



On Your MARC

MUSEUM & ARCHIVES OF ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

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2nd Quarter
Visitor Count:

414

Fiddlers' Convention celebrates musical legacy

By Wayne Seymour

There were three centers of activity in the early country music industry: Bristol and Galax, VA, and the area now known as Eden, NC. Today, the Galax Old Fiddlers' Convention is known world-wide. Crowds at Galax and at the Bristol Rhythm and Roots festival number in the tens of thousands. Bristol is also home to a major country and bluegrass museum.

Pickin' at the MARC is intended to honor our county's contributions to American vernacular music, not only in the past, but also in the present day. The festival offers opportunities for musicians to showcase traditional music, share techniques, sharpen skills, and to entertain and educate spectators.

Fiddlers conventions help to develop new generations of musical talent. In its fifth year, we hope Pickin' at the MARC will continue to grow and promote appreciation for bluegrass and old-time music, instruments, and dance.

Historically, many North Carolina businesses sponsored company bands. They were usually traditional brass bands; however, as early as 1895, Spray Cotton Mills sponsored a fiddle, banjo, and guitar band and established a tradition of support for string band music. During World War II, American Tobacco sponsored an all-female string band - new instruments, sailor suit costumes, and all! Lessons in violin, mandolin, and guitar were offered for local mill employees and their families as early as 1904.

In the 1920's, Spray Cotton Mills brought Otto Kirches, a German violinist, to give violin lessons to mill employees' children. Instead of insisting on a strictly

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Pickin' at the MARC

Saturday, November 9

Pre-registration and rules online

Competition begins at 12:00 noon

Admission - \$10 Adults \$5 Students

Featured Performances by
The Slate Mountain Ramblers and
The Jeff Little Trio

Sponsored by the Town of Wentworth,
MARC, and HomeTrust Bank

P.O. Box 84, Wentworth, NC 27375 (336) 634-4949
MARCCconnection@gmail.com www.themarconline.org
Physical Address: 1086 NC HWY 65, Reidsville, NC 27320
Follow us on Facebook: Museum & Archives of Rockingham County

From our President

MARC moves forward during interim phase

When Jordan Rossi, Executive Director of MARC for the past four years, shared the news of her move to Colorado, MARC leadership was fully aware of the challenge ahead to find her replacement. During her tenure, Jordan led MARC to make progress in our archives, galleries, partnerships with other agencies, and public perception. However, the silver lining here lies in the strength we draw from these accomplishments as we continue to work toward our vital mission to preserve, promote, and share the history of Rockingham County.

A Search Committee consisting of Ann Brady (chair), Karen Baker, Jeff Bullins, Dan Mosca, and Dennis Paschal, is hard at work to select the next director. During the interim, the Executive Committee is meeting bi-weekly to handle MARC business. Members of the Board of

Directors are volunteering at the museum on a regular basis to help with operations. Nadine Case, Administrative Assistant and Volunteer Coordinator; Fletcher Waynick, Operations Manager; and Bob Carter, County Historian, continue to rise to the occasion and manage the daily work at MARC. I am most grateful for the leadership and cooperation shown by each person.

---Jeff Bullins



Photo credit: G. Allen

L to R: Bob Carter, Nadine Case, Fletcher Waynick, and Jordan Rossi pose together at the August 3 reception to honor Jordan's service to MARC.

Fiddlers' Convention, continued from page 1

classical approach, he encouraged students to continue to play their regional tunes. Even adults came to Kirches for lessons and advice. As a result, many local fiddlers displayed much better technique than was usual in country fiddlers elsewhere.



Although this music is often mistakenly called "mountain music," Rockingham County has been home to many musicians who have made substantial contributions to American music in the fields of folk, old-time music, bluegrass and other forms of traditional music. Their names are usually not known to the general public, but they are held in high esteem by musicians, not only in America but abroad. See the MARC website to learn about some of Rockingham County's notable musicians.

There is so much to enjoy at Pickin' at the MARC! In addition to performances and competitions by musicians and flatfoot dancers, event admission also provides access to visit the MARC complex. And, excellent vendors - including The Rib Man - will be on hand to feed the crowd throughout the day!

Volunteers are the key to our success

Success of Soirée is rooted in community support

Members and friends of the Museum & Archives of Rockingham County gathered for the Summer Soirée on Saturday, August 17, at Pennrose Park Country Club in Reidsville. Themed “Rooted in Rockingham,” the evening brought friends together to celebrate MARC’s mission and accomplishments. As our primary fundraising event, profits are designated to fund salaries for the coming year. We are sincerely grateful for the generosity of our guests and sponsors. Community support makes it possible to open our doors each day as we preserve and share the history of Rockingham County.

