, we meet via teleconference.

 **Contact us for 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, N.C., and promote cultural tourism and economic development in our area.

GCHA 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.

GCHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

Welcome

Kirstyn (Kay) Waller has joined the GCHA team as a part-time Archivist.



Kay will be assisting GCHA with creation and maintenance of its Archival Database.

GCHA has purchased PastPerfect® museum software to archive the many donations of artifacts and photos so generously shared by the community for our museum collection.



GUN RAFFLE



TICKETS: \$10.00 EACH OR 6/\$50.00



Where to Purchase Tickets:

A GCHA Member ~ Hometown Tax
GCHA Booth at Special Events
Lovin Equipment & Sales

Drawing to be held at the Graham County
150th Anniversary Celebration
Summer 2022

Proceeds go to:
GRAHAM COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



GCHA YETI COOLER RAFFLE

Ken Husky drawing
winning ticket



PAUL FITZPATRICK



Paul Fitzpatrick

Max Buchanan

"SNOWBIRD CHEROKEE MATRIARCHS" MURAL



Photo: Catch the Spirit of Appalachia, Inc

Michelle Shiplet of REVVED UP of Robbinsville, NC met with Doreyl Ammons Cain, artist & director of the Appalachian Mural Trail. She had no idea a \$50,000 grant would be in their future. Michelle had a plan for developing historical murals for Robbinsville but had no clue where to start. Through their interaction, the opportunity arose to apply for the Z Smith Reynolds Inclusive Public Art Grant. Shiplet's first thought was to honor the women of the Snowbird Cherokee Community.

In December of 2018 Shiplet was informed that the Women of the Snowbird Community mural proposal was a semi-finalist in the grant process and they would be given funds to develop a budget, plan and a first rough draft of the artwork for the mural. She asked Doreyl Ammons Cain of the Appalachian Mural Trail and TJ Holland, Cultural Resources Supervisor for the Eastern Band of the Cherokee, to be lead artists for the project. During the next three months this creative team met with the Snowbird Community, listened to their stories, and Cain came up with the first rough draft of the mural and assisted with the planning of the mural project and the plan was submitted. On June 4, 2019, the announcement was made that the *Women of the Snowbird Community* mural would be a reality.

This mural project celebrates the achievements and recognition of the women of the Snowbird Cherokee community. The Snowbird Cherokee are a community that is part of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, whose

land base is in Graham County. While most mainstream knowledge about the Cherokee in this area centers around the "Trail of Tears," the Snowbird Cherokee, having hidden in their mountains to escape the forced removal of their people, embody to this day a spirit of perseverance and survival, and there is no better evidence than the lives of their many strong and gifted women. This remarkable community mural brings these qualities alive. The background painting of the mural tells the story of the Snowbird treasured traditions of hominy making, storytelling, beadwork, art and soap making.

Lead Artists:

TJ Holland – liaison, historical accuracy, Cherokee symbols

Doreyl Ammons Cain – Preliminary Sketches and painting of the Mural Master, mural painting workshops

Nikki Nations – On-Site Mural Lead Artist.

Excerpted from: <https://cherokeespeaks.com/snowbird-matriarch-mural/>

Iva Rowena Rattler worked to preserve and protect Cherokee culture, while also sharing her knowledge with many. She wrote a book called *How to Make Soap* to demonstrate the old way of soap making. Iva founded the *Fading Voices* committee. She was a first language speaker and medicinal plant master.

Eunice Lois Rattler Calonehuskie was a teacher in many areas of education ranging from Head Start to colligate level classes. Her education came from the Cherokee Boarding School where she was a student of the infamous basket maker Lottie Stamper. She served as the project director for the *Fading Voices* project and an instrumental part of a one-year oral history project that was funded by the North Carolina Arts Council.

