

THE CHAPEL HILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Spring 2020 Newsletter

Note from the President

We're using this newsletter to update you on our operations and plans as we all cope with the effects of COVID-19. Our priority is ensuring the health and safety of our members, program participants and those who use our office for research. At this time, we have curtailed our planned programs until further notice, and our office is closed along with the rest of the Chapel Hill Public Library. In the interim, we are exploring how we can use online video platforms to stream some of our planned programs. We will use our website and Facebook pages to keep you apprised of our operating status and potential online programs. Our website is accessible [here](https://chapelhillhistoricalsociety.org/). (<https://chapelhillhistoricalsociety.org/>). Our Facebook page can be found at Chapel Hill Historical Society on Facebook.

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It's likely that our May membership meeting also will be postponed. One agenda item for our meeting is the affirmation of new board members. I'm excited to report that we've recruited new board members who are bringing vitality and diversity to our board. Read about them at the end of this newsletter.

The rest of this newsletter highlights some of the materials that are available online and projects that might be of interest of as we all practice social distancing. Stay safe.

Journal Your Experiences

Our January program on the 1918 pandemic (see below) highlighted the importance of capturing and preserving first-hand accounts of historical events. Such accounts give a human face to history – how daily life was altered, how individuals and communities responded, how information was gathered and shared, what feelings and emotions were invoked. As a historical society, we're interested in how we can best document and save our collective experiences as we work through this crisis. Before the advent of email and social media, letters and journals were often the primary source material for historians and archivists. Keeping a journal or scrapbook of your experiences might be a great a great family project and would help preserve this time for future generations.

More broadly, at a recent board meeting we discussed how we could help capture and preserve the stories and perspectives of groups and individuals in our community that have not been recognized or celebrated, including members of the African-American, LGBTQ, Asian and Latino communities. If this is a project you'd be interested in, we'd love to hear your thoughts and enlist your help.

Chapel Hill Historical Society Website Materials

If you haven't had time to explore our revised website, now is the perfect time to take a look. Items and pages you might find of interest:

Past Programs: This [page](#) provides an inventory of our past programs for the last six years. Beginning with this year's programs, we're making an effort to make materials from our programs available on-line.

- *Does It Come From Spain* – Little did we know when we scheduled this program on the 1917/1918 pandemic that we soon would be facing a similar situation. Sarah Carrier's slides, using newspaper clippings, first-hand accounts and correspondence, provide a fascinating look at how information, understanding, and responses to that flu pandemic evolved, with many parallels to what is happening today. This might be a great resource to share with middle and high school students when discussing the coronavirus.
- *Archeological Investigations* –Steve Davis's presentation on archaeological work in Hillsborough and the UNC campus used material that is available online at the UNC Research Laboratories of Archaeology's Ancient NC website. This virtual museum of North Carolina archeology is another wonderful resource for school children and their parents. It also includes three driving trails, and a discussion of sites explored on UNC's campus should you need to get out and explore! There is a link to this wonderful website on our webpage and [here](http://ancientnc.web.unc.edu/). (<http://ancientnc.web.unc.edu/>).

Community Treasures: Read about our past Community Treasures recipients – individuals who have made our community such a special place [here](#).

Do you have someone you'd like to nominate as Community Treasure? We've extended our deadline for nominations for this year's awards to May 31. Please help us identify potential nominees. The general guidelines for nominees are that they:

- Have been a resident of the Chapel Hill/Carrboro/Orange County communities and been involved in local community service for at least 20 years.
- 75 years of age.

Please send your nominations with a brief supporting description to:

chhistoricalsociety@gmail.com.

CHHS Blogs: Our CHHS blogs, found [here](#), contain short write ups by members about some of their local research. Be sure to check out Bill Burlingame's research about the McCauley family cemetery. As noted later in this newsletter, Bill was recently recognized by the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) for his work.

Research Materials: This [page](#) has a variety of materials and links.

