



The Link



preserving our heritage and building a future together

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Fire: An Urban Menace — New Exhibit in the Jonesborough/Washington County History Museum

Jonesborough's first fire fighting equipment finally has an exhibit of its own! "Fire: An Urban Menace," is now on display at the Jonesborough/Washington County History Museum. This permanent exhibit tells the story of Jonesborough's long and harrowing history with fire, and how the town worked together to combat such disasters.

The creation and installation of the exhibit, just like the town's fire prevention methods of yesteryear, was a joint effort. Heritage Alliance volunteer William Stout built the platforms for the equipment, and he helped tear out the previous cases that had been in that spot since the museum opened its doors in 1983. The pumpers were shifted around multiple times throughout the process, and the Jonesborough Fire Department graciously stepped in to help move the historic pieces up and down and then back again.

The text panels include information from the earlier incarnation of the exhibit when the pumpers were out in the middle of the museum, while also incorporating new facts and images. Stafford Custom Graphics worked with the Alliance to produce the beautiful panels that now hang on the walls. Over the next few months, a reader rail will be installed

in front of the equipment, and the standing labels will be mounted on the rail. William Stout is also hard at work building a case to display one of Jonesborough's old Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. These maps have been invaluable to the historic preservation of Jonesborough, and the Heritage Alliance will be able to incorporate the displayed map into town tours and our educational programming.

The new exhibit also features an excerpt from "The Fire Fiend: Its Fearful Ravages in Jonesborough." Printed in the *Herald and Tribune* on

January 8, 1874, the article recounts the tale of woe and misery that followed the 1873 New Year's fire. The language of the piece is striking, and a longer excerpt is included below. Make sure you check out the newest exhibit in the Jonesborough/Washington County History Museum!

"Eighteen hundred and seventy-three will be a memorable year in the history Jonesborough, for the dreadful scourging of pestilence and excessive loss of fire. Our long immunity from such direful visitations renders . . . (cont on pg 2)



these calamities the more grievous, and the harder to be borne with that complacent philosophy which regards whatever is right.

The last day of the old year was one of peculiar and almost irreparable misfortune to a few of our citizens, and their great losses cause universal sympathy and regret in the community. The eye of the day and year closed amidst the

GHASTLY HORRORS AND FIERCE WRATH

Of a disastrous conflagration. A huge pile of ruins, heaps of scoria and rubbish and rent and blackened walls the destruction of two of the largest and best private dwellings in the place – were the sad and grim greetings of the New Year.

At 5 o'clock P.M. the town was startled by loud cries of fire and the rapid strokes of the Court House bell. The citizens rushed forth from their stores, residences, offices and places of business, to the scene of ruin, and the street was soon filled with crowds of men and boys, who, with a few exceptions, were so bewildered by excitement that they could but, for a short while, summon the coolness and judgment necessary to wage a methodical warfare against the constantly increasing heat and volume of the rapacious flames. When the fire was first discovered, the roof of the Gallaher house was all ablaze, and the structure being entirely of wood, burned with awful rapidity. – When the roof fell in the burning mass shot

A SOLID COLUMN OF FIRE

At least fifty feet high, and then all idea of saving the adjoining property was abandoned, though the brave and noble men who were battling against all odds with the devouring elements did not cease their heroic but hopeless exertions . . .

- "The Fire Fiend," printed in the *Herald and Tribune* on January 8, 1874.



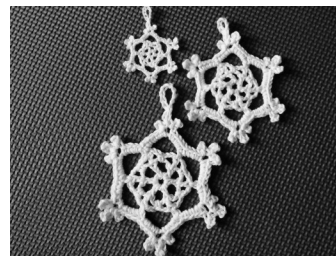
Salt Box House Mat — The Final Project for the Rug Hooking course

Oak Hill Needle Arts School Fall Classes: Knitting, Crocheting, and Traditional Rug Hooking

This fall, the Oak Hill Needle Arts School will be offering classes in knitting, crocheting, and traditional rug hooking. There will also be two sessions on how to knit and crochet your own ornaments, just in time for the holiday season. (Mini mitten and snowflake ornaments are pictured below.) Classes will be small in size (3-8 students per class), and meet for limited sessions, providing instruction from the most basic to more advanced skills and projects.