Onita Wachacha Bush served on community initiatives to preserve Cherokee culture. On top of her volunteer work at various prestigious institutions, Onita worked as a home health nurse with the tribe for 16 years. She spoke at different universities on the importance of plant medicine and native health. Onita received many honors from the different organizations she's been a part of throughout her career. Cont'd Pg. 4

"SNOWBIRD CHEROKEE MATRIARCHS" MURAL (cont'd)

Bessie Smoker Jumper was a white oak basket maker and hand stitch quilt maker. She was never taught to make baskets or quilts but learned by watching her mother. She walked with her mother across the mountain to Andrews to sell and exchange their baskets for food and household items, providing for her family.

Edna Marie Wachacha Chekelelee promoted Cherokee traditions in her community through dance, storytelling, and crafts. She traveled all over the country spreading Cherokee culture and reminding others of their presence in America. She shared her love for her culture with non-natives across the nation. She toured with the original *Snowbird Ant Dancers* and various gospel singing groups. She taught Cherokee arts and crafts like basket making, beadwork, doll making and quilt making at Robbinsville High School.

Temotzena (Zena) Long Rattler was the first council woman for the Snowbird/Cherokee County communities, serving two terms. She worked for the Snowbird Day School as a cook. She often taught home economics, canning and preserving foods using the vegetables grown in the Day School Garden. She was active in the original *Snowbird Indian Quartet* traveling all over Tennessee, Georgia and North Carolina.

Emma Jackson Garrett is an outstanding basket maker with works displayed in museums from Washington to Atlanta. She taught classes and demonstrated her skills in rivercane basketry at various Native festivals. She was a part of the *Snowbird Quartet* and a member of the *Qualla Arts and Crafts Mutual* where she sold her baskets.

Martha Welch Wachacha was very active in the community. She was an excellent white oak basket maker and bead worker, and cooked all the traditional Cherokee foods. She loved to sing gospel songs in the Cherokee language, as she was the note singer.

Callie Hornbuckle Wachacha grew up in Cherokee and went to the Cherokee Boarding School. Callie was very involved in community events, serving on the election board and various others. She was also a known storyteller in the community.

Ella Bird is one of the Eastern Band of Cherokee's national treasures. Her dedication to her family, culture, and language is inspirational to many. She was brought into the world by her grandmother, Maggie Wachacha, in the mountains of West Buffalo. All her children were taught the Cherokee language and continued making traditional Cherokee crafts. Ella was known for her hand-stitched quilts. She received an honorary doctorate degree at UNC-Asheville and received numerous awards for dedication to the Cherokee way of life.

Shirley Jackson Oswalt was named "Beloved Woman" for her contributions to educating our children and community with her knowledge of cultural traditions and language. The Cherokee language will survive because of her commitment to teaching and her love for her people. She was an accomplished artist whose works enrich many people beyond our community. She made baskets, pottery, painted gourds and beadwork. As Beloved Woman, Shirley provided guidance for tribal leaders, teachers and her community. Her dedication to preservation has ensured that generations to come will continue to spread traditional craft making and language preservation.

Maggie Axe Walkingstick Wachacha was one of the first Cherokee beloved women in 200 years for the Eastern Band. She was chosen for this title due to her commitment to tribal affairs (Secretary of the Eastern Band Cherokee for 34+ years), her knowledge of medicine and preservation of the Cherokee language. Maggie never fully learned to speak English. She was a known midwife in Snowbird and delivered over 3,000 babies. She was named one of 100 American heroes by *Newsweek* and honored with a Distinguished Women of North Carolina Award.



Maggie Wachacha holding corn maul (1972) Photo: Graham Star

PROGRESS report

The challenges GCHA has faced over the last two years may have slowed our progress somewhat, but we have forged ahead in spite of those limitations.

We have been limited in our physical interactions, but much has been accomplished behind the scenes.

What's Happening at the Museum Building?

Ever watch one of those home design TV shows where the owners have to spend thousands of \$\$\$\$ on things that will be behind the walls and not seen in the design?

Well, that is the stage we are in as we focus on the infrastructure of the building in preparation for the design stage.

Rest Assured, We Are Making Progress!

Little if any progress could be made without the tireless efforts of our **Beloved Volunteers** and their diligent devotion to the goals and mission of our organization.