- Listen to Doug Eyre's interviews with James Webb, noted modernist architect and past president of the historical society. In addition to this oral history, we're processing a collection of Mr. Webb's materials, consisting of photographs, architectural drawings, and personal papers. While this project has been delayed due COVID-19 restrictions, we hope to get them added to our collections in the near future.
- Celebrate Women's History month by listening to the UNC Southern Oral History Program Sound Cloud Playlist's audio recordings relating to the presence of female students on the UNC campus. This material was developed by the Southern Oral History Program as part of a campus walking tour, and was also used in our March 20, 2016 presentation, "Digging in Our Heels, Angels on Campus."
- Turn off the news for a bit, and watch two short films:
 - *This Is Chapel Hill from 1948:* This black and white film describes the history of Chapel Hill and the history and activities of the University of North Carolina, especially the consolidation of the University. Frank P. Graham, R. B. House, and other university administrators make brief appearances. There are descriptions of Franklin Street businesses, like Andrews-Henninger Co. and Varsity Department Store, Wentworth & Sloan Jewelers, The College Shop and Carolina Bootery, the Carolina Theater, Harry's Delicatessen and Danziger's Coffee Shop. Please note, this is digitized from a VHS tape by DigitalNC, and the film's visuals can be blurry or poor quality.
 - *Movies of Local People* - Professional "Home Movies" of local residents of Chapel Hill, NC, photographed by Filmmaker H. Lee Waters. Waters would film local

residents and then invite them to come see themselves in the movie, which was projected at a local cinema (in this case the Hollywood Theater). This movie was filmed in April 1941, primarily in the Northside area and features members of the African-American community. Waters takes care to engage with his subjects rather than just observe. This film is taken from the [H. Lee Waters Film Collection, 1936-2005](#), at Duke University Libraries.

Chapel Hill Timeline History - Check out our timeline of important events in the history of Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and the surrounding area, from the earliest settlements to the present. You can view the timeline by clicking on this link [Timeline of Chapel Hill History](#). The timeline is a work in progress, and will continue to evolve as significant events are added. We welcome suggestions for additional events to add to the timeline; if you have a suggestion, please contact us at chhistoricalsociety@gmail.com.

DigitalNC

The [North Carolina Digital Heritage Center](#) is a statewide digitization and digital publishing program that works to digitize and publish historic materials online. It is housed in the North Carolina Collection at UNC's Wilson Special Collections Library. We've partnered with them to provide digital access to some of our material, including old issues of the Orange Echo and Lincoln Echo, the student newspapers published by the Orange County Training School and Lincoln High School; Chapel Hill High's Hilllife year books, and photos of Chapel Hill. You can view our contributions [here](#). Browse their full collection here: <http://www.digitalnc.org/collections/>

Re/Collecting Podcasts

The Chapel Hill Public Library has launched a series of podcasts that explore untold stories from our local history. One of our new board members, Danita Mason-Hogans, co-hosts these along with Molly Luby. We've been pleased to lend our workspace to facilitate some of these recordings. Season One, which focuses on monuments and memory, can be found at: <https://chapelhillhistory.org/podcast/>

Bill Burlingame Historic Preservation Medal Award Ceremony

The Davie Poplar Chapter presented Bill Burlingame the prestigious National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) Historic Preservation Medal at a February ceremony. Sarah Geer (President) and Richard Ellington (Vice President) represented the Historical Society at the ceremony. A copy of the NSDAR's news release announcing this award is reprinted at the end of this newsletter.

Bill's efforts to find a suitable repository for the button from Matthew McCauley's Revolutionary War dress uniform (highlighted in our Winter 2020 newsletter) was

also recognized in the [spring issue](#) of the Federation of NC Historical Society's bulletin. Bill has been an invaluable board member of the Historical Society and a champion for historical research and preservation. Congratulations, Bill!



Bill with Davie Poplar Regent Barbara Post (left) and State Regent Carol Weiss. Photos by Libby Chenault.



Sarah Geer, Bill Burlingame, and Richard Ellington

Staffing Changes

With the closing of UNC classes, our wonderful staff person and research assistant, Julie Wiker, has returned to her home in Pennsylvania. Julie undertook a number of projects for us, including drafting appraisal/accessions/discard policies to guide decisions about our collections. Due to the uncertainty of the coronavirus restrictions, we are not looking to find a replacement at this time. We likely will need to rely on volunteers to staff our office and operate on an abbreviated schedule when we are able to reopen. If you are interested in volunteering or would like to be considered for the staff position when we are ready to re-hire, please let us know.

New Board Members

Four individuals have recently joined our board: Missy Julian-Fox, Danita Mason-Hogans, Sally Sockwell Smith, and Kenny Mann, Jr. They join Lois Anderson Annab and Christina Benson. New board members serve on an interim basis, pending formal ratification by our members. A brief bio of each of these talented folks is provided below.

