

# THE LINK

...preserving our heritage and building a future together



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## 2023 PROGRESSIVE DINNER

On December 2nd, the 45th Progressive Dinner shared holiday cheer, history, and preservation success stories with 107 guests. This year's fundraiser sold out in record time. The event featured homes and buildings from three different centuries. First stop was February Hill (built in the 1830s), owned by Linda Crouch McCreddie of Tennessee Quilts where appetizers were served and Mayor Chuck Vest welcomed attendees with a holiday toast. The second stop was the Phillips/Dupre house (built circa 1929) for soup from the Boone Street Market. The main course was held at the McKinney Center (built in 1940) and catered by Main Street. The final stop was the Anderson house (built in 2001), owned by Bill and Marianne Anderson for dessert. We want to thank our musicians Analia Malcolm, the Jonesborough Jazz Trio, and the Jonesborough Novelty Band for the beautiful and festive music. Over fifty volunteers worked to make the evening a resounding success. We cannot thank them enough. And a final, big thank you to our event sponsors Celebrate!, First Horizon Foundation, and Renasant Bank. It may have rained all evening and night of the Progressive Dinner, but our spirits were never dampened.

# Heritage Alliance Annual Meeting

## January 18, 2024 - 6:00 p.m.

### Jonesborough Visitors Center

In accordance with the bylaws of the Heritage Alliance, the Annual Membership Meeting will be held on Thursday, January 18th, and you're invited! Help us celebrate another, wonderful year for the organization. The evening will include a short business meeting, election of new board members, updates on programming, and will provide a wonderful opportunity to connect with friends old and new alike. Please bring a covered dish, either a side item or dessert, to share. We will provide the main entree. Please R.S.V.P. by calling 423.753.9580 or by emailing [chesterinn@heritageall.org](mailto:chesterinn@heritageall.org) no later than January 11, 2024.



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

Embree House Wedding Cakes & Historic Farm, The Herald & Tribune, Jonesborough Genealogical Society, Law Offices of Edmonds & Edmonds, Law Offices of James R. Wheeler, Linnaea Gardens, Main Street Café & Catering, Tennessee Quilts & February Hill Quilting Retreat, The Kitchen at Grace Meadows Farm, Architectural Restoration & Paint with Chris Basar, Speed Goat Solutions.

For full contact information visit our website at [www.heritageall.org/links](http://www.heritageall.org/links).



# COLLECTIONS ACTIVITY

A rare find was just donated to the Jonesborough/Washington County Museum and Archives by another local history lover! Leslie Farmer of Telford, Tennessee, brought to our staff photographs and yearbooks - including from East Tennessee State College and Sulphur Springs High School - belonging to the Anderson Family of Sulphur Springs. Mrs. Farmer was aware of the lack of heirs to the Anderson's estate, and with her husband assisting with the auctioning of the house, she went through and saved family portraits, artwork, yearbooks, and a family owned Bible before the transfer of the estate after the sale.

The last Anderson owner of the house was Janis Anderson, who passed away in July of 2023 at the age of 96. She attended ETSC in the late 1950s and was a teacher in the Knoxville school system.



Front of the Anderson House, August 1962.



Front of the Anderson House, early 20th century.

Not surprising that teaching came naturally to her since her grandfather was John Fain Anderson who was a well known authority on the history of Washington County and attended Washington College until the college was closed due to the Civil War; his sister Rachael Ellen Anderson was a teacher as well.

This collection is an amazing edition to the Alliance's archival collection. The family pictures truly show the changes from generation to generation. Look at the difference between families in front of the Anderson house just one generation apart!

# CAPITAL MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT GRANT

The Heritage Alliance is excited to announce the receipt of \$15,000 for the purpose of updating the security system and the purchase of new casework for the Jonesborough/Washington County Museum and Archives located in the Jonesborough Visitor Center. These monies come from a direct appropriation grant funded by the Tennessee General Assembly, through the Tennessee State Museum.

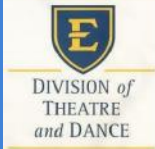
Beginning this January, the Alliance will work with Fleenor Security and mount additional cameras in the museum area, along with a computer screen to monitor activity, as well as record for playback if needed. Also during this time, HA will determine what casework is most appropriate to exhibit artifacts and select those items from a museum furniture company. These cases will have interior lighting, ample security, and most of all, designed for superior accessibility by all types of visitors!

This grant is part of a larger staff effort to update the JWCMA, by improving both accessibility and the aesthetics of the museum. We are concentrating on acquiring better lighting, improving patron flow through the site, and safeguarding the collection for years to come. Next steps are updating the carpets and carpentering, and continue redoing exhibit spaces through updating research on labels and trading out artifacts to ensure preservation measures. Also, with all of these changes, the Alliance is excited to see what new exhibits are to come!