GCHA extends a wholehearted **Thank You** to our many **Volunteers** for all that they do.



Interested in Volunteering? Contact us at grahamcountymuseum@gmail.com or call 828-479-5088

MOUNTAIN MEDICINE TIDBITS

Excerpted from *Folklore of the North Carolina Mountaineer* by Haywood Parker

"In many parts of our mountains, generations have been born, grown to old age, and even died without the aid of a physician. The people have had to rely on home treatments and old women's remedies. These are mostly combinations or concoctions of the herbs, roots and barks found in the neighborhood..."

"Some of these old remedies are:

"Butterfly-root tea given hot cures pneumonia; bone-set tea is also good for pneumonia.

"Sourwood bark tea thickened with flour made into pills cures dropsy [edema]; another remedy for dropsy is made by steeping elder bark in vinegar in which rusty nails have been soaked.

"Wild cucumber bark soaked in whiskey is good for liver trouble; blood root is also good for the liver.

"Sampson snake root tea cures colic.

"Lady-slipper tea is good for nervousness.

"Balm of Gilead buds steeped in whiskey cures coughs.

"Shop cinders and sulphur is good to renew the blood.

"Dogwood bark and old field cinders are good to clear the complexion.

"Pulverized wild cherry bark taken before meals stimulates the appetite.

"Tea made of sunflower seed, prickly pear and green coffee cures gravel [*kidney stones*]; spikewood root is also good for kidney troubles; and a hot greasy plate that has been used over meat or beans while cooking, placed over the region of the bladder will remove the gravel and let the urine pass when all other remedies have failed.

"Flax seed tea cures uric acid in the blood.

"Dried beef gall applied to a rising will bring it to a head; and a poultice made from the bark of sassafras roots will make a boil come to a head.

"Smoke-dried leaves of life-everlasting to cure toothache.

"Seneca Snakeroot tea is good for the hives, measles and all diseases which must be "brought out;" it is also good for whooping cough.

"Red poke "berries are good for thrash [*thrush*].

"Hart leaves and bark from root of red alder are good to regulate the bowels, especially of teething children; cold water drunk off sliced comphery [*comfrey*] roots is good for diarrhea.

"Dried and powdered butterfly root dusted on a sore will stop proud flesh [Proud flesh develops when the normal phase of wound healing proceeds unrestricted; e.g., granulation tissue is pink and appears rough or bumpy].

"Poultice of Jemson [*Jimson*] leaves is good for the sore throat.

"Red pepper pods applied to a felon] will give relief. [An infection inside the tip of the finger can form an enclosed pocket of pus (or abscess) that is very painful as it expands. [*Felon-a fingertip abscess deep in the palm side of finger caused by bacterial infection*]

"The inside of a chicken gizzard dried and powdered is good for dyspepsia, and also to stop vomiting.

"A bunch of cold keys put down the back will stop the nose bleeding."

THE KATHY WILSON COLLECTION



GCHA is proud to have become the caretaker for this collection of Graham County Treasures.

The mounted bass, bear cub, boar's head and baby boar piglet are all donated by Mrs. Kathy Wilson.

The story behind the baby boar piglet given by Mrs. Wilson is that the baby boar was in the lot at Blue Boar Lodge. The mother rolled over and killed the baby boar July 28, 1992.

Details on the other donations are not fully developed yet, but what is clear is that all of the above were caught or bagged at *Blue Boar Lodge*.

The boar's head and baby boar are in transition from being on loan to being a part of the permanent collection. A verbal agreement has been made.

this timber company sold an expansive tract to the Whiting Manufacturing Company. George Gordon Moore of St. Clair, Michigan was an agent for Whiting, and during this transaction Whiting agreed to a 100-year lease to Moore of 1,600 acres of mountain land on which to establish a European-style shooting preserve for the entertainment of wealthy clients and friends. Arrangements were made for English Capitalists to fund the project. Moore selected for his location the remote section of Hooper Bald. “

HOOPER BALD GAME PRESERVE

Excerpts: “Valley So Wild” by Alberta and Carson Brewer

“About a mile east of the Tennessee line, Hooper towers 5,429 feet above sea level. Robbinsville, the closest town, is about ten air miles to the east and Andrews is about twelve miles southeast. The bald is an irregular rectangle of about 15 acres. Wild strawberries ripen there in late June or early July. Blueberries follow in fabulous numbers in August.



