



The Link



preserving our heritage and building a future together

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Summer 2016

Heritage Alliance Not Your Ordinary Dinner Party a Hit!

“Not Your Ordinary Dinner Party” was held on June 11th on the lawn of the Williams/Deaderick home, adjacent to the Old Jonesborough Cemetery. The party marked the premiere of an original play tilted “With These Hands,” which was populated by a broad ensemble of characters from Jonesborough’s past, including the Town’s first historian Paul Fink, and Angelina Mason and Charlotte Dillworth, who shared a divided household during the Civil War.

The meal included a BBQ dinner, provided by Heritage Alliance members Commissioner Joe Grandy and John Abe Teague, followed by a show-stopping dessert from Main Street Catering. Over 100 diners participated in the event.

The drama was written by Anne G’Fellers-Mason and directed by Jules Corriere. The cast and crew, all from Jonesborough or nearby areas, did a great job of recapturing characters from the Town’s history. A special thanks is owed Nansee and Bob Williams for hosting the event in their yard, and to the around 35 plus volunteers who helped with serving and staging. Thank you to all the actors, volunteers, and audience members for making our first summer fundraiser a success! This was more than a fundraiser, it was also a friendraiser, and we welcomed many new members to the Heritage Alliance family.



Cast and Crew of “With These Hands” (photos by Peter Montanti).



Kathleen Petretta, Financial Center Manager at First TN Bank, serves diners as guests converse in the shadows of the Old Jonesborough Cemetery



Heritage Alliance Brings Historical Interest to this Year's Jonesborough Days

The 46th annual Jonesborough Days festival was held the first weekend of July. This year the Heritage Alliance offered a number of opportunities for festival goers to find out about Jonesborough's history. Over the weekend, more than 2,000 visitors checked out our activities in the #OnlyInJonesborough Discovery Park and the Chester Inn, which offered extended hours and multiple town tours.

In Discovery Park, several special experiences were offered. Bob and Mary Noel created a replica archaeological excavation square (although since this was in historic Jonesborough, a few real artifacts came out of the unit). Kids were given the opportunity to help screen for artifacts by shaking through dirt from the square and to learn about the items that frequently are found during an excavation in East Tennessee.

A replica of the Oak Hill School was assembled under a tent. Historic desks were set in place and festival goers were given the opportunity to take lessons on writing with a quill pen. There were also Heritage Games on hand, and children, along with their families, took turns trying to get the ball to stay in the cup and learning the game of Graces. We look forward to participating again during the next festival!



Jonesborough Days visitors practice their penmanship.



Archaeologists (and HA members) Bob and Mary Noel get excavation "assistance" from some future scientists.



Heritage Alliance Puts History in Jonesborough Fashion Show

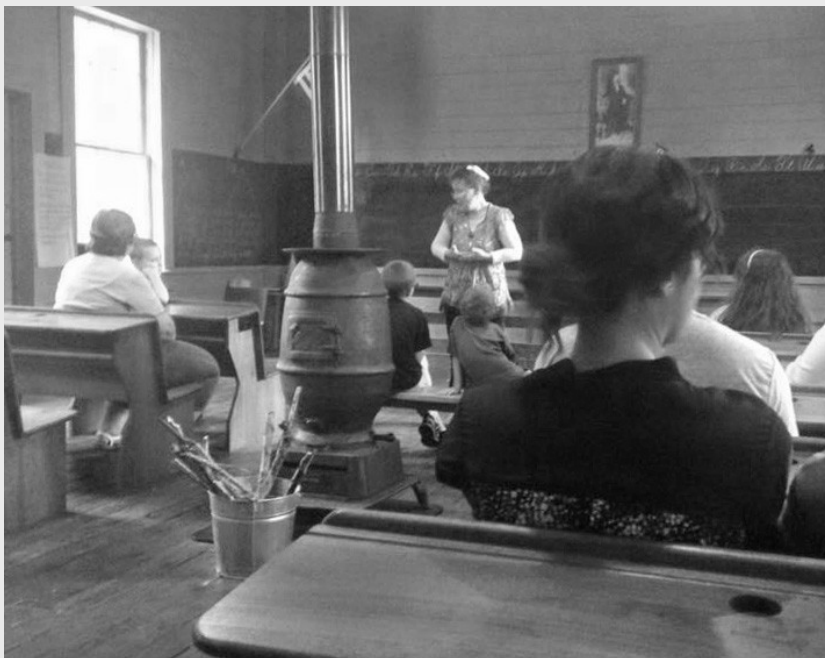
The Heritage Alliance participated in a fashion show held on July 12, hosted by **Type A Designs** on Main St., Jonesborough. Alongside the modern fashions, Anne G'Fellers - Mason modeled a 1920's bathing suit and a Victorian dress.