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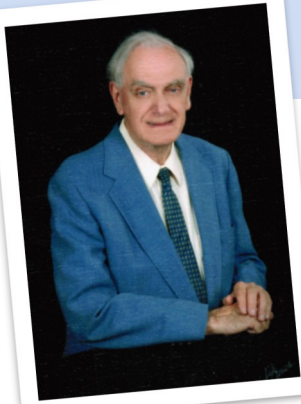
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Photo credits: J. Anderson





Mr. History: Bob Carter, County Historian

County Landmark is Demolished

Excerpts from *A History of the "Nancy Moore Place"*

Editors note: Bob did extensive research of wills and deeds to discover the Moore family genealogy and the family's connections with this property. His full manuscript, written in September of 2019, is posted on the MARC website. Check MARC online!



The remains of one of Rockingham County's oldest houses were demolished during the summer of 2019. The structure was located on the west side of NC Highway 14 near Town Creek, one mile south of Bethlehem United Methodist Church. The old home, owned by Barnett Moore and his descendants from 1815 until the 1990s, was commonly referred to as the "Nancy Moore Place."

During the late 1700s and early 1800s, a number of people from Prince Edward County, VA migrated to North Carolina and settled along Town Creek. These families' surnames included Moore, Ellington, Forrest, Wesson, Hutherson, Jackson, Guerrant, Wells, Tucker, and perhaps others. Town Creek had rich bottomlands that grew excellent crops of corn – the fuel for man and beast during pioneer days.

It appears that some of these families were members of the Methodist Church in Virginia, and when they settled on Town Creek they helped found two new churches in the area. Mount Carmel United Methodist became a class meeting in 1808 and was formally organized in 1813. Bethlehem United Methodist Church was organized in 1835. Bethlehem was only one mile from Town Creek and the Moores and other families living in the area became members of that congregation. Both congregations are currently still active.



The land around the Moore farm house can be traced back to 1779 when Thomas Young entered a claim for acreage from the State of North Carolina and he received the 300 acre plot in 1783. The land went through several sales to former Virginians. In 1784, Young sold the land to Andrew Fargis. He probably resided there until 1794 when he sold the property to Edward Williams. In April 1803, Williams sold to Francis Jackson.

Jackson built the house we refer to as the "Nancy Moore Place" soon after the purchase. It was built with hewn oak logs covered with weather boards. On each end of the building were large stone chimneys. A portion of the rock used in the construction of the chimneys was quarried stone, which was unusual in Rockingham County at this time. The main body of the house had a cellar underneath with its exterior entrance located beside the east chimney.

The building was one and one-half stories tall. Access to the second floor was by an enclosed stairway in the southwest corner of the room. The main body of the house was divided into two rooms by plank walls on both

Mr. History: Bob Carter, County Historian

Continued from page 4

the downstairs and upstairs levels. The two main rooms downstairs were covered by wide boards layered in board and batten fashion. They were whitewashed, as was the style of the time. The two fireplaces lacked decorative mantle pieces.

The doors in the building were also of board and batten style, and the windows were six over six sashes. On the north side, two shed rooms were attached to the main body of the house, but they eventually fell into ruins. The nails used in construction were blacksmith made "T" or rose head nails. Water was supplied by a spring encased in a rock form located in a nearby hollow. Later a well was dug near the house.

Francis Jackson became one of the leading citizens of Rockingham County. He was appointed as a Justice of the Rockingham County Court in 1807. He acquired an additional 499 acres of land. It may be on the larger tract that Jackson owned a grist mill by 1807. The mill was probably located on Piney Fork, a large tributary of Town Creek. The Jackson family lived in Rockingham County from 1803 until 1811 when they moved to Williamson County, Tennessee.

This house and its land passed through nearly 200 years and multiple generations of the Moore family (see sidebar and website for details). In 1999, the part of the farm that contained the dilapidated house was sold to a new owner and the Moore family's ownership of the property ended. The most recent sale in 2018 led to the demolition of the historic house.



Brief lineage of the Moore farm on Town Creek

1783 - The 300-acre property was granted to Thomas Young by the State of North Carolina

1784 - Young sold the land to Andrew Fargis of Halifax County, VA

1794 - Fargis sold the land to Edward Williams

1803 - Williams sold the land to Francis Jackson.

