



# The Link



*preserving our heritage and building a future together*

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## **“A Sojourn in Jonesborough” - The First Members-Only Event**



On March 28th, members of the Heritage Alliance gathered at the International Storytelling Center to take part in the organization's first members-only event. Anne G'Fellers-Mason, the Special Project Coordinator for the Alliance, wrote and performed a short one woman play based on a sliver of detail from the “A Winter in the South” serial. Published periodically in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* from 1857-1858, “A Winter in the South” tells the story of Squire Broadacre and his family as they leave Virginia for the winter and travel to New Orleans. The family stopped in Jonesborough along the way, and some of the author's impressions of the town are quoted in the

Chester Inn Museum. The women liked the accommodations and shopping in town so much, they decided to stay, while the men journeyed to Roan Mountain alone. Nothing more is said about the women's stay in Jonesborough, and when the men finally returned, much later than originally expected, the family moved on.

Using the story and other sources, such as Captain Ross Smith's *Reminiscences of An Old Timer* and Eugene and Joyce Cox's *Jonesborough: The Town and Its People*, Anne reconstructed what Jonesborough might have looked like in the 1850s, while the Broadacres were visiting. The short theatrical piece chronicled what Annette Broadacre, the 18 year old daughter, might have seen and done during her sojourn in Tennessee's oldest town. It was a piece of the historical record left empty, and Anne was happy to put her playwriting and history degrees

to work to answer “what if?”

The Heritage Alliance hopes to present “A Sojourn in Jonesborough” at another time for an even wider audience. We hope you will join us for more members-only events as the Heritage Alliance thanks you for all your continued support. Future events will be announced via Postcard on the Facebook page, and on the Heritage Alliance website.



*Anne G'Fellers-Mason as Annette Broadacre, pictures courtesy of Peter Montanti of Mountain Photographics, Inc.*



## A Jonesborough Icon: Remembering Bernard Kaiman

### *Jonesborough lost an icon.*

And though we mourn his passing, we are grateful for his living. Bernard Kaiman loved Jonesborough. He and his gracious wife Audrey moved here in 1966 and immediately immersed themselves in the life of the town. They found a community of good, strong people and joined in the work to mold the physical surroundings to reflect the spirit of that community. The Kaiman's helped create the Jonesborough we see today: a place of strong roots, good bones and joy in life well lived.

Bernard was one of the first and earliest supporters of restoring Jonesborough's downtown. He was instrumental in steering Jonesborough toward preservation and heritage tourism as an economic engine for downtown revitalization. His efforts included holding some of the earliest public meetings to generate enthusiasm for preservation and writing a regular column in the *Herald and Tribune* called "Restoration News and Views"

Bernard was one member of the survey team charged with identifying Jonesborough's most significant structures and marking them for restoration. This effort led to the nomination that put Jonesborough's Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places in 1969, a designation that helped pave the way for so much of what we have

become.

Along the way, Bernard and Audrey helped to found the Jonesborough Civic Trust, from which the Heritage Alliance is a direct descendant. In fact, Bernard was the first Chair of the Civic Trust. Under his leadership, both Jonesborough Days and the Storytelling Festival were created and the Christopher Taylor Cabin was saved from demolition. During his tenure, some of the earliest attempts at heritage tourism programming were researched and implemented; the current Walking Tour brochure sold by the Visitor's Center is based on this work. The Heritage Alliance still counts on the Progressive Dinner, another program from Bernard's days at the Civic Trust, to help fund our programs and services, as well as advocate for preservation principles, just as it did when it was initiated 36 years ago.

The Kaiman's believed in Jonesborough and in historic preservation as a tool to build a strong, vibrant community. They not only put their heart into this belief, they put their money in to it as well. Bernard and Audrey bought a home in the historic district and a building downtown. In 1970, they purchased the old Rhea Lodge no. 47 meeting house at 129 East Main Street and began operating one of Jonesborough's most long-lived businesses. This building was recently donated to the Heritage Alliance, thus

continuing and cementing Bernard's belief in the power of historic preservation.

