

# GRAHAM COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



## HONORING THOSE WHO PIONEERED THE RUGGED MOUNTAINS OF GRAHAM COUNTY



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**WWW.HISTORYGC.COM**

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### NEWSLETTER

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

United Community Bank  
132 Rodney Orr Bypass  
Robbinsville, NC 28771

#### **HYDRO-ELECTRIC SYSTEM ON SNOWBIRD IN 1905**

The first hydro-electric system for incandescent lamps west of the Balsams in Western North Carolina was built on Little Snowbird in 1905 by Gaston Carriker, son of Adam Carriker. At this time nobody but nobody had electricity around these parts. In fact, the area of Little Snowbird still doesn't have electricity all the way to the upper reaches...

They had a motor that would generate the electricity, but didn't have anything to turn it fast enough to light up the carbon globes. Gaston rigged up a 17 ft. undershot wheel and a mill race on Little Snowbird Creek. He ran a pulley off the wheel down to the little motor. The result was 3,500 revolutions per minute.

## GCHA HIGHLIGHTS



This is a painting of the Old Snider Store in the 1920's donated to GCHA and painted by Eric Williams, great-great grandson of John H. C. Denton (only white family to live in Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest). The painting was unveiled at our Sept. 17th meeting.

### Denton Museum visit Sept. 2018



**September 26th, 2018**, Stacy Guffey, the director of the Historic Cowee School, came for a visit. Cowee School is located about 7 miles north of Franklin, NC. The school and old Rickman Store have both been renovated, and Stacy shared a lot of knowledge about how that happened, as well as their current operation.

Stacy came to Graham County to tour Snider's and shared information that was very helpful to us, and was especially helpful on how to make Snider's sustainable. Rickman Store and Cowee School are both rented out for various projects and groups. He also talked about being on the Historic Register and compliance.

Stecoah Harvest Festival  
Thanks to the Jones Boys for drawing our winners! Randall Seller is our YETI Cooler winner. Max Buchanan won the Snider's pillow & coaster set. The day started off rainy but cleared off by noon. Thanks to all the volunteers who weathered the rain and cool.



### 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.

### Historical Events Walls Project for T&T Office

#### Layout & Design Committee

1. **CHEROKEES**  
Picture of Junaluska & Monument  
Story: Junaluska given land in Robbinsville Trail of Tears  
Story: Fort Montgomery in Robbinsville, Holding area
2. **JOYCE KILMER MEMORIAL FOREST**  
Story: Pioneer family who lived in a fallen tree, built a cabin, and raised 9 children in Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest (1880's)
3. **GEORGE MOORE GAME PRESERVE ON HOOPER BALD**  
Story: Building of Hunting Lodge and importing game from European countries  
Constructing Cherohala Skyway  
Story: Joint effort between North Carolina and Tennessee beginning with a Wagon Train
4. **KIRKLAND BUSHWHACKERS**  
Story: Hideout in this area after Civil War
5. **MOONSHINERS**  
Story: Rose Brothers Story
6. **CONSTRUCTION OF DAMS**  
Santeetlah            Fontana  
Cheoah                TVA  
Story: People sacrificed homes and land in order to provide power, which eventually led to the development of the Atomic bomb and won World War !!

[END DISPLAY ON PATRIOTIC NOTE]

## PARTNERS OF JOYCE KILMER SLICKROCK WILDERNESS RECEIVE PRESTIGIOUS AWARD



The Partners of Joyce Kilmer Slickrock Wilderness were chosen by the US Forest Service to receive the prestigious 2018 Bob Marshall Award for Group Champion of Wilderness Stewardship. Deputy Forest Supervisor Cavan Fitzsimmons, National Forests in North Carolina, presented the Plaque to Partners President Jim Kriner at the GREAT Meeting November 15th at Fontana Village. The Bob Marshall Award recognized the Partners for our many projects assisting the Cheoah Ranger District in managing and maintaining the Joyce Kilmer Slickrock Wilderness and surrounding areas. Robert "Bob" Marshall was an American forester, writer and wilderness activist who is best remembered as the person who spearheaded the 1935 founding of the Wilderness Society in the United States. Annually, the US Forest Service selects one group and one individual nationally to receive this recognition. The Partners wish to thank the National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance, the Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards, the Wilderness Society and the men and women of the Cheoah Ranger District, US Forest Service, for all their assistance and support in helping us in this endeavor.



