



# FOOTPRINTS OF THE PAST

PRESERVING FUQUAY-VARINA'S HERITAGE

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 11 MARCH 2016

MUSEUMS OF FUQUAY-VARINA

## JOIN US FOR A TRAIN RIDE TO BENEFIT CABOOSE #375

April 16, 2016 at 3:00 p.m.

New Hope Valley Railway,

3900 Bonsal Rd., New Hill, NC 27562

**INVITE EVERYONE WHO IS INTERESTED IN THIS  
FUN EXCURSION!**

New Hope Valley Railway, the North Carolina Railroad Museum at Bonsal, and the Norfolk and Southern Historical Society have generously agreed to arrange a "special train trip" with all proceeds going to the NS Caboose #375 Restoration project for the Fuquay-Varina Museums.

Everyone is advised to purchase tickets in advance because there are limits to the numbers who can be accommodated.

Tickets will be available at the Fuquay-Varina Museums every Wednesday 1:00-4:00 p.m., from members of the Friends of the Museums, or by arranging with [info@fuquay-varina-museums.org](mailto:info@fuquay-varina-museums.org).

Contacts are: Donald Cotton, Shirley Simmons, Tim Carroll, Max Ashworth, Brenda Johnson, Orlean Newton, Dan Turner, Al Prevatte, or Eleanor Stephenson at David Anthony's.

Ticket holders should arrive at Bonsal Rd. parking lot for the train ride at least thirty minutes early. For directions to the train see: [www.trianglettrain.com](http://www.trianglettrain.com)

Bring your children, grandchildren and yourselves for an interesting event, operating rain or shine. The 8 mile trip is over portions of the old rail line which New Hope Valley regularly uses for their excursions. Expect about a 45 minute ride. Be prepared for no restroom facilities and limited handicapped service.

The crew is all volunteer and donating their services to the Fuquay-Varina Museums. The date was arranged in

cooperation with the annual meeting of the Norfolk and Southern Historical Society scheduled for Fuquay-Varina on April 15-16, 2016. The group will also be visiting the old Varina depot (now Aviator), the Duncan depot, (now Duncan Junction), and touring the new home of Caboose # 375, the Fuquay-Varina Museums.

Ticket prices: adults \$10; seniors (60 +) \$9; children 2-12 \$7; children under two are welcome free.

## MUSEUMS DURING FREEDOM BALLOON FESTIVAL

The Fuquay-Varina Museums will be participating in the WRAL Freedom Balloon Festival by opening to the public during the event.

Hours will be:

Saturday May 28 12:00 noon through 4:00 p.m.

Sunday May 29 12:00 noon through 4:00 p.m.

Docents will be on duty in all buildings to assist visitors.

The Fuquay-Varina Woman's Club is partnering with us to provide an information table, water, and sales items from the museums in our park.

Suggest to all your friends and family who may be coming to Fuquay-Varina for the Balloon Festival that the museums will be something they can enjoy during the other hours, before and after lunch in town, and when the balloons are not flying.

## DUKE ENERGY FOUNDATION GRANT

The Friends of the Museums, Inc. are pleased to announce that we have received a grant in the amount of \$6,000 from the Duke Energy Foundation. A Local Community Development grants program application

was submitted by Shirley Simmons in December, 2015. Our application specified that we would use the grant for interior wood and painting, exterior painting and restoration, and electrical wiring of the caboose. While the amount of the grant will not cover all our application requests, the funds awarded will clearly provide major assistance in the completion of our NS #375 Caboose.

Duke Energy is acknowledged by the Friends of the Museums as a wonderful corporate supporter. Their local community grants are targeted to meet local community development needs. Our Fuquay-Varina Museums project to restore and open the NS Caboose as a part of our museums complex speaks specifically to fulfilling such a community need. The Friends of the Museums salute Duke Energy Foundation for this acknowledgment.

## FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUMS RECOGNIZED AS MAIN STREET CHAMPIONS

The Board of the Friends of the Museums officially express our appreciation to the Fuquay-Varina Downtown Revitalization Association for nomination of our organization as a Main Street Champion for 2016. The Main Street Program exists under the auspices of the North Carolina Department of Commerce. FVDA is deeply involved in the program and has submitted many nominations from Fuquay-Varina over the years.