The knitting and crocheting classes begin on Saturday, November 2nd and continue every Saturday through November 23rd. Our rug hooking classes will take place on Saturday, November 9th and 16th. The fee for the knitting and crocheting courses is \$10.00 per 90 minute session. The fee for the rug hooking classes is \$35.00. This fee covers the cost of the kit. Deb Burger, a professional member of the Crochet Guild of America and the Knitting Guild of America, will be the instructor for the knitting and crocheting courses, and Joani Range Douglas, a member of the Association of Traditional Hooking Artists, will be the instructor for the hooked rug courses.

Pre-registration and payment of class tuition is required, and registration for the hooked rug classes closes on October 18th. Fall classes will take place in the Chester Inn, a State Historic Site and home of the Chester Inn Museum located in downtown Jonesborough. For a complete schedule with course detail, or to make a reservation, please call the office at 423.753.9580. The full schedule is also available online at www.heritageall.org. Help us preserve traditional needle arts this fall at the Chester Inn! A full schedule is included in our events calendar on page 6 of this newsletter.



Meet Corrinne Moore — The Newest Friendly Face at the Chester Inn Museum

If you've been to the Chester Inn Museum lately, you've been greeted by a new face. Corrinne Moore assumed the position of head docent at the Chester Inn Museum this August following the departure of Jama Grove. During her tenure, Jama designed and installed multiple exhibits, created a museum coloring book and scavenger hunt, and shared the town's history with a multitude of school kids of all ages. Her dedication to the Chester showed in everything she did, and her presence will be greatly missed. The Heritage Alliance wishes her all the luck in the world as she pursues her PhD in History at the University of Arkansas.

Corrinne, a senior at Tusculum College in their Museum Studies' program, interned with the Alliance throughout the spring and summer of 2013. She worked with volunteer Gordon Edwards in the Old Jonesborough Cemetery, and also helped to photograph and inventory the Rhea Wells' art collection and the W. Eugene and Joyce Cox Historical Collection.

The Alliance is thrilled to have Corrinne at the Chester Inn. A native of the area, Corrinne is a graduate of David Crockett High

School. Her love of history drew her to the Museum Studies' program at Tusculum, where she will be receiving her degree in the spring of 2014.

While at the Chester, Corrinne hopes to continue raising awareness about the building by making sure the public knows it is open and ready for a visit. She'll also be working with the Alliance to revamp the educational programs offered in the museum. Her first rotating exhibit, "Law and Order in Washington County," was on display during the



Washington County Courthouse Centennial. Her second rotating exhibit, a play on the Victorian

abinet of curiosities, will be on display throughout the month of October.

When asked what she loved about the town of Jonesborough and the Chester Inn, Corrinne replied, "I love the Chester Inn and Jonesborough for the sole reason of all the history that lies within the town and the building itself. Jonesborough is a beautiful town with some of the friendliest individuals I have ever been lucky enough to come in contact with. The Chester Inn is a gorgeous building that has such a massive story to tell and I hope each guest that stops by leaves knowing that story or at least pieces of it."

Corrinne also strives to interest the younger generations in history. "The best way to get younger people interested in history is to tell them the untold stories that get left out of the history books. I have noticed that they become more interested when you can give them seemingly random knowledge that not many people are aware of." Make sure you stop by the Chester Inn Museum and say hello to Corrinne!

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The Courthouses of Washington County

By: Ned Irwin

"We shape our buildings, and afterwards our buildings shape us." There is no better illustration of Winston Churchill's statement than with the courthouses of Washington County. Without a need to build a courthouse, there would have been no need to build Jonesborough.

In the spring of 1779, the first county courthouse was completed in what would now be the middle of Main Street. It was a simple one-story log structure. Prior to this time, county court met in the homes of individual members of the court. Once there was a courthouse built, people began coming to pay their taxes, get a marriage license, file a deed, submit a lawsuit. Often they lived some distance from the courthouse, so a need soon arose for inns to be built to house them, taverns to feed and water them, and roads on which they could travel. In this way a community took shape around the courthouse, the town of Jonesborough. From that time, there has always been a close connection between the county courthouse and the town.