We are saddened by this loss, yet cannot help but smile when we think of Bernard. He was truly a "character" in a town with a long history of "characters". Our thoughts and our prayers are with his wife Audrey. We take some small solace in knowing that, whatever your view of what lies beyond, there is a new man in residence there and he has spaghetti dinner tickets for one and all.

In honor of the Kaiman's tireless efforts in Jonesborough, the Heritage Alliance Preservation Advocacy Award has been renamed to the Bernard and Audrey Kaiman Award for Excellence in Preservation Advocacy



*The changing of the guard, the late Dorothy Wood and the late Bernard Kaiman exchange the Civic Trust sign for the Heritage Alliance sign at the Duncan House.*



## Progress Report: Old Jonesborough Cemetery

Springtime is here, warmer temperatures and sunshine are back, and the cleaning and restoration project at the cemetery has resumed. Overseen by Craig Ford and Rachel Conger, the town of Jonesborough's crew supervised by Bobby Oliver spent several days doing some heavy clearing in the east end of the cemetery, the area commonly known as the original 1803 section. They also brought in a contractor who utilized a rubber tracked grinder to assist in this effort.

The Heritage Alliance assists in this restoration effort, providing guidance to assure preservation of the historical aspect of the cemetery. Heritage Alliance volunteer, Gordon M. Edwards, spends time onsite doing hand clearing and trimming, as well as recovering items and markers, and cataloging gravesites, some of which had been lost for decades.

Additional town work planned for this summer includes bringing in topsoil to level uneven areas and the planting of grass seed in the newly cleared areas. Gordon will continue to do fieldwork, including straightening of markers where possible.

Gordon has accumulated data over recent months that will be processed into a more granular mapping of the cemetery layout. It is important to record as much infor-

mation as can be garnered, as over time, markers deteriorate, and information can be lost.

The Old Jonesborough Cemetery did play and continues to play a significant roll in the history of the town. The land for the "publick burying ground" was purchased from a Mr. Patrick Long for \$30.00 in 1803. Some of Jonesborough's most prominent citizens, including Judge Thomas Emmerson, Knoxville's first mayor, Dr. Samuel B. Cunningham, a founder of the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad, and A.E. Jackson, prominent Jonesborough businessman and a Brigadier General during the Civil War, are buried there. The cemetery, just like the buildings further down the road, tells the story of the town and its people.

In June of 1890, the Colored Peoples Cemetery Society of Jonesborough purchased land to start a cemetery adjoining the already existing Jonesborough cemetery. Later known as Evergreen Cemetery, the two cemeteries were kept separate by society and by nature. Jonesborough's only Buffalo Solider Alfred Martin Ray is buried in Evergreen Cemetery. The recent restoration work has finally torn down the natural barriers that stood between the two cemeteries. Today, visitors to town have easy access visitation to both the Old Jonesbor-

ough Cemetery and Evergreen Cemetery. In the months to come, the Heritage Alliance hopes to develop a strolling brochure for the cemeteries that will highlight their history and some of the town's most prominent residents.

Work in the cemeteries is far from over, however, and the Heritage Alliance is always in need of dedicated volunteers to help continue the good work. We will be hosting an official clean up day in the fall, but work continues in various forms year round. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact us! The more hands we have on deck now, the more history we save in the long run.



### Please Frequent Our Business Members as They Help Support Our Region's History:

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## William Henry Richards, Jonesborough, and the Niagara Movement

by: Jama Grove, Chester Inn Museum

*"We refuse to allow the impression to remain that the Negro-American assents to inferiority, is submissive under oppression and apologetic before insults. Through helplessness we may submit, but the voice of protest of ten million Americans must never cease to assail the ears of their fellows, so long as America is unjust."*

*-Niagara Movement, Declaration of Principles, 1905*

In 1905, twenty-nine African American intellectuals gathered at Niagara Falls to demand full political and social inclusion. These men, the founding members of the Niagara Movement, directly questioned accommodationist tactics that encouraged African Americans to accept disfranchisement, Jim Crowism, and limited educational opportunities. The next year, Niagara Movement leader W.E.B. DuBois explained the organization's principles and attacked discrimination in America, saying, "Stripped of verbiage and subterfuge and in its naked nastiness the new American creed says: Fear to let black men even try to rise lest they become the equals of the white. And this is the land that professes to follow Jesus Christ. The blasphemy of such a course is only matched by its cowardice." When DuBois called for African American intellectuals to unite against racial discrimination, William Henry Richards responded. Distance and

decades separated Richards, a Howard University law professor, from his Tennessee upbringing when he joined DuBois at Niagara, but this civil rights leader and champion for educational opportunities began his career at the Warner Institute in Jonesborough.