- **Missy Julian-Fox** – Missy is returning to the board, where she previously served as president. A native Chapel Hillian whose family businesses have been fixtures on Franklin Street, Missy is an ardent advocate for the downtown area and is the creator and organizer of the highly successful “Heart of the Hill” walking tours. Missy also

has close ties to UNC, having served as the head of the UNC Visitors Center for many years.

- ***Danita Mason-Hogans*** – Danita’s Chapel Hill roots go back for eight generations; she is the daughter of David Mason, Jr., one of the Chapel Hill Nine whose efforts helped to launch the Civil Rights movement in Chapel Hill. Danita manages the Critical Oral Histories Program at Duke’s Center for Documentary Studies. In this role, she works with national veteran civil rights leaders to document civil rights history. Danita also serves on the UNC commission for History, Race, and a Way Forward. She has a TED talk on History as a Social Justice Issue and also serves as co-host of Re/Collecting Chapel Hill podcast series about Chapel Hill history.
- ***Sally Sockwell Smith*** – Sally grew up in Chapel Hill and recently retired from her oncology practice. She is the daughter of Phyllis Sockwell, one of our former Community Treasures. Sally runs “Free Walking Tours of Chapel Hill” that provides visitors with a 90-minute tour of Chapel Hill and the UNC campus.
- ***Kenny Mann, Jr.*** – Kenny is a Chapel Hill native whose family here goes back generations. Kenny has an avid interest in local and family history, especially the untold stories of the black community. Kenny is the leader of the Liquid Pleasure band, a multicultural icon in our community.
- ***Lois Anderson Annab*** –Lois grew up in the Kings Mill Road neighborhood and recently moved back to her childhood home after retiring as a biologist at the National Institute of Environmental Health Science. Her brother, Carl Anderson, is also a board member. For the past year, Lois has been serving as our Programs Chair, coordinating our monthly speaker programs, our Howard and Lillian Lee Celebration and Community Treasures event.
- ***Christina (Tina) Benson*** – Tina also grew up in the Kings Mill Road neighborhood. Tina moved back to the Chapel Hill-Durham area four years ago, after working in the banking and bank regulatory fields in Charlotte and Washington DC. Tina coordinated our roll-out of the revised John Allcott book, *The Campus at Chapel Hill: 225 Years of Architecture*, and our revised newsletter.

News Release from Davie Poplar Chapter of NSDAR

William Burlingame Receives Historic Preservation Medal

In November 2019, the Historic Preservation Committee of the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR), approved the nomination of William Victor Burlingame for the Historic Preservation Award. At a February 2020 ceremony hosted by the nominating chapter, Davie Poplar, located in Chapel Hill, State Regent Carole Weiss presented this prestigious award to Dr. Burlingame for extraordinary volunteer work in historic preservation over a long period of time. The Historic Preservation Medal is the highest preservation award the National Society presents to individuals, and fewer than thirty of these awards are presented each year throughout the United States.

One of Dr. Burlingame's notable achievements was the restoration of the Matthew McCauley cemetery. Matthew McCauley, Revolutionary War Patriot, donated land upon which the University of North Carolina was built, and he participated in the laying of the cornerstone of Old East, the first building of the first public university in this country.

The cemetery restoration project began in 2016 when the McCauley family, concerned about the deplorable condition of the site, contacted past Regent Jean Lusted and the Chapel Hill Historical Society (CHHS). Davie Poplar Historic Preservation Chair, Jane Slater, galvanized the responsible parties to clean up the site. Dr. Burlingame, with CHHS support, completed the restoration in the ensuing years. He maintained a blog on the CHHS website recording the progress and telling of the involvement of many people he brought together in the community to accomplish this work.

Dr. Burlingame, retired from the faculty at UNC, has served as an ambassador for historic preservation in Chapel Hill, throughout North Carolina, and across the country. He has inspired others to pursue historic preservation. Davie Poplar was honored to recognize him with this highest of awards, the DAR Historic Preservation Medal. For more information about the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution or about Chapel Hill's Davie Poplar Chapter NSDAR, please contact Barbara Post, UNC Alum and Regent, Davie Poplar Chapter NSDAR at postb@mindspring.com.

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Chapel Hill Historical Society

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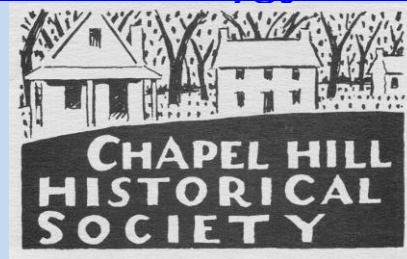
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