There have been six courthouses at Jonesborough, beginning with that simple log cabin 236 years ago. In 1785, a second log cabin of two-stories replaced the first. In 1794, a third log courthouse replaced the second. By 1820, people in town were making their homes of brick instead of logs. That year they also began construction of the county's fourth courthouse, the first one to be made of brick. This building burned in 1839. Fortunately, the public records were saved. It wasn't until 1847 that a fifth courthouse, also of brick, finally opened. It had a dome atop with a clock that faced in all four directions. This building became unstable by 1910, was torn down in 1912, and replaced by the sixth and present courthouse in 1913.

These buildings have stood witness to a lot of history. This should come as no surprise in Tennessee's oldest town. Jonesborough became a migration node

for anyone moving into America's first frontier and then moving into those new frontiers of the West. Natives from this county could be found in many far off places from Spanish Texas to the gold fields of California.

Men passed the first courthouse on their way to defeat the British at the Battle of King's Mountain. It was in the second courthouse that the state of Franklin was first proclaimed. And into its court chamber in 1788, a young Andrew Jackson was approved to practice law. In the third courthouse, he sat as a judge and ordered and then personally made the arrest of the man who had been the first white child born of permanent settlers in Tennessee, Russell Bean. Bean swore he would never surrender to no other man.

It was on the steps of the fifth courthouse that Andrew Johnson was threatened with his life for speaking on behalf of the Union during the secession debate that led Tennessee into the Civil War. At various times, Confederate and Union troops passed by, advancing or retreating. The courthouse even served briefly as a makeshift military hospital.

The current courthouse has shaped the life of our country and its citizens for the past 100 years. In August 1912, a "Homecoming" week was hosted in Jonesboro with residents and former residents coming to witness the laying of the courthouse cornerstones. And yes there are two cornerstones, one on the northwest side and one on the northeast. Rhea Lodge No. 47 F.A. & M. laid the east one and placed in it the relics taken from the old courthouse cornerstone, along with a roster of the members of the lodge. The west cornerstone was laid by the citizens of the county, and it included among other items a Grand Army of the Republic badge and a Southern Confederacy badge with the two badges "fastened together to emphasize the friendly relations now

existing between these two organizations," so that the event also served as a unique Civil War reconciliation.

The following year construction was completed and on Monday, October 6, 1913, the new courthouse was dedicated. About 6,000 people attended the dedication ceremonies. An interesting feature of events that day was a parade of 341 school children from the schoolhouse to the courthouse, each child waving an American flag as they marched from Academy Hill down Main Street singing "America."

Over the years, the courthouses witnessed election campaign rallies, the speeches of native sons Bob and Alf Taylor in their "War of the Roses," temperance parades, and public hangings. It has always been something like the county's front porch. It remains that today with its' musical events, festivals, farmer's markets, and celebrations.

Many remarkable people have had business or made history at the courthouse, including noted jurists, lawyers, and politicians, even presidents of the United States. But far more numerous have been the average citizens of Washington County, going about their daily business, and leaving their histories in the courthouses of Washington County.

(Ned Irwin is the Archivist for the Washington County Archives. This essay was prepared for the Courthouse Centennial Celebration that took place on August 10th and 11th.)



Plans Underway for the 36th Annual Progressive Dinner!!!

Reservations are now open for the 36th Annual Progressive Dinner, and this year's event features some exciting changes! The Progressive Dinner will take place on Saturday, December 7th, and we will be offering a new seating time starting at 3:00 p.m. There will be five seating times available this year: 3:00, 4:10, 5:20, 6:30, and 7:40.

The Progressive Dinner is a unique event, which brings hundreds of visitors to Tennessee's Oldest Town every December for an evening of fine food, great entertainment, and the opportunity to visit some of our most historic structures, not usually open to the public. This year's main course will take place inside the McKinney Center at the Booker T. Washington School, Jonesborough's latest adaptive reuse success story.

Phone reservations can be made through the Heritage Alliance at 423.753.9580 or directly with the Visitors' Center Ticketing Service at 423.753.1010. If you wish to pay by check, simply fill out and return our reservation form with your payment. The reservation form is available at our website, www.heritageall.org. A confirmation letter containing lodging and dining information will be mailed to you upon receipt of your payment. If you would like to make a reservation for a table of 8 or more, please contact the Heritage Alliance directly.