Three new styles of exhibit cases will now be featured in the Washington County History Museum.





In 1820, Elihu Embree wrote *The Emancipator*. Nancy was his enslaved woman. We know his story.

What about hers?

# Nancy

An original, award-winning play by  
Anne G'Fellers-Mason

Sunday, January 21st at 2:00 pm

Bach Theatre inside the James C. & Mary B. Martin  
Center for the Arts

Admission is free, but you must register for your free tickets at the website below. Call 423-753-9580 or contact Dr. Carter at [carterda@mail.etsu.edu](mailto:carterda@mail.etsu.edu) if you have questions. This performance is presented by the Heritage Alliance, ETSU Black American Studies, and the ETSU Department of Theatre and Dance.

Register for Tickets: <https://go.activecalendar.com/etsu/site/arts/event/nancy-a-play-by-anne-gfellers-mason/>

#### Board of Trustees

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Meghan Kieta, Jonesborough  
Jack Van Zandt, Jonesborough  
Pat Wolfe, Telford

#### Contact Information

HA Office Phone: 423-753-9580  
Chester Inn Museum: 423-753-4580  
[www.heritageall.org](http://www.heritageall.org)  
[info@heritageall.org](mailto:info@heritageall.org)

The Chester Inn Museum is funded under an agreement with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Tennessee Historic Commission.

#### Heritage Alliance Staff

Interim Director: Joshua Dacey  
[Chesterinn@heritageall.org](mailto:Chesterinn@heritageall.org)  
Collections Coordinator & Museum Manager: Amy Steadman DeWitt  
[adewitt@heritageall.org](mailto:adewitt@heritageall.org)  
Oak Hill School: Deanna Carey  
Appalachia CARES AmeriCorps Service Member: Samuel Bowen  
[education@heritageall.org](mailto:education@heritageall.org)  
Special Projects: Anne G'Fellers-Mason  
[amason@heritageall.org](mailto:amason@heritageall.org)



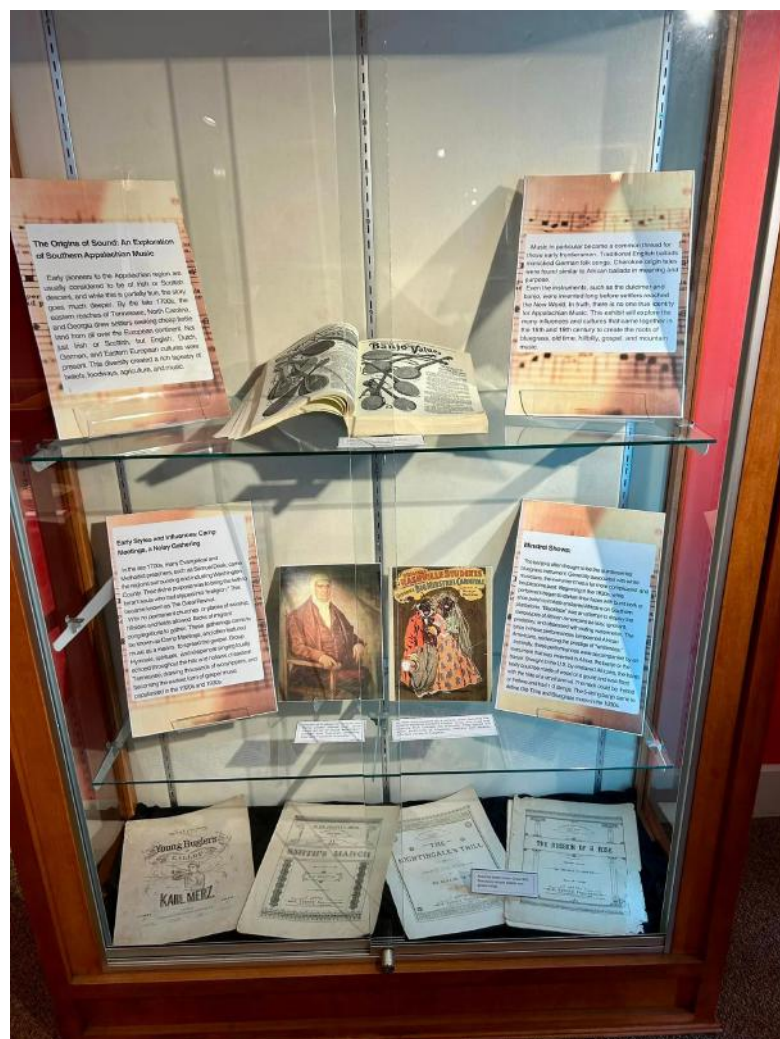


# "THE ORIGINS OF SOUND: AN EXPLORATION OF SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN MUSIC" A NEW EXHIBIT AT THE CHESTER INN MUSEUM

By Joshua Dacey

The new exhibit at the Chester Inn Museum, "The Origins of Sound: An Exploration of Southern Appalachian Music," is an attempt to tease out the many musical threads that make up the "Mountain Sound." From the camp meetings of the mid 19th century to the Minstrel Shows of the early 20th century, myriad influences have shaped the notes and chords now considered to be the signature sound of southern Appalachia.