## Something to Think About!

Article shared by Mary Ritter

Sunday, September 9, 2018

**Living history museums are rethinking how they reenact, portray the past - Mark Pratt**

ASSOCIATED PRESS – BOSTON

A Massachusetts living history museum that depicts life in the early 19th century is looking to overhaul the way it presents the past in an effort to stay relevant to a 21st-century audience.

Old Sturbridge Village has received a \$75,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities that it will use to partner with scholars and other consultants for a multiyear study into how it portrays four areas: agriculture and food, civics, industry and economy, and race and gender. It's a modest grant, but it could have a major impact.

"What this grant will allow us to do is look at the entire picture and really dive deep into making sure that it's a cohesive, purposeful experience for the visitor as they progress through the museum," said Rhys Simmons, Old Sturbridge Village's director of interpretation.

The reboot, the museum's first in about 40 years, is sorely needed, Simmons said. Old Sturbridge Village hasn't updated its staff training material since the 1970s, and visitor experience surveys have found that people, while generally positive about their visit, feel something is missing. Many museums are dealing with similar issues, said Jeff Hardwick, deputy director of the National

Endowment for the Humanities Division of Public Programs. According to a 2016 report by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences Humanities Indicators project, visits to historic sites have been on the decline since 1982.

"Many historic site interpretations have lagged behind scholarship, so they have to become more relevant to a more diverse audience," Hardwick said.

Old Sturbridge Village, on 200 acres in central Massachusetts, depicts life in a small New England town of the 1830s, with 40 to 50 employees dressed in period clothing going about daily routines in the home, workshops or farm and interacting with visitors. It gets about 250,000 visitors a year.

The early 19th century was a time of social upheaval, and the role of minorities and women was changing. Slavery no longer existed in most of New England, and the abolitionist and temperance movements were in full swing.

Yet the museum hasn't done a good enough job of presenting those stories, Simmons said.

"We under-represent the African-American and the Native American story dramatically," Simmons said. "You leave here with the sense that it was an almost exclusively white- and male-dominated picture of what life was like."

The role of women also needs to be re-examined, he said. While men held jobs in the fields, or in workshops, women held the household together.

"The home was the foundation of every family, so women played probably the most important role in rural New England life,"

Simmons said. "Men couldn't manage without women."

People have more options for their leisure time and money now than they did 20 years ago, and museums need to figure out how to better compete for that time and money, said Lauren McCormack, secretary of the Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums. The Old Sturbridge Village study may help.

"Anything they learn at Old Sturbridge Village hopefully would be shared throughout the field and be applicable to some extent at other museums," said McCormack, executive director of the Marblehead Museum in Massachusetts.

## Charlie Denton was a living History Lesson

*Reprinted from a Graham Star article by Marshall McClung*

### PART II

In 1835, the North Carolina Militia moved in to begin the round up of the Cherokee in preparation for their removal. Many Cherokee hid out in the mountains, staying there until the final removal was over. Charlie Denton said one family that lived near them, Conseen – also spelled Conesene at the time – was one of the families that hid out and escaped the removal.

They were living on Santeetlah Creek at the time, but hid in Slickrock near the Big Flats which is below Big Fat Gap and near Slickrock Creek. They stayed hidden in the Slickrock for three years. Charlie recalled that most of the Cherokee lived in log houses, but didn't hew the logs like the white man did but left them round.

One story about the Cherokee that stayed with Charlie and was probably his favorite was relayed to him by the Reverend Joseph Wiggins about Standing Wolf. Standing Wolf was considered to be a religious leader among the Cherokee. He lived on Wolf Creek in the eastern part of Graham County. **Is this how Wolf Creek got its name?** The soldiers came to get Standing Wolf and the other Cherokee in the Wolf Creek area. They were accompanied by George Hayes from Tomotla in Cherokee County, who served as an interpreter for the U.S. Army. When the soldiers entered Wolf's cabin, he asked to be permitted to pray first. Wolf prayed his prayer, leaving most of those present in tears.

Standing Wolf was taken to a stockade on the Nantahala River. After being there a few days, Wolf asked the soldiers if he could be permitted to go get his family. He promised to return the next day, and he did. They were then moved to another stockade on the Hiwassee River in Cherokee County. At that time, Hayes, the interpreter, visited the stockade. Standing Wolf told him that he had received a warning (from God?) that if they were moved west, that they would be stricken by a fever and die. This sadly came true for many of the Cherokee who died of Typhoid Fever.