George Moore, Builder of Hooper Bald game preserve

“It was on Hooper, in 1910 or '11 (memories vary) that George Gordon Moore started building an unusual game preserve. Moore lived in Michigan, New York, California, and, briefly, on Hooper. He was a ‘plunger,’ a man ‘rich today and poor tomorrow,’ say those who knew him. He represented English capitalists who invested in American enterprises. He learned about Hooper while serving an English group that was financing a logging venture in the Carolina Mountains. He conceived the idea of the game preserve and hunting lodge, where he intended to entertain and impress his wealthy associates.

“He hired several mountain men to build the lodge and fence the preserve.

Cont'd Pg 7

HISTORY OF GRAHAM COUNTY - PART VI

A compilation by Tere Moore

Hunting Preserves of Graham County

Excerpts: Graham County.net

“By the early 1900s, the Great Smoky Mountain Land and Timber Company held much of the land in the Snowbird area, including a section on the south side of Hooper Bald Mountain. In 1908,

HISTORY OF GRAHAM COUNTY - PART VI (cont'd)

Among them were brothers Frank and Dave Swan and an Andrews, N.C., Irishman, Garland McGuire, called 'Cotton' because of his very blond hair."

Excerpts: Graham County.net

"Three years were spent in preparation before the operation could begin. No small task was the construction of a road to the Bald. The road could be used by the ox wagons, but it was always necessary to have from one to three teams of oxen attached to each wagon depending on the load it was carrying. A clubhouse was constructed of logs, 90 feet long and 40 feet wide, containing ten bedrooms, two baths, a kitchen, and dining room. The lobby was 45 x 20 feet. Telephone lines were strung across the Snowbird Mountains from Marble. There was a lower house that served as home for a caretaker - a four-room cabin with a porch all the way around. As caretaker and keeper of the preserve Moore hired a local, Garland "Cotton" McGuire.

"Huge enclosures appropriate for its various occupants were constructed, including a 600-acre boar enclosure and an enclosure for buffalo over a mile in circumference. It is said that twenty-five tons of double-strand barbed wire was hauled in by wagon to fence the various game lots. The wild boar lot was built of huge chestnut rails, nine rails high."



**Cotton McGuire, Mgr.
Hooper Bald Preserve**

Excerpts: "Valley So Wild" by Alberta & Carson Brewer

"They built a log lodge 90 feet long and half that wide, with 10 bedrooms, two baths, dining room, and kitchen. A 10-foot hallway ran the length of the building between two rows of bedrooms and intersected a 20-foot-wide lobby through the middle of the building. The lodge was roofed with oak shingles and floored with chestnut puncheons.

"People came far and near to see those bathtubs, commodes and lavatories,' one resident recalled. These were new to Graham County.



Front view of Hooper Bald Lodge

"The wild boar pigs, from the Ural Mountains, twelve sows and two males, weighing only about 50 pounds each, along with four Western bison, arrived by rail at Andrews in April 1912. Frank Swan and his helpers loaded the animals into six wagons, each pulled by four oxen.



Imported Wild Boar

"We headed over a rough dirt track for Hooper Bald by way of Hanging Dog and the old Jap Fain place,' said Swan. 'It took us three days.'

"Before fall, four more bison, twelve elk, 34 black and cinnamon bears, eight Western mule deer, 150 wild turkeys, and several exotic pheasants also arrived.

"Nearly nothing went as Moore planned. The bears had been in captivity so long they had become somewhat dependent on man. Some climbed the fence and went down the mountains to raid gardens near Robbinsville. Farmers killed some and Frank Swan and McGuire recaptured others. 'Cotton' had become manager of the preserve.