Although not native to the United States, instruments such as the fiddle, banjo, dulcimer, and mandolin were readily adapted to create a unique blend of regional music that helped define Appalachia. These instruments were relatively easy for home crafters to fashion with the limited resources found on the southern frontier.



Above: A collection of musical artifacts ranging from sheet music to a Sear and Roebuck Catalogue from 1902.



Above: A Rolmonica Player Harmonica and a tambourine from the Shubert Club.

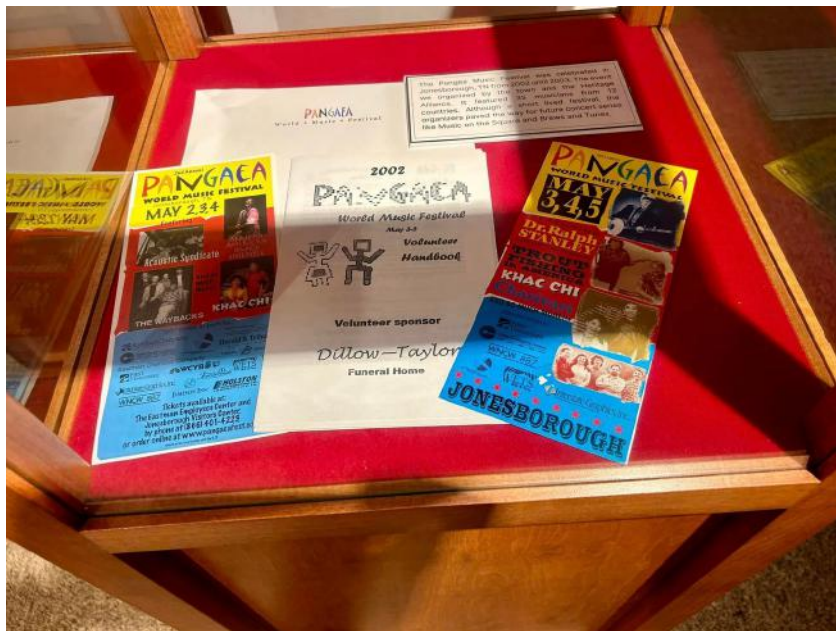
More than just the musical expressions, the subject material also harkens from a time before the United States was in its infancy. As immigrants from Western Europe crossed the Atlantic, traditional ballad lyrics brought new meaning to the experiences of English, Scottish, Irish, and French settlers in the New World. A mournful tribute to the loved and lost transcended the survival of the Irish Potato Famine or the Scottish rebellions, to take on new meaning as a pining for family members and friends who could not make the transatlantic journey.



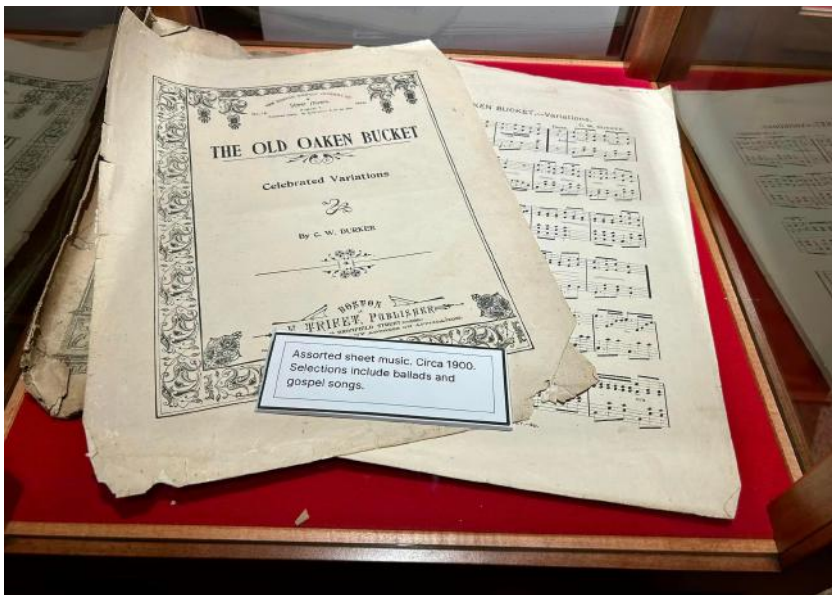
# CHESTER INN MUSEUM CONTINUED...