Standing Wolf told Hayes that he wanted to get out of the stockade and go back home. He asked Hayes what would be the best way to go about that. Hayes told him that each time the soldiers gave them food to save part of it and hide it until he had enough food to last him for the trip back home.

Several weeks later, Hayes was cutting wood in his yard late one afternoon. He saw a small group of Cherokee approaching him. It was Standing Wolf and nineteen other Cherokee. Standing Wolf made it back home. Sometime later, he and his wife had a child and named it "Come Back Wolf."

Charlie finished the story by saying that in his career as a surveyor, he ran across the name of Come Back Wolf on several documents and important papers. He was well acquainted with one of Wolf's granddaughters, Mrs. Dave Wade Skittie, who lived on Connelly's Creek in Swain County.

*[See PART III in the next GCHA Newsletter]*

## Whisky was downfall of Eagle Rose

*Reprinted from an article by John Parris'  
"Roaming the Mountains" Column  
in the Asheville Citizen*

### HANGOVER MOUNTAIN

#### PART II

"He'd have made two or three barrels. He'd run those singlings off, keep them up there at the stillhouse, and then when he got that all run off out of the regular beer, when he'd double it back. What we called 'doublings.' When he doubled it back and brought it out, why it was pure whiskey, clear too.

"He made good whiskey. He would never allow none of that Verdi-grease to get in there. He'd put a big funnel there with charcoal in it and a clean wool sock over the top and beneath and run the whiskey through that into his jogs. When you got through running it, you'd see little wads of greasy substance on that white wool sock. The verdigrease was supposed to be poisonous.

"Of course, helping my daddy make whiskey, I learned to make it myself. And during the Depression (of the '30s), during some slack time, me and my brother-in-law made some whiskey. During that time we supplied doctors and lawyers and even the sheriff's department. They were pretty good customers.

"But when I was 25 years old I was converted to Christ and became a Christian and stopped making whiskey. By that time my daddy had been dead 10 years."

Eagle Rose was shot and killed by a shotgun blast at close range in the back of the head on April 2, 1926, and his body hid in Yellow Creek for 40 days until searchers found it.

His two brothers were killed before he was murdered. J. Thee Rose was killed by a man named Dick Thomas in a drunken shoot-out over in Tennessee at Meadow in 1909. And George W. Rose, known as Pitt Rose, was shot down at the Southern Depot in Calderwood, Tenn., in 1923, by his mother's brother, Charlie Ditmore, when they both were liquored up.

When Eagle Rose was reported missing, searching parties of volunteers headed into Yellow Creek Mountain where he was reportedly last seen. John Bart Orr, camp foreman for Kitchen Lumber Company, which was cutting timber near Hangover, was given leave by the company to head up the search.

Finally, Rose's badly decomposed body was found in Yellow Creek. Six men were indicted and tried for his murder but were found not guilty.

One of the six was "Little Dan" Gladden. And years later, according to John Bart Orr, Gladden summoned him and Jack Morphew, a Robbinsville lawyer, to his deathbed and said he had a confession to make.

Gladden said he shot Eagle Rose from behind, on the trail, with a shotgun at close range; and then hid his body in Yellow Creek, but learned later, to his dismay and intense regret, that he had killed the wrong man – that Eagle Rose had not reported his illicit distillery to law officers.

"In my time," Floyd Rose said, "I've heard all sorts of stories about my father's murder. I don't know what to believe. But I'm feel certain that the men they tried were all connected with it. Who pulled the trigger, I don't know. But I do know that he was murdered because of whiskey."

**GCHA STRETEGIC PLAN**  
**GOALS, OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES, RESPONSIBILITY**



**GOAL #1**

*Organize and establish Graham County Historical Association as a non-profit organization.*

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	DATE COMPLETED
Organizational meeting	Solicit volunteers and information pertaining to Graham County history	Carolyn Stewart Edd Satterfield Lavina West	2016
Become a 501-C3 non-profit organization	Apply for 501-C3 status	Terri Phillips	Aug. 2016
Seek Funding	-Fund Raising events -Donations -Membership Solicitations -Apply for grants	GCHA Committees	Ongoing
Obtain information related to the establishment of a museum	Special meetings with individuals involved in history related organizations	GCHA members	Oct.-Dec. 2017