Jackson built the home on the property we refer to as the "Nancy Moore Place." The Jackson family resided there until they moved to Tennessee in 1811.

1815 - Barnett Moore and his son, Thomas C. Moore, purchased the farm. Barnett Moore was buried on the land in 1822.

1825 - Thomas C. Moore bought out his siblings' shares of the farm. Upon his death in 1833 he left the property to his children.

1837 - To settle Thomas Moore's estate, Thomas's brother, John F. Moore, purchased the farm. John's wife was Nancy Worsham Tucker, whose name has long been associated with the house.

1851 - John F. Moore sold 60 1/2 acres to John A. Ratliff. He was the husband of Moore's niece, Mary E. Moore.

1852 - John F. Moore willed lifetime rights to the remaining 242-acres to his wife, Nancy T. Moore. John died within two weeks of the date of the will.

1869 - Mary Moore Ratliff purchased 2/3 interest in the farm from her siblings.

1880 - Nancy Moore sold her interest in the farm to Mary Moore Ratliff, but Nancy continued to reside there.

1889 - Nancy Moore died and was buried beside John in the family cemetery on the property. Nancy was the last known member of the Moore family to live on the farm.

1889-1999 - Descendants of John and Mary Ratliff owned the farm. It was rented and worked by tenants. Ownership by Moore descendants ended after it was sold off in 1999.

Coming Events

Dedication is set for MARC's Quilt Square

Reidsville artist Kathy Melvin has completed a beautiful quilt square to represent the MARC, and the Rockingham County Tourism Development Authority invites visitors to attend its dedication at the MARC on October 31 at 11:00 am. A second square will also be dedicated at nearby Bee Sweet Orchards, with refreshments to follow.

The design of MARC's quilt square is based on Kathy and Jordan Rossi's historical research and eyes for design. They selected the "Grandmother's Flower Garden" quilt pattern as the centerpiece because of its similarities to the tile floors on the first floor in the MARC and because the pattern dates to ca. 1900, around the time the courthouse was built. The "Duck and Duckling" quilt pattern is featured on opposite corners and counter-balanced with drawings of the two most prominent aspects of the MARC entity - Wright Tavern and the old courthouse.



MARC's quilt square is proudly mounted on the east side of the courthouse building. More than 30 quilt squares are displayed around the county, each one with a meaning and story of its own. The Quilt Trail map can be located on the Tourism website at www.visitrockinghamcountync.com. The quilt trail tour can be driven in a single day, or be enjoyed in segments.

Add this to your holiday calendar!



Todd Southard selected this vintage 1920's Christmas card to "express the joy and excitement of time-hoping to recreate the decorations in the Tavern's main parlor and dining room!"

The Programs Committee is hard at work preparing for one of our most popular events, Christmas at Wright Tavern. Once again, Todd Southard is researching and planning decorations to reflect traditions that might have been typical in the 1920's. During this time period red and gold were popular decoration colors, and Todd says, "I have used that throughout the Tavern plan." Seasonal foods will also reflect a 1920's garden party theme.

We hope you will join us at MARC Saturday, December 14 from 1:00 to 4:00 pm. This gift to members and the community includes free access for Tavern tours and to the museum.

MARC Business

Scenes from “Rooted in Rockingham” Summer Soirée



Photo credits: J. Anderson

In remembrance of Dr. Jerry Owens, Jr. June 1935 - September 2019

Dr. Jerry Owens may be best remembered for his 13 year tenure as President of Rockingham Community College. However, he was an advocate for the citizens of Rockingham County in



so many ways - serving as Chair of the Rockingham County Board of Commissioners and on numerous boards and committees. He and his wife, Mary, have been faithful supporters of the MARC for many years, and the museum benefitted in particular from Dr. Owens's leadership during the years he served on the Board of Directors. We are grateful for his dedication to MARC and to our county.

Truslow joins MARC board

Dr. Will Truslow was elected to the MARC Board of Directors at the June board meeting. Will and members of the Truslow family have been active members for years, starting when we were known as the Historical Society. Now that Will has retired from his medical practice, he is able to devote more time to areas of his personal interest. Thank you, Will, for your willingness to serve MARC.

Will is filling the seat on the Board left vacant when Bill Horsley moved to the Triangle area of North Carolina. Bill will be greatly missed as MARC's vice-president, development chair, Soirée chair, chef extraordinaire, motivator, friend, and in the many other ways he worked among us.