Convenient on-line ticketing through the town of Jonesborough is also available by visiting their website at www.jonesboroughtn.org.

The Progressive Dinner is the perfect kick off to the holiday season!

This year's event is a guaranteed sell out, so secure your reservations today!



Washington County Courthouse Centennial — The Celebration Continues

On October 6, 1913, the current Washington County Courthouse opened for business. Washington County and the town of Jonesborough honored that historic event with a weekend of festivities in early August. Though the rain put a damper on most of Saturday's events, the legacy of the Courthouse as a public meeting space lived on as Washington County Attorney John Rambo was sworn in on the steps of the Courthouse as Chancellor for the 1st Judicial District of the Washington County Chancery Court.

With the threat of rain still lingering in the air, Sunday's festivities were moved inside to the Visitor's Center.

There, attendees were entertained with a rousing musical tribute that featured several artists, choirs, musicians, and dancers from across the area. The Heritage Alliance would like to thank the members and organizations that made up the Courthouse Centennial Celebrations Committee for all their hard work



and planning. Thank you, too, to Washington County Mayor Dan Eldridge, the Washington County Commissioners, the Town of Jonesborough, all the event sponsors, volunteers, and countless others who helped to honor the Courthouse.

The celebration is not over, though. A new exhibit on the Courthouse is now on display in the Jonesborough/Washington County History Museum. The exhibit will challenge you to think. How were the ideas of freedom, justice, and liberty celebrated, honored, and challenged throughout the years on Courthouse Square, and how does that tradition live on today?



Fall — Winter Calendar of Events

November: Chester Inn Museum winter hours, museum open Fri-Sat from 11:00-6:00 and on Sun from 1:00-5:00

November 1: Haunts and Happenings at the Chester Inn Museum from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

November 2: Oak Hill Needle Arts School Learn to Knit session 1, Crochet Snowflake ornament

November 9: Oak Hill Needle Arts School Learn to Knit session 2, Learn to Crochet session 1, Traditional Rug Hooking day 1

November 10: 4th Installment of "A Military Life" Washington County Veterans' exhibit at the Jonesborough/ Washington County History Museum

November 16: Oak Hill Needle Arts School Learn to Knit session 3, Learn to Crochet session 2, Traditional Rug Hooking day 2

November 21: Members-only program at the International Storytelling Center at 7:30.

November 23: Oak Hill Needle Arts School Mini-Mitten ornament, Learn to Crochet session 3

December 7: 36th Annual Progressive Dinner (3:00, 4:10, 5:20, 6:30, and 7:40 seating times)

December 21: Dickens Downtown, create a Victorian ornament with museum staff from 11:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.

December 22: Final day of the Chester Inn Museum for 2013 season, museum will resume regular hours on 3/01/2014

January 19: Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 979 out of Kingsport will share their stories and journeys at the Visitor's Center from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

January 25: Volunteer training for docents at the Chester Inn Museum at 11:00 a.m.

Something Curious Is Coming to the Chester this October . . .

Come to the Chester Inn Museum this fall and partake in our play on a Victorian Cabinet of Curiosities. Some of our wildest artifacts and pictures will be on display. Learn some odd history that will make you cringe, and help us identify some of our most mysterious items.

You curious yet?

"She is an efficient teacher and a good woman, but we fear she has a misconception of her social duties to the Colored race." -

Editor of the *Jonesborough Journal*, 1880

"I do believe a black heart is infinitely worse than a black skin."

- Julia B. Nelson in *The Herald & Tribune*, 1880

In the late 1870s, Julia B. Nelson assumed the position of instructor and principal of the Warner Institute in Jonesborough, a Friends Freedmen's School for the education of African Americans. Her strong beliefs put her in the midst of a national debate about equality, education, race, and gender. Come and be a part of the action in our second Members-Only program taking place November 21st at 7:30. Please keep an eye out for additional information!

Volunteers Needed for Exciting New Programs at the Chester Inn Museum!

In 2014, the Heritage Alliance hopes to implement a new series of educational programs for visitors of all ages at the Chester Inn. In order to do this, though, we need your help. The Chester Inn Museum is looking for volunteers for the new year! We will be hosting a volunteer training session at the museum on Saturday, January 25 at 11:00 a.m. If you're interested in attending the training session, please call our office at 423.753.9580 or contact Corrinne Moore at the Chester Inn at 423.753.4580. The training session will last about an hour. If you'd like to help the Heritage Alliance in other ways, just give us a ring. We always have multiple irons in the fire and can use all the help we can get!