Jonesborough has always been a fashionable town. The early merchants were savvy, and brought a level of goods to Jonesborough that were typically found in much larger cities. As early as 1802, we have accounts from European visitors remarking on how impressive it was to find such a small town offering dress patterns and dish patterns that they had not seen since leaving Philadelphia. In 1843, local tailor J.N. Draper advertised that he could make the latest fashions from London, and a number of storeowners of Jonesborough were offering a variety of goods from Europe.

The fashion show was held in a building that once housed R.M. May's Department Store. Mr. May sold a number of goods including shoes, clothing, hats, and notions. It remained a department store for decades. The faded ghost of R.M. May's name can be seen painted at the top of the building, and engraved on the entry floor. Jonesborough's legacy of high fashion - in this space and around town - is not a ghost but remains alive and well in shops on Main Street.



Anne G'Fellers Mason rocks the runway.



Winny Elrod shares a story at Oak Hill School.

Children's Storytellers Hosted at Oak Hill

A **Children's Storytelling concert** was held on July 16. The event was jointly hosted by the Heritage Alliance and the Jonesborough Storyteller's Guild. About 30 attendees enjoyed story time. Lemonade and cookies were also served on the lawn.

Three adult storytellers were joined by two junior storytellers, 14-year-old Arianna Torres and 11-year-old Sydnee McClellen.

Marjorie Shaefer (AKA Mother Goose) said "it's so great to have young people getting involved in storytelling."





Volunteer Spotlight: Sam Dalton

Sharing history is not a new activity for Sam Dalton, who retired from a 15-year career as an elementary and middle school History teacher.

He became aware of the Heritage Alliance through a grant the organization provided to support teaching history in local schools. He started out as

a volunteer docent at the Chester Inn, and now is the newest town tour guide.

The Happy Valley resident says of being a tour guide, "I enjoy meeting and talking with people. It gives me the opportunity to share with them all the interesting local history of the area."

Town Tours Now Offered on Thursday Evenings!

It gets hot in Jonesborough during the summer months, and it's definitely hot out on the street during the mid-day hours. And we all know how breathable & well ventilated historical clothing is, right?

Not to fear, you can now take a Historic Jonesborough Town Tour during the cooler, evening hours. We're offering 7:00 p.m. tours on Thursdays. Tickets are

still only \$5 and are available for purchase at the Chester Inn State Historic Site & Museum. The tour lasts about an hour, and the Chester Inn stays open longer those evenings so guests have plenty of time to visit the museum.

The evening tours will continue through the end of September. So, if you're worried about the heat, don't sweat it, come and take a

history-filled, evening stroll instead.

Fun Tour Facts:

- Since beginning in 2014, we've had over 2,000 people on tour
- We now have five tour guides, all dressed in costumes from different periods
- We've had visitors from every continent except Antarctica

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Cemetery Research Update (Provided by Gordon Edwards)



The Ray-Rice Cemetery in Devil's Fork, Unicoi County (photo by Gordon Edwards)

Cemeteries in the Spring.

The appearance of cemeteries takes on a change in late spring and early summer as the new growth of most every type - grass, trees, flowers - begins. Young wildlife, rabbits, groundhogs - and the obligatory snakes - begin to move around in these areas of relative calm - they feel safe here.