**GOAL # 2**

*Develop a marketing plan to inform the public, solicit members, participate in fundraisers, use social media and other forms of advertising to promote Graham County Historical Association.*

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	DATE COMPLETED
Inform public of GCHA purpose	Place signs and banners with GCHA information in various locations	Terri Phillips	Aug. 2017
Advertising	Develop and distribute brochures, membership forms, -Participate in fundraisers	Terri Phillips  MD/PR Committee	June-Aug. 2017  July, Sept, Oct. 2017 June, July, Sept, Oct . 2018
Participate in Social Media	Facebook Maintenance	Carol Borrelli	Initiated May, 2018
Up-to-date information	Design and distribute newsletter once/quarter	Tere Moore	Dec. 2017, Mar. 2018, Aug. 2018
Promote GCHA	-Design and publish website -Develop marketing plan -Advertisements in publications -Determine membership due dates -Include marketing in budget	-Terri Phillips -Membership Development and Public Relations Comm.( Len Sheffield- MP) Terri Phillips	June, 2017    July, 2018

**GOAL #3**

*To purchase, renovate, and maintain a building to display and educate the public about Graham County, regional, and Appalachian history. Select a name to encompass all potential elements considered for this structure.*

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	DATE COMPLETED
Locate and purchase a building to be used as a museum	Negotiate a purchase price with Snider family	Board Members	Aug. – Oct. 2017
Purchase Snider building	Purchase and obtain deed for building	Board Members	Nov. - 2017
Develop plan and layout for renovation and remodeling of Snider's Building including a Welcome Center	Estimate from Architect and Contractors (Phase 1)	Building and Grounds Committee	03-05-18
Secure sufficient monies for design & remodeling	-Create a renovations budget -Apply for ARC Grant for feasibility study.	Finance Committee  Sophia Paulos	  Aug. 2018
Mid 2018- Begin renovation and remodeling	-Building Code assessment -Schematic design -Construction drawing	GCHA Building & Grounds Committee	April. 2018 April, 2018
Building Security	Security System	B & G Comm	
Management of project	-Select person or persons from B & G committee to manage project -Solicit for competitive bids -Award contracts	  B & G Comm.	

**GOAL # 4****Guide the design of a museum in the Snider building and oversee production of the exhibits within the museum.**

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	DATE COMPLETED
Determine the museum's design and layout	-Identify resources -Determine layout	Museum Layout and Display Committee	
Apply for Grant	Professional help with design and planning	Grants Committee	
Develop Interpretive Plan	Research storylines	Museum Layout and Display Committee	
Guide planning, design, and construction of exhibit halls	-Identify resources -Contact exhibit professionals	Museum Layout and Design Committee; Building & Grounds Committee	
Assist with creation and installation of displays and exhibits	Design a plan with assistance from professionals and in-house volunteers	Museum Layout and Display Committee	

**GOAL # 5****Identify, collect, display, catalog, and preserve artifacts, documents, and other collection items that are acquired by the GCHA. Embrace best practices for acquisitions and collection management processes.**

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	DATE COMPLETED
Implement Acquisitions Policy	Develop and adopt an acquisition policy with related forms and procedures	Acquisitions and Collections Committee	
Implement initial Collection Management Policy	Develop and adopt a collection management policy. Revise as storage and display areas are constructed	Acquisitions and Collections Committees	
Acquire best software for acquisition and collection management processes.	Research available systems and purchase optimum package	Acquisitions and Collections Committee	
Implement preservation procedures for all artifacts, documents, and other collection items	-Attend preservation workshops -Develop and implement procedures to preserve and protect all collected items	Acquisitions and Collections Committee	

**GOAL #6****Gather and preserve Oral History to be used for historical and educational purposes.**

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	DATE COMPLETED
Gather and preserve oral history	-Attend oral history workshop -Identify potential individuals to be interviewed -Conduct Interviews -Develop a plan for proper preservation	Oral History Committee	03-05-18  July, 2018  Initiated Aug. 2018  August, 2018
Proper Documentation	Create Oral History procedures and corresponding forms	Oral History Committee	August, 2018
Display and use oral history for educational and historical programs	Develop layout plan for oral history displays and uses	Oral History Committee; Museum Layout and Display Committee	