From the Director's Desk



As I write this, WETS-FM, our local public radio station, is in the beginning of their Fall Fund drive. They make no bones about it. If we don't support the station, we are in danger of losing it. Isn't that true of everything in life? We all need support and not just in the form of funding (though your tax deductible contributions are always welcome).

A kind word, a smile or a story to share provides support as well. This is the type of support that money can't buy. It is the support we regularly receive from our volunteers. Folks like Don Burger, who can often be found bringing attention to the Chester Inn by sitting outside with his dulcimer entertaining the passersby. The Chester Inn Museum is often overlooked by folks walking down the street, but if Don is there, folks stop, enjoy a tune and learn a bit about the town in the process. Or Charlene Cleveland and Nancy Kavanaugh who donate time to make visitors to the Chester feel welcome, answer questions and otherwise be helpful. And then there

are folks like William Stout and Gordon Edwards, whose physical labor on our behalf is truly a blessing. William not only takes care of the Duncan House, he builds museum display furniture, provides support and maintenance at the Chester Inn and always...always has a warm smile and a great story to brighten our day. Gordon Edwards' work in the Old Jonesborough Cemetery has not only changed the landscape, but helped establish among local officials a new sense of appreciation and importance for one of Jonesborough's most historic places.

These volunteers, together with the many who help us during the Progressive Dinner and with large group children's programming, are worth their weight in gold (and like gold, we could use a lot more of them). They understand the connection between volunteering and being connected to the community. And they understand the importance of their work is not just in the history learned or the places preserved. It's about the little witch who kept watching the video in the Chester Inn during Haunts and Happenings, or the 4th grader who discovered he had something in common with an elderly aunt after a visit to Oak Hill School. It's

about the appreciation on the faces of veterans whose visit to the museum has caused them to recall those all too few moments of mirth during service. It is about the precious family heirloom, so laden with memories, it can't be thrown away. And it is about the feeling one gets seeing two cemeteries visually and appreciatively become one.

Every day the Heritage Alliance helps make a memory or calls one to mind. Our programs, collections, exhibits and archives are alive with the past. They enlighten the present and shine a light on the future. Your support, especially your time and creative energy to work with collections and programs, make memories to last a life time.... and so much longer.

Won't you become a part of the story? Add your time and talents to ours by becoming a volunteer, a member, a supporter. You'll like the way you feel.

Heritage Alliance to Host Veteran's Program in New Year

On September 18, the Heritage Alliance had the honor of attending a program at Bluff City Middle School hosted by members of the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 979 out of Kingsport. Moe Baines, Bill Peterson, R.B. Louthian, James Vaughn, John Pollak, Mack G. Begley, Jerry A. McLain, Lennis France, and John L. Ward shared their experiences in Vietnam with the students. Each member discussed his specific and expected duties based on his position and branch of service.

The veterans had items on hand from their service years to show the students, and they set the atmosphere with era appropriate music. Most history classes struggle to make it beyond WWII before

the school year ends, so it's wonderful to have programs such as this that continue the story.

Some of Moe Baines' artifacts from his time in Vietnam will be on display in the 4th installment of "A Military Life" in the Jonesborough/Washington County History Museum. The latest edition of the exhibit honoring Washington County veterans will open on November 10.

The Heritage Alliance will be hosting members of the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 979 out of Kingsport on Sunday, January 19th from 2:00-3:00 p.m. at the Jonesborough Visitor's Center. We hope to see you there!

Calling All Washington County Veterans!

The latest installment of "A Military Life" will be unveiled over Veterans' Day weekend. This ongoing display works with the Veterans Affairs Committee to honor Washington County Veterans. The fourth installment, which will run from November 2013 through May 2014, is in need of new artifacts and new stories. We would love the chance to help honor your service and to tell your stories. If you have a military item you'd like to display, please contact the Heritage Alliance by phone at [423-753-9580](tel:423-753-9580) or by email at info@heritageall.org. Help us continue this wonderful exhibit by bringing your service to the attention of the wider community.





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