Spring also brings with it the old mountain tradition of "Decoration" (Decoration Day is known now as Memorial Day). The "decoration" practice has evolved somewhat and expanded to a longer timeframe - maybe mid-May through June. It is a time when folks will visit and decorate grave sites, not just those of fallen Veterans, but loved ones also come to pay homage to their kinfolk and friends no longer living. This can take the form of an individual flower to more elaborate displays.

This year I have been working over in Unicoi County, which actually was formed in the late 1800's from Carter and Washington County land. Expanding the Heritage Alliance graveyard outreach into this area has been very rewarding. Although practiced in some Washington County burial grounds, "Decoration" activities in small family graveyards seems more prevalent in Unicoi. (This is based not on statistical data, just my casual observation.)

Another difference found in Unicoi County compared to Washington County is the large number of small, active family burial grounds. Most are on family farms owned for several generations by the same family. Many of these are tucked up in remote areas that require 4-wheel drive or walking access.

Part of my Unicoi "journey" is easy and fairly quick - record the location, GPS, and photograph a burial ground. The other part, learning the history of the property and about the deceased, is more time consuming but much more rewarding. I have had the opportunity and pleasure to visit with many family members, the majority of which are older, and been told many wonderful (and a few not so wonderful) stories. These stories not only include information about certain deceased individuals and the surrounding land, but also the lives, hardships, and successes of these pioneer families.

Cemetery preservation and education is just a small part of the overall historic preservation and education process. When all the pieces of this puzzle come together, it gives us a better understanding and appreciation of our past.



Reminder: *A Spot on the Hill* Returning this Fall!

The popular Heritage Alliance drama *A Spot on the Hill* will return this fall to the Old Jonesborough Cemetery. There will be all NEW characters from the past to visit and tell stories of their lives (and deaths).

Tickets for the program will go on sale in late August. Shows will be held in mid to late October.

More details to come!

Big Kid Day at Oak Hill School

Why should kids have all the fun? On September 24, kids 18 and older are invited to step back in time to 1893 and come to a day at Oak Hill School. Class will begin at 9:00 that morning and conclude at 1:00. Lessons for the day will include the three R's, reading, writing, and arithmetic, and much more! Play with games that were popular in 1893, and practice your penmanship with a quill pen!

The cost for the day is \$5.00, and reservations are required due to limited space. To secure your spot, call the Heritage Alliance at 423-753-9580, or email info@heritagell.org. All proceeds will go the maintenance of Oak Hill School and the continuation of the Oak Hill School Heritage Education Program.

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116 Franklin Avenue
Jonesborough, TN 37659
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www.franklinhousebb.com

SonGear: A Christian
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Jack Van Zandt, Customer
Servant
423.948.0237
www.songear.com

Jonesborough Genealogical
Society
c/o Washington County Library
200 Sabin Drive
Jonesborough, TN 37659
<http://jgsgn.wordpress.com/>

Calendar of Events

- **Chester Inn Museum:** Open Fri, Sat, Mon 11-6 and Sun 1-5.
- **Town Tours:** Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat at 1:00. NEW Thurs evening tours at 7:00. Tickets available at Chester Inn Museum.
- **Cemetery Tours:** Cemetery tours are BACK on Sat., 9/10, at 2:30. Tours every Saturday through Fall. Tickets \$3 at Chester Inn Museum, take both tours for \$7.
- **Architectural Salvage Warehouse:** Open from 8-11 on Aug 20, Sept 3, Sept 17, Oct 1, and Oct 15.
- **Senior Center Programs:** The third Monday of the month, the Heritage Alliance delivers a program to members of the Senior Center on various, historical topics at 1:30 p.m.

Aug 18 *Back to School: Jonesborough's "Four Academies of some architectural pretension"*

Sept 19 *"I am too little acquainted with the Circumstances": America's first attempt at a 14th State*

October 17 *Jackson's Duel and Brownlow's Beating: Outrageous Jonesborough History*





From the Director's Desk

Vegetable gardening at my house

is all about the sauce....various varieties of summer squash, peppers and lots of basil are all represented, but it's the tomato that rules the garden. And August is tomato month at Casa Montanti....that time of year when I come home to a steamy kitchen filled with the delightful smells of garlic, onion, basil and, of course, tomato. Since I neither garden nor cook, it is up to me to provide the history behind the tomato. After all, we must all do our share of the work, right?