**GOAL #7****Explore and implement other uses, i.e., indoor market for vendors, meeting space for groups, historical education programming, indoor classroom for locals, gift shop, snack bar.**

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	DATE COMPLETED
-Provide a retail outlet for local artisans -Space leased as an income source	-Design and assign space and layout for vendors -Partner with Travel & Tourism	Layout and Display Committee B & G Committee GCHA Board & Travel & Tourism	
Historical educational programs	-Design and assign space to be used as a classroom or meeting space for groups -Identify people to present programs	Layout and Display Committee; Building & Grounds Committee	
Gift Shop as an income source	Design space and stock items	Layout and Display Committee Museum Personnel B & G Committee	

**GOAL #8**

**2021- Grand opening**

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	DATE COMPLETED
Plan and promote GCHA grand opening	Appoint ad hoc committee	GCHA Board	
Cultivate sponsors to fund opening	Host opening reception	Membership and Promotions Committee	

## COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION EFFORTS

In concert with the incredible efforts made by Graham County Historical Association toward achieving their vision of a historical museum in the center of Robbinsville, two other groups are working diligently to bring revitalization to our community.

### MAINSTREET REVITALIZATION

T. J. Holland offered a suggestion for consideration for a theme for the Robbinsville area. The theme is based on the Cherokee name for this area/place which is known to most as Cheoah. The suggestion was to use an otter as the area visual, much like Bryson City now uses the trout theme and Cherokee uses the bears. The otter was suggested because it represents nature, playfulness and use of water, which ties to the existing branding of "Your Natural Destination." The idea was well received, and Sophia Paulos is to schedule a meeting with T. J. to further discuss the possibilities.

Ann Bass, a representative from ARC's rural economic development division offered some ideas for the development of the tourist industry and businesses which tie to the local branding as well. An additional meeting with Ms. Bass is going to be pursued to discuss the potential association with her organization.

A brainstorming activity provided clarity for which "projects" are the most compelling. The results were as follows:

1. Pavilion development, cultural arts and small business recruitment/development tied for first place
2. Museums, festivals, mural trail, social engagement and beautification tied for second
3. GGCG, humanitarian outreach, student involvement, education, health and visitor center

Three main themes can be derived from the outcome, Tourism, Small Business, and Community Engagement are the areas of highest interest. More discussion will come on this topic at our next meeting.

The Main Street business owners present raised their concerns about the lack of ordinances and the presence of unchecked criminal activity which endanger Main Street property and development. The need for animal control was discussed as well. Sophia Paulos is to contact the animal advocates about this issue.

Contact information was collected for those who could help with the formation of city ordinances to offset the issues at hand. It was agreed that we would move forward cautiously with this subject

Governor Cooper has announced that Graham County is to be the next Hometown Strong Community in North Carolina. A group of his advisors will be coming to Graham County in early October to discuss the needs within the community. The Hometown Strong program focuses on infrastructure and capacity building.

Church Mouse Ministries has entered into the lease agreement with the Town of Robbinsville for the old VFW building and the vacant lot beside it. They will be used for economic development planning and as a cultural gathering place. Grant funding is being pursued for the pavilion area as priority in development as it can be in use while funds for the remainder of the project are sought.

CMM will be pursuing grant funds for the mural project through the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation. Location and subject matter still to be determined.

Angie Knight will be contacted about pulling together a group of students to participate in our meeting and economic development plans.

A meeting with Ann Bass is scheduled for Friday the 31<sup>st</sup> to discuss the involvement of the ARC with our Mainstreet Revitalization group and if the state offers any type of economic incentives to start-up businesses.

John Colwell presented concept drawings for one of the areas of interest on Main Street, including a tribute to the EBCI and using the otters theme suggested by TJ Holland and Brian Johnson.

A meeting will be scheduled with TJ to discuss further development of the idea.

A copy of the existing town ordinances will be given to Michelle Shplet, and John Colwell has agreed to preview them to determine which areas need to be addressed.

Matt Shplet will look at the standing rock façade to determine its condition for safety concerns.

Sophia is going to address the issue of the cat motels on Main Street and will contact the Thompsons about the property behind the façade.

Several organizations and grantors have made the strong suggestion that we make the Mainstreet group an official entity for validity and recognition, giving it a name. One name suggested is:

Robbinsville Envisioning Vibrant, Vital Economic Development and Urban Prosperity (R.E.V.V.E.D. U.P.)