Born into slavery near Athens, Tennessee, William Henry Richards first met Yardley Warner while studying under Julia B. Nelson at the freedman's school in Athens. When Nelson accepted the position of principal at the Warner Institute in Jonesborough, Richards came with her. In Jonesborough, Richards continued his own education while earning a small monthly salary teaching at a nearby African American school. With financial help from Nelson and English Quaker donors, along with his own savings, Richards left Jonesborough to enroll in Howard University, where he earned a law degree in 1882. He later joined the faculty at Howard and served as the president of the alumni association.

Richards shared DuBois's commitment to opening higher education to African Americans and was instrumental in the founding of the Niagara Movement. He served as the secretary for the first meeting, the first chairman of the finance committee, and was appointed to incorporate the organization.

Richards, along with W.E.B. DuBois and La Fayette Hershaw, served on the group's founding board of trustees. As a member of the movement, Richards insisted that all organizational educational materials advocate for higher education rather than limiting African American education to industrial training, which limited students' opportunities for achieving economic and social advancement.

Although the Niagara Movement survived for only a few short years, the organization provided a philosophical and tactical model for subsequent civil rights groups, including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which formed in 1910 and absorbed the membership of the Niagara Movement in 1911. DuBois and the other members of the Niagara Movement continued their struggle for equal rights, including an esteemed professor whose professional training began in a brick building overlooking Jonesborough's Main Street.

*This Regional History Article was researched using sources from the W. Eugene Cox and Joyce Cox Historical Collection, used by permission of the W. Eugene Cox and Joyce Cox Historical Collection.*



## Changes in the Jonesborough/Washington County History Museum

If you've visited the Jonesborough/Washington County History Museum lately, you've probably noticed some differences. The Heritage Alliance is in the midst of updating and revamping certain exhibits. The main goal of this change over is to provide permanent display space for Jonesborough's first fire pumpers. Providing a permanent home for them will free up the center of the museum and allow the Alliance to bring in more traveling exhibits along the lines of last summer's "Common People in Uncommon Times: The Civil War in Tennessee" from the Tennessee State Museum.

Due to a lack of proper storage space, clearing out the center of the museum used to mean moving the fire pumpers to various locations to be housed temporarily. Constant loading and unloading causes strain on the artifacts and accelerates the wear and tear process. It was in the artifacts' best interest to find them a more permanent solution. With the help of Alliance volunteer William Stout, the organization had been able to provide just such a solution. The old cases that were housing the exhibit on A.E. Jackson have been removed, and a brand new expanded exhibit on the fire pumpers, Jonesborough's history with fires, and town involvement will be placed in the back corner of the museum. The A.E. Jackson exhibit will be coming back, and the Alliance hopes that this small renovation will be the first of many that will take place in the museum throughout the coming years.