"Poachers got some of the pheasants and turkeys.

Cont'd Pg 8

HISTORY OF GRAHAM COUNTY - PART VI (cont'd)

Swan didn't know what happened to the mule deer, but the herd dwindled. The buffalo did not thrive. They were not of the woods bison strain that earlier roamed here. The buffalo cows bore few calves and only two calves lived beyond calf-hood.

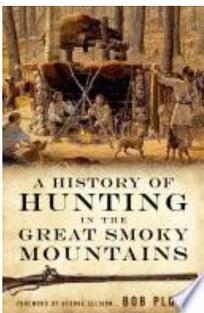
“Meanwhile, Moore was having second thoughts. His rich friends were not eager to visit. He came only a few times himself and his stays were brief. He sometimes brought enough baggage to fill a wagon. Cotton hauled it over the narrow, rocky road and got Moore ensconced for a long stay, only to learn the next day that Moore had changed his mind. Back down the mountains went the baggage.

“Moore's last visit was in about 1922. At one of the down points of his up-and-down career, he failed to pay Cotton, and Cotton went to New York to see him. Moore then deeded the entire preserve to Cotton, except the land, which Moore had only leased from its owners.”

BLUE BOAR LODGE

Excerpts: Graham County.net

“Fred Bruckmann built Blue Boar Lodge in the Snowbird Mountains and began to organize and promote boar hunts. By the time Bruckmann reached old age he had become a legend as a wild boar hunter. Robert Senior purchased the hunting lodge and with son-in-law Jack Jackson gave new life to boar hunting in Graham County. Senior, the Orrs, Phillips, Birchfields, and others made Graham County the boar hunting capital of the nation.”



For fascinating stories about early hunting in Graham County and Western North Carolina, check out:

A History of Hunting in the Great Smoky Mountains
by Bob Platt.

Look for “History of Graham County – Part VII” in the next GCHA Newsletter

CHINQUAPINS AND PAW PAWS

by Marshall McClung

In earlier days, one of the favorite pastimes of past generations was to go out in the woods and harvest nature’s wild bounty including chinquapins and paw



paws. Today, you would be hard pressed to find many people who know what either of these is, let alone find them. Neither is all that common today.

The chinquapin, also called “chinkapin” is a small bush or shrub and is related to the chestnut tree. They were once so plentiful that people would gather baskets of them at a time. Their taste could best be described as having a sweet, nutty flavor. The nuts were eaten fresh or roasted, much like our chestnut. Chinquapins only grow one nut to the burr as opposed to the chestnut which will have

two or more nuts to the burr. The chinquapin nuts ripen in late summer or early fall.



The paw paw was also plentiful in earlier times. Folks would gather them by the bushel and store them until they ripened. Paw paws were

also a favorite wildlife food, especially for squirrels and possums. In earlier days, paw paws were made into a jelly and often served at Christmas. It is said that they made a fine brandy also. Some folks called them “mountain banana” due to their resemblance.

Desoto mentions the paw paw in his chronicles. When he came through western North Carolina in 1540, the paw paws were in full bloom, giving off the odor of wine or ripening grapes. Months later, after the frosts of autumn had come; Desoto and his men were low on rations when they came upon some paw paw bushes, the fruit now fully ripe. He described the paw paw as looking like little fat sausages or stubby bananas, indicating that they were edible and very tasty.

BIG PRESERVE IN MOUNTAINS

Michigan Lumberman Has Large Hunting Lodge In Graham County

5,000 FEET ABOVE SEA

Everything From Fish and Partridges to Buffaloes Has Been Assembled in Wild Mountains by George Moore—Wardens Protect Game From the Hunters—Much Money Spent in Stocking Preserve—A Description of Fine Fishing and Hunting Preserve.

(Special to The Times.)