Recent Events



MARC's summer quarter is full of activity

Many friends, volunteers, and past and present MARC board members attended the August 3 **reception to honor Jordan Rossi** (top photo). Reflecting on her time as MARC's Executive Director, she said, "One of the things that makes it so great is all the people I have gotten to know and work with. We have a small staff and so we rely a lot on you to get things done. I am really grateful to have had the opportunity to work here and with you." We wish Jordan well as she continues her career in Colorado.

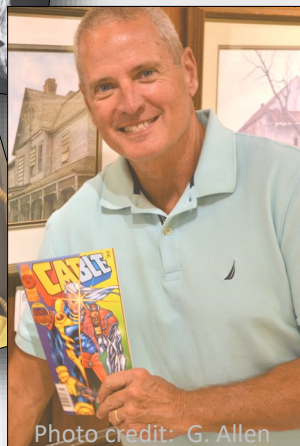
Reception guests also enjoyed **MARC's Makers and Collectors Day** which featured an interesting variety of collections and crafters.

Sue Wells is noted within regional tribal communities for her expertise and authenticity in making ceremonial attire for

Native American leaders. In the photo to the left, she is showing girl and boy dolls wearing detailed leather outfits she made. The outfits, hand cut and hand sewn, even include miniature moccasins. Examples of the beadwork Sue creates are on display on the table. In the bottom photo she is demonstrating her technique for weaving beaded designs to be worn at formal events.

Local comic book artist Randy Green was also on hand to explain his work designing, penciling, and coloring for leading comic book companies. What a fun way to use artistic talent!

We are grateful for these and all the creators and collectors who shared their treasures on this special day. And, we invite members and friends to let us know if you have a collection you would like to share at a future Makers and Collectors Day!



Recent Events



DAR chapters coordinate Constitution Celebration

(Above left): MARC president Jeff Bullins poses with DAR officers Elisabeth Pugh (William Bethel Chapter Regent), Janelle Johnson, and Kim Thompson (James Hunter Chapter Vice-Regent and Regent). These chapters joined forces to host the **2019 Constitution Day** celebration at MARC on Sunday, September 15. The annual event commemorates the signing of the US Constitution in Philadelphia in 1787.

In addition to displays about the Constitution, DAR members were available to help guests to begin or continue work on family history searches. It was an interesting coincidence that Ruthiebelle Young, Mollie Boaz, Robyn Garrett (photo bottom left) discovered they were working on the same family tree and that their grandmothers were sisters! Justiann Ard assisted Noah Purgason with his search (photo above right), and ironically later conversations revealed that Noah and Jeff Bullins share DNA matches on Ancestry. The DAR groups and MARC hope to work together for future genealogy help sessions.



Special guests at the Summer Soirée included members of the young professionals group of Western Rockingham County. They established their group to seek ways to bring positive change to our county through their careers and through leadership roles in their communities. We appreciate their interest in the MARC and their participation in the Soirée!

Museum & Archives of Rockingham County Board of Directors

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Brenda Ward—Secretary
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Tilda Balsley—Past President

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Fletcher Dalton	Will Truslow

Staff

Vacant—Executive Director
Fletcher Waynick—Operations Manager
Nadine Case —Administrative Assistant



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ON YOUR MARC Staff

Editor & Design: Jean Bullins
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Libby Barrett	Debbie Russell
Bob Carter	Sharon Tongbua



1086 NC Highway 65
Reidsville, NC
Mail to: PO Box 84
Wentworth, NC 27375
Phone: 336-634-4949

MARC your calendar

High Rock Ford Park is open daily from sunrise to sunset. Enjoy hiking trails, river access, and learning about the historical significance of the area. See our website for directions and trip planning tips.

Thursday, October 31
MARC Quilt Square Dedication
11:00 am at the MARC

Sunday, November 3
High Rock Farms Chestnut Roasting Festival
12:00 noon to 5 pm
960 High Rock Rd., Gibsonville near High Rock Ford Park

Saturday, November 9
5th Annual Pickin' at the MARC Fiddlers Convention
Come as a competitor or spectator to experience Bluegrass and old-time music and flatfoot dancing

Saturday, December 14
Christmas at Wright Tavern
1:00 - 4:00 pm
Our annual holiday celebration for members and the community. Free day for tours at Wright Tavern and MARC.

MARC Hours of Operation

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday	1 pm - 6 pm
Saturday	10 am - 4 pm

Museum Admission

Adult	\$5.00
Seniors & Students	\$3.50
Children	\$2.50
Children under 4 years	FREE
Family pass	\$15.00
Members	FREE

Visit www.themarconline.org for individual and business membership information and forms. Become a sustainer by pledging monthly donations!

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