We have all heard stories of how the tomato was considered poison in the 17th and 18th centuries, how as a member of the "deadly nightshade family", it could kill on contact and how people stood in the town square of Salem, New Jersey in 1820 and watched Robert Gibbon Johnson eat an entire bushel basket of tomatoes, waiting for him to drop dead. (This, by the way is now known to be an urban legend.) But the tomato wasn't as feared as many of us seem to think. In fact, it was mainly the English who had such a fear. Mediterranean cultures have enjoyed eating tomatoes well before British colonists arrived on American shores. The Aztecs ate a small yellowish-green fruit they called *tomatl* prior to the 16th century, and easily adopted the larger Central American version similar to what we eat today. The Spanish encountered it in 1519 and thus the tomato came to Europe. Readily accepted by the Spanish and Italians, the English did not take too well to the plant. Not

only did they fear its association with the nightshade family (belladonna, mandrake and other poisonous plants), but they disliked its smell, the texture of the leaves and its genus name *Lycopersicon* which roughly translates to "wolf peach". Is it any wonder it took a while to catch on in those areas colonized by the British?

In America, tomatoes were being cultivated in the Carolinas by the mid-18th century. The first published reference to growing tomatoes, *The Gardeners Kalendar* (sic) for South-Carolina, was published in 1774. By the 1830's tomatoes had grown in popularity in most parts of the nation and were considered a cash crop by the 1850's. Thus, historic gardens representing the late 18th and early 19th centuries can contain the tomato, though finding appropriate heirloom varieties can be tricky. There were people who would not eat them, just as there are people today who would not eat a brussell sprout.

Even though no longer feared, tomatoes are still controversial. Is it *to-may-toe* or *to-maw-toe*? (Actually *to-maw-toe* is probably closer to the historic pronunciation, but who cares?) Is it a fruit or a vegetable? Depends on who is doing the classification; botanically, it is a fruit, but the Supreme Court of the United States ruled it a vegetable for taxation purposes in 1887 (*Nix v. Hedden*). The USDA ruled it a vegetable for the purpose of a nutritionally complete school lunch in 1981. (Actually, the ruling pertained to tomato ketchup.) And still there are people who firmly believe the tomato is not for human consumption (the green parts of the tomato plant do contain a poison which makes an excellent pesticide,

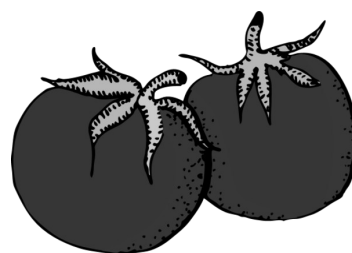
so I am told.)

If you would like to know more, I recommend two wonderful books: *The Tomato in America*, by Andrew F. Smith (University of South Carolina Press, 1994) and Karan Davis Cutler's *Tantalizing Tomatoes*, published by the Brooklyn Botanic Garden in 1997. OR, if you are among the anti-tomato population, you might enjoy www.tomatoesareevil.com. This website has lots of history, as well as great tomato-free recipes for traditional tomato based foods.

But for now...since the tomatoes are starting to ripen, here's a historic recipe for "Baked Shrimp and Tomatoes" by Sarah Rutledge, originally printed in *The Carolina Housewife*, Charleston, 1847. I came across it in *The Tomato in America*:

"Butter well a deep dish, upon which place a thick layer of pounded biscuit. Having picked and boiled your shrimps, put them upon the biscuit; a layer of shrimps, with small pieces of butter, a little pepper, mace or nutmeg. On top of the shrimps put a layer of stewed tomatoes, with a little butter, pepper and salt. Then add a thinner layer of beat biscuit and another of shrimps and so on, till three or four layers of both are put in the dish. The last layer must be of biscuit. Bake and brown the whole."

Sounds like a po'boy to me.





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