The Friends wish to acknowledge the efforts of Naomi Riley, Director, and all the members of FVDA for their recognition of our efforts in establishing the Museums of Fuquay-Varina, Inc.

Immediately, this award encompasses the work of some fifty trained docent volunteers who regularly open the museums for tours, public festivals and other events; the Fuquay Spring Quester Chapter # 1134 who began the museums in working with the Town on the Ballentine School House and continue to staff the museums; a number of volunteer citizens who give time to the museum on a regular basis; the entire membership of the Friends of the Museums who make up the 501 (c) 3 organization which partners with the town, and the town employees who have been the strong right arm of the Friends.

Donald Cotton, President of the Friends of the Museums and Shirley Simmons, Volunteer Director of the Museums journeyed to Goldsboro on March 18, to receive the Champion Recognition. Al Prevatte, Vice

President was unable to attend. The ceremony was most impressive. The variety of Champions and the projects honored were amazing. The Friends of the Museums are quite humbled to be included in such a distinguished array of Champions from across our state.

Historically, other groups must be recipients of this recognition as well.

We begin with Larry Bennett (then town manager) and Mike Sorenson who assisted a multiplicity of town organizations and citizens in restoring the Ballentine School House, the Aikens Family for donation of the building, and the enlistment of Joanna Proctor and Dotty Knott in permanent alliance with the Fuquay Springs Questers in creating that museum. The list moves to the Town Board of Commissioners 2008 and Mayor Byrne who created the Centennial Commission, chaired by Frances Senter and Shirley Simmons, which quickly envisioned a museum complex to sustain our progress.

Simultaneous with the Centennial, the Board and town supported the Questers in acquiring the Post Office and accepted the Jones Family donation of that building. Following that the foresight of the Centennial Commission in partnering with the Town to create the Friends of the Museums ensured a future for the museum complex. Finally the Board of Commissioners in conjunction with the Ashworth Family designated Ashworth Park to operate under the Parks and Recreation Department and be a permanent home for the museums.

The Friends of the Museums insist that this Champion of Main Street Award belongs to all this past and to multiple other individuals, civic organizations, corporate supporters, and donors. Championships are possible only with a team effort. Thus we are a team of MAIN STREET CHAMPIONS.

## GHOST FARMERS

No, the circle in the newly designed Ashworth Park was not built for a fire pit. Entitled "Ghost Farmers," a metal sculpture is now located in its permanent home within that much discussed portion of walkway in front of the tobacco barn.

The Museums of Fuquay-Varina finally have been able to display the sculpture of one of our local artists, Ben Harris. Mr. Harris gave the piece to the museums during our centennial year; however, the staff had to wait until the master plan was completed and the exact location prepared to showcase the work. The staff planned the

work as a fitting complement to our 100 year old Tobacco Barn Museum.



Ben Harris poses with the installed sculpture, still to be repainted as originally planned. The colorful version does not give the illusion of ghosts as well as the original version.

Harris calls himself the "The Accidental Artist;" however, this piece does not represent an accident. Fashioned from pieces of farm machinery at least 100 years old, "Ghost Farmers" is a tribute to the small farmers who once were the major inhabitants of our area. No longer able to make a living on the family farm, these individuals are now part of our past.

The Burtons, the Scotts, the Snipes, and the HARRISES, all neighbors in the Piney Grove Wilbon Road neighborhood, through their machinery parts in this sculpture are symbols of this lost era of tobacco farming.



Rick Russell installs parts of sculpture  
Ben Harris spent his working lifetime in construction and

welding. First using scrap materials from Peden Steel, his employer in Raleigh, he then worked for a number of years in California where he developed his artistic career. A competitive runner from metal and his Statue of Liberty replica, shown at the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles, are among his portfolio of works.

The Museums are indebted to the Parks and Recreation Department for the site, the services of Tilley Brothers for preserving parts in the base of the work, and Rick Russell and town employees for actually reassembling the parts.