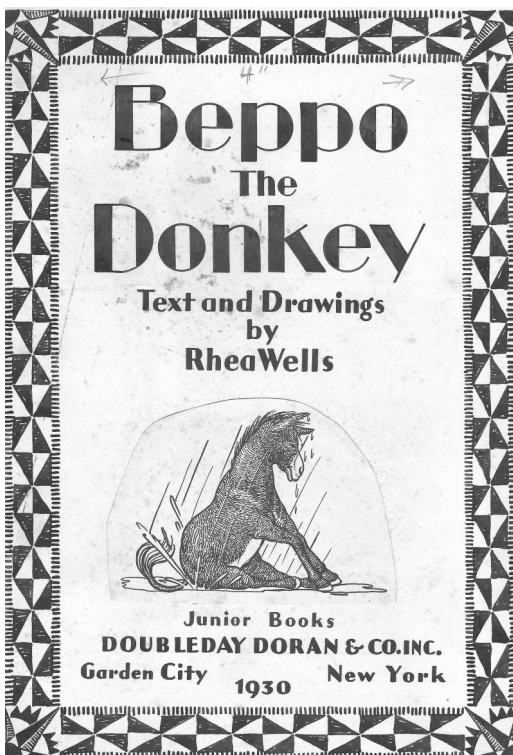
A temporary exhibit honoring the 100th birthday of the Washington County Courthouse will be placed in the center of the museum for the Courthouse Centennial in early August. This exhibit will be in tandem with other exhibits in the Courthouse and the Chester Inn Museum. Make sure you keep checking back with the Jonesborough/Washington County History Museum as it continues to change and grow. Information on all upcoming traveling exhibits can be found online at our website [www.heritageall.org](http://www.heritageall.org) or at our Facebook page.

### From the Archives

A new exhibit featuring work from children's author Rhea Wells (1892-1962) is now on display at the Chester Inn Museum. Wells, a Jonesborough native, grew up at 703 West Main Street. The rural setting of Washington County influenced several of his books, including *An American Farm* (1928).

Wells served in World War I and then ventured to Chicago, where he studied art and met his wife Mildred. She provided the financial backing that allowed Wells to write and draw. He also traveled extensively throughout Europe and Northern Africa. His children's books include *Peppi the Duck*, his most successful, *Zeke the Raccoon*, *Beppo the Donkey*, *Ali the Camel*, and *Judy and Grits and Honey*.

Later in his life, Wells returned to Jonesborough and set up home at 103 North First Avenue. Each Christmas, he produced nativity plays that involved as many town residents as possible. When he passed in 1962, Wells willed his house to the town of Jonesborough to be used for children's activities. The house was sold in 1980, and the money was used to construct the current Jonesborough/Washington County Library. Today, the library's children's section is named in honor of Rhea Wells.



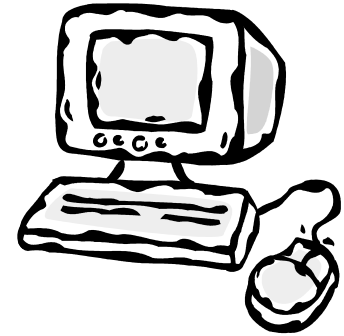
Cover of *Beppo the Donkey*



### Calling All Local Veterans!

The third installment of “A Military Life” will be unveiled over Memorial Day weekend. This ongoing display works with the Veterans Affairs Committee to honor Washington County Veterans. The third installment, which will run from May until November of this year, will feature new information on local involvement in World War I. The trench mortar formerly located on Courthouse Square, is in the process of being moved to the Jonesborough/Washington County History Museum. The last of three such existing mortars in the world, the Alliance is excited to be able to help preserve and interpret this historical piece.

The World War I info is only a small portion of the overall exhibit, though, and the Heritage Alliance needs uniforms, medals, pictures, and various other objects to put on display from you, our local veterans. 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 place on loan these next six months, please contact the Heritage Alliance by calling us at 423-753-9580 or by emailing us at info@heritageall.org. Help us continue this wonderful exhibit by bringing your service to the attention of the wider community.



Have you visited the Heritage Alliance website lately? If not, then check it out!

We've got a whole new design. The website is a great way to stay up-to-date with our current news stories, and to make sure you don't miss any events by checking in with our calendar page.

[www.heritageall.org](http://www.heritageall.org)

### Needlework Classes at Oak Hill School

While we often think of Heritage Preservation in terms of architecture, there is also a need to preserve and promote the more ephemeral aspects of our heritage, including traditional crafts and arts. **Oak Hill Needle Arts School** will be preserving and passing on traditional needle arts, while presenting them in contemporary applications. Class offerings will include knitting, crocheting, and embroidery, among others. Classes will be small in size (3-6 students per class), and meet for limited sessions, providing instruction from the most basic to more advanced skills and projects. The goal is to foster love for needle arts, by providing encouragement, fun and useful projects, and expert technical instruction. 50% of all class tuitions will help to support ongoing maintenance and programming at the Oak Hill School.