Asheville, July 23.—Near the summit of Hooper's "bald," in Graham county, a few miles from the Tennessee line, and over 5,000 feet above the sea level, almost as high as Mount Mitchell, the highest point east of the Rocky Mountains, George Moore, a wealthy Michigan lumberman and timber owner, has erected a large hunting lodge, a log bungalow, in the midst of thousands of acres of some of the wildest country in the United States, which he is converting into a hunting and fishing preserve. The lodge is near the headwaters of Snowbird, Buffalo and Santeetles, all good sized streams and famed for their fishing, each abounding in speckled trout, and these with their tributaries, are included in Mr. Moore's boundary, or

a great part of them.

The owner of this vast tract has already spent a great deal of money in stocking his preserve with the larger kinds of game. He has proceeded somewhat along the European lines and the plans adopted by those few in the United States who have established such preserves. He is really a pioneer in this part of the country, for, with the exception of the Vanderbilt estate, there are no hunting preserves worthy of the name in the western part of the state. And his efforts in this direction are worthy of mention in that his example is sure to be followed in the future, as soon as those who have the means recognize the advantages that western North Carolina has to offer in this respect.

German Wild Boars.

Mr. Moore has about a dozen buffaloes on this preserve, which in itself shows that he is in earnest, since these animals are nearly extinct and the herd must have cost him a pretty penny. He has about the same number of elk, which are rapidly following the steps of the buffalo toward extinction. The wild boar of Germany is another animal with which he is experimenting. He has also imported a number of brown bear from the Apennines of Europe, and there are several pairs of the mule deer of the southwest. All of these animals have been on the preserve long enough to demonstrate the fact that it is practicable to propagate them in this part of the world. They are healthy and seem to be contented. A large part of the boundary is enclosed with a strong, high wire fence, and in this is kept the wild boar and the brown

bear, which are dangerous. The buffalo and the elk are allowed the freedom of the range. All of them are fed in the winter time.

Game Well Protected.

There is little likelihood that the large game might be shot by local hunters, since the preserve is miles from any settlement. But the owner does not trust to luck in this respect and maintains a force of six men to patrol and manage the work.

It is one man's duty to make one trip around the wire fence every day. The bear sometimes give trouble by climbing over the fence. One did not long ago and killed a dozen or more chickens before he was returned to the enclosure. This was done only after the men had turned out the pack of wolf hounds, which brought him to bay and permitted the men to lasso him.

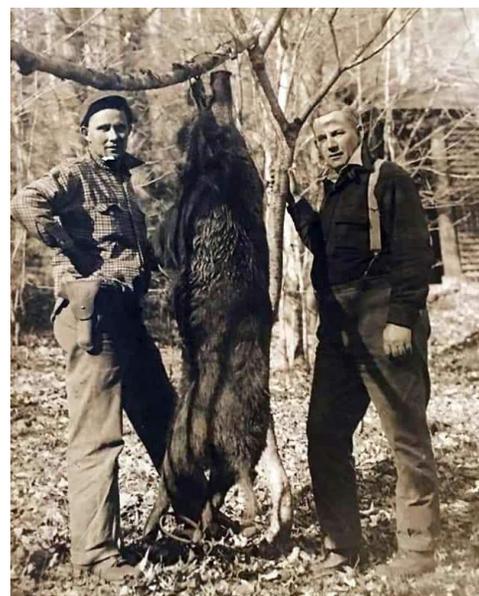
Many Wild Cats.

The only kind of game that is now being killed is the wild cat. This animal is said to be one of the most destructive in the woods. Mr. Moore has turned loose a large number of turkeys to run wild in the mountains, and they are a prey to the wild cat. Traps are set for them and they are killed in any way possible. A large number of pheasants of different species have also been liberated on the boundary.

While little has been said of fishing, this is one of the most attractive features of the preserve. The streams were originally stocked with the native speckled trout and others have been added from time to time. This is in contrast with the stocking of most of the western North Carolina streams, which has been done with rainbow trout, or lake trout.



Fred Bruckmann, builder of Blue Boar Lodge, with boar



[left] Fred Bruckmann - [right] Boyd (Peck) Jordan, guide

*Photos courtesy of
Teresa Mahon,
daughter of
Fred Bruckmann*