Throughout the early 20th century, Appalachian music spread beyond church halls and barn raisings. While northern record companies sought profit as well as renown for their artists, southern musical acts took a different approach more geared to a wider audience base. The radio became a vital tool in the expansion of the musical offerings in the South. Radio stations broadcast acts regionally and nationally, with little charge to the consumer beyond having an actual radio. Free music was more accessible to anyone curious about southern Appalachian music. In offering a free listening experience, radio stations, like WJHL in Johnson City, propelled acts like the Carter Family onto the national stage.

The concept for the exhibit came from my personal affinity for musicians like Tim-O'Brien, Earl Scruggs, and Bella Fleck. The Heritage Alliance's artifact collection also contains a unique and varied amount of musical artifacts. The artifacts on display include various types of sheet music, a player harmonica, a well loved fiddle, and programs from the short lived Pangea music festival. The exhibit will be on display at the Chester Inn Museum through the summer of 2024.



Above: Programs from Jonesborough's Pangea Music Festival.  
Below: Sheet music circa 1900.



Below: A fiddle that belonged to George McPherson.





# THANK YOU FOR 20+ YEARS OF SERVICE

At the beginning of every calendar year, some Board of Trustees' members roll off the Board and new ones come aboard, pun fully intended. This year's transition is one for the Heritage Alliance history books, though, as longtime Board members Pat Wolfe and Terry Countermine leave the Board. Most Trustees serve three-six year terms. Trustees can only serve two consecutive terms before stepping off to take a break. At least one Trustee is appointed by the Jonesborough Mayor and another by the Washington County Mayor. For a long time, the organization's by-laws did not stipulate a term end date for the appointed Trustees, but that has since changed. Pat Wolfe was the County Mayor's long time appointee and Terry Countermine was the Town Mayor's long time appointee. Both have been on the Board since the Heritage Alliance began in 2001, or were appointed very soon thereafter. We cannot thank them enough for all they've done for the Alliance. They've seen the organization grow and acquire new buildings and create new programs. In his board spotlight in 2020, Terry said, "Being a part of that process (HA Board of Trustees) has been very rewarding." In his spotlight, Pat Wolfe shared, "People should get involved with the Heritage Alliance because they need to be aware of their past, and we all need to work together to help preserve that past." If you see Pat and Terry out and about, please thank them for their 22 years of service.



Above: Pat Wolfe at the Duncan House.  
Below: Terry Countermine playing with The Novelty Band.





# FROM THE DIRECTORS DESK

Well, here we are my final “From the Director’s Desk” for the Heritage Alliance. I am no more surprised than you all, but life is always filled with the unexpected. I have loved my time with the Alliance. I have literally grown up in the Duncan House. No, I did not spend a childhood Christmas there like my sister did when our grandparents lived here, but I did enter those doors as a young graduate student in 2008. I leave as a seasoned director with fifteen years of public history experience under my belt. There are too many memories to share them all, but I’ll share some standouts.

I will never forget helping to open the Chester Inn State Historic Site and Museum in 2011. We wrote the text and selected the images. I will always feel a connection to the oldest commercial building in Tennessee’s Oldest Town. Another highlight from my tenure is all the work that has been done in the Old Jonesborough Cemetery thanks to “Graveyard” Gordon Edwards and the Town of Jonesborough. In 2013, former Executive Director Deborah Montanti took a chance and encouraged me to create my first museum theatre piece “A Sojourn in Jonesborough.” This morphed into other productions like “A Spot on the Hill.” It has been an honor to share the stories from the Old Jonesborough Cemetery and connect people to the past in meaningful ways. And I will never forget the moment earlier this year when Gordon told me that he and Dr. Jones had found the mass grave from the cholera epidemic of 1873. The voices of the past call out all the time if we’re willing to listen.

Another voice that called out to me was the voice of Nancy, mother of five and Elihu Embree’s enslaved woman. I firmly believe that without her influence and humanity, there would be no Emancipator. If you haven’t seen the show already, I encourage you to come and see it at ETSU on January 21<sup>st</sup>. Ubunibi Afia Short puts on a tour de force performance. And, I believe we may have finally found out what happened to Nancy and her children after Embree passed away in late 1820. (More on that in the near future.) The Heritage Alliance holds so many precious memories for me, anytime a student shared their love for history, and all the events and programs I got to interact with our wonderful members and volunteers on. This organization and all the people involved with it have enriched my life in so many ways. I am thrilled that I will remain in Jonesborough and continue to preserve its history and stories, albeit in a slightly different way with the McKinney Center. I hope to see you all at the Annual Meeting on January 18<sup>th</sup>, and I hope you will continue to support the Alliance and love it as I have and always will. Interim Director Joshua Dacey, Amy DeWitt, Samuel Bowen, and the future staff will do an excellent job leading the Alliance into its next chapter.



Above: Anne Mason during Voices from The Chester Inn, 2019.