Saturday classes are open to anyone 12 years of age or older, on a first-come, first-served basis, until each class is full. Pre-registration and payment of class tuition is required, to ensure small classes and optimal student to teacher ratio. Deb Burger, Alliance member and Jonesborough resident, will serve as instructor. She has published 2 books of crochet instruction and designs, and has over 20 years experience teaching various textile arts to all ages. For more information on specific classes and dates, please visit our website at [www.heritageall.org](http://www.heritageall.org). The first class begins on **June 8!**

### Salvage Warehouse Open for Spring-Fall

The Salvage Warehouse will be open from **10:00 a.m. — 1:00 p.m.** the following days

**May 4, May 18  
June 1, June 15  
July 6, July 20  
August 3, August 17  
September 7, September 21  
October 5, October 19**

Our volunteers have been hard at work rearranging and taking inventory. Come and see what we have in stock!



## From the Director's Desk

### The W. Eugene and Joyce Cox Collection

*"I find that a great part of the information I have was acquired by looking up something and finding something else on the way."*  
- Franklin P. Adams

This idea of a curious mind is vital to the work of historians, researchers and especially museums. We sometimes call it being lost in the museum vortex. We go in searching for one thing and come out with so very much more. And often it is the "more", those tidbits we weren't looking for, that have produced the most interesting results, be they exhibits, articles or simply new paths to travel.

The W. Eugene and Joyce Cox Historical Collection is full of new paths. This collection, over seven linear feet of information, has been donated to the Heritage Alliance by our good friends and neighbors, Gene and Joyce Cox. The Cox's have wandered (and wondered) through Jonesborough history for several years, including three years worth of deed research in the Washington County Courthouse. (If there is anyone left who could possibly question the need for a Washington County Archives, just talk to Gene and Joyce!)

Over the course of their time in Jonesborough, the Cox's have produced two award winning books, the *History of Washington County Tennessee* (2001), edited and compiled by the Cox's and *Jonesborough's Historic Churches* (2007). In addition, they have written extensively on Jonesborough history, including the compilation of deed research on approximately 10 blocks of Main Street, taking numerous twists and turns along the way. Theirs are indeed curious minds. It is their research for these endeavors that are contained in the W. Eugene and Joyce Cox Historical Collection.

The research of Gene and Joyce proved invaluable in the creation of exhibits in the Chester Inn Museum. And over the past couple of weeks, it has fed countless hours of pure history nerd bliss in the offices of the Heritage Alliance. So far, we have just scratched the surface! We have no doubt that contained in these seven large boxes are exhibits, *Link* articles and enough curiosity to keep us going for years to come. So to Gene and Joyce, our most sincere gratitude . . . not only for these boxes, but for your support, your generosity and especially, your curiosity!

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## **The 2009 Teaching American History Grant Comes to a Bittersweet End**

After three and a half years of providing intense, hands-on pedagogy to area teachers, the 2009 TAH grant has reached its end. During this time, the Heritage Alliance served 93 local teachers and provided over 1,000 hours of formal and informal professional development. Teachers were able to spend one on one time with trained historians in addition to discussing lesson plans with their peers. History is a greatly underserved area when it comes to core specific in-service, and our teachers expressed how beneficial it was to spend time with other area history teachers that they probably never would have communicated with under different circumstances.

Just like us, our teachers are sad to see the grant end, and they're currently working on ways to keep the channels of communication open. They've come up with several sustainability ideas, including forging their own local history support group. We're excited to continue to work with them to see where they go from here. The Heritage Alliance feels very honored to have participated in two Teaching American History Grants. We know we have made a difference, and it's been a privilege to work alongside our area's very talented and dedicated teachers.

*"This grant has been the most beneficial inservice that I've been part of since I've been teaching for 33 years. It's had more of an influence on my teaching than anything!"* - TAH participant





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*Preserving the architectural, historical, and cultural resources of our region and providing heritage educational experiences for a wide range of audiences.*

Giving Opportunities: THANK YOU for your commitment to preserving our heritage and building a future together!

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