The original design of "Ghost Farmers" is shown here. Repainting of the base portion is now complete; the cutouts of metal men will be repainted white as in this original.

By the May 14th planned Heritage Day, the statue site should be finished with repainting and fill dirt. The F.V. Garden Club has agreed to provide appropriate plantings for the circle when it is complete.

A permanent bronze marker commissioned by the museums will be placed to recognize the artist and the symbolic "ghost" farmers.

## HERITAGE DAY FEATURES NAVAL STORES & OTHER EARLY CRAFTS

Fuquay-Varina Parks and Recreation and the Friends of the Museums are joining forces to celebrate our Heritage. Mark your calendars for May 14, 2016 between 10:00 am and 4:00 p.m.! Come to the Ashworth Park, 121-131 S. Fuquay Avenue to help us showcase the past.

"Tar, Pitch, and Turpentine" will be the feature celebration of the history of our area and North Carolina. Every hour on the hour, Bryan Avery will enlighten visitors on this subject.

Once a major producer of Naval Stores, the North Carolina of Colonial Days utilized our native long leaf pine forests. In fact, our very area was called the dark corner of Wake, primarily because of the rich pine trees growing here. Our museums have records detailing the value of turpentine from the Five Points area of Fuquay-Varina. Avery is sponsored by a special Humanities grant to Parks & Recreation.

At this time, we have not confirmed all the other crafts and ways of life from our past which will be stationed around our park. We are expecting to have quilters who can demonstrate their craft. Another site will be weaving which every household practiced.

The museums will be open for touring. Docents on duty will share the many artifacts and details of Fuquay-Varina in every building. Tobacco barning will be one of the features. The two room school and early education, another.

Plan to come, tour every building, and learn details of all the crafts being exhibited. Enjoy a restful day in our wonderful park! Walks are stroller accessible. Old and young can manage the site easily.

A lunch will be available to purchase with all profits going to the museums project of NS Caboose # 375 and a future depot. There will be no admission charge. Some crafters may have works for which you may bargain.

## MUSEUMS HIGHLIGHT TABLE AT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Board of the Friends of the Museums tried to document all our facets of operation for the highlight table during the two-weeks assigned to us by the Chamber of Commerce.



We hoped that this display would enlighten the members who visit the Chamber of Commerce building, create interest in coming to the museums, and invite further contributions to our collections.

## LET THERE BE LIGHTS!

Duke Progress has now let the contract for completion of the lighting for Ashworth Park. The poles were set into place many weeks ago; however, this past week the workman actually trenched for the wiring to each pole.

We don't have a date for the actual first "lighting" but surely expect this soon. Our task now will be to wire the tobacco barn and the little playhouse so that displays can be viewed during all hours of operation.



# TRAIN RIDE ON NEW HOPE VALLEY RAILWAY

## Benefit: Fuquay-Varina Caboose # 375

*Saturday, April 16, 2016*

*3:00 p.m. 8 Mile Trip*

*3900 Bonsal Rd. New Hill, NC 27562*



*Rain or Shine: open cars  
Excursion: one hour  
Arrive 30 minutes early  
Limited for handicapped  
No bathroom facilities  
All volunteer crew*



*Tickets: Adults \$10  
Seniors (60 +) \$9  
Children (2-12 yrs) \$7  
Children under 2 years free*

### *Advance tickets*

*Friends of the Museums  
[info@fuquay-varina-museums.org](mailto:info@fuquay-varina-museums.org)  
David Anthony's Gifts 552-9827  
Shirley Simmons: 919-552-5562  
Tim Carroll: [salrrtkagt@aol.com](mailto:salrrtkagt@aol.com)  
Donald Cotton, Max Ashworth,  
Orlean Newton, Brenda Johnson,  
Al Prevatte, Dan Turner*



## Sponsored by

*North Carolina Railroad Museum  
Norfolk and Southern Railway Historical Society  
New Hope Valley Railway [www.trianglettrain.com](http://www.trianglettrain.com)*

Perfect experience for your children, grandchildren, neighbors, friends