

FOOTPRINTS OF THE PAST

PRESERVING FUQUAY-VARINA'S HERITAGE

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MUSEUMS OF FUQUAY-VARINA

HERITAGE DAY 2018

Led, by President Max Ashworth, the board of the Friends of the Museums set Heritage Day as the first Saturday in May of each year. They requested the Fuquay-Varina Board and the Parks and Recreation Department to endorse this date for the years hereafter.

The Friends of the Museums declared HERITAGE DAY, May 5, 2018, a rousing success. The park was spruced up by Parks and Recreation who supplied a tent for our new feature, "History Under the Tent."

While it is impossible to have an accurate count of visitors, estimates range from 300-500 visitors. Noted were guests from Hickory and Mocksville, North Carolina, and nearby Holly Springs, Cary, and of course Fuquay-Varina.

Mothers in strollers, seniors with walkers and families with children were a familiar site all day. Hot dogs were enjoyed from Rock Harbor Grill. Earl Butts cooked one of his stews and at least three cobblers for visitors.

All buildings were open with trained docents on duty to meet, greet, and tour visitors between the hours of 10:00 am and 4:00 p.m.

In addition the TAR WHEEL A's club brought their cars for viewing. The local Scouts volunteered to assist with set up and clean up along with providing some of the activities.



Docent Sonia Webb presides over the Ballentine School House Museum.



Docent Betsy Gunter does tour of little post office museum.



Bryant Tyndall gives his tobacco talk at the barn assisted by Al Private.

An adult talk by Billy Yeargin, Jr. sponsored from the Humanities Council of N.C. and Parks and Recreation detailed TOBACCO in North Carolina. Yeargin was associated with Duke University and does a series of talks on a regular basis. He is an interim minister with the United Methodist Church. He attended all day long with his wife Patricia.

A native son of Fuquay-Varina, Ron Jones, presented STORYTELLING designed for all ages. A favorite was the FROG song. Ron grew up on Sunset Lake Road in the area of Oakwood School and Ballentine Dairy and is a graduate of Fuquay Varina High. He worked for ten years with the story telling and 28 years as a library consultant and administrator.



Ron Jones in his story telling presentation.

The original playlet, "See You in our Dreams" featured history told by characters who appeared in the dreams of Marilyn Gardner, the narrator docent. Our prima donna, Sara Ellen Chappell Ragan, appeared as her grandmother, Hattie Parker Jones. Hattie was a teacher in the Ballentine School, the first lady Postmistress of Fuquay Springs and our little Post Office Museum, and wife of Barney Jones, a local son. J. D. "Squire" Ballentine (played by Dan Turner) and Virginia "Varina" Arey Ballentine (played by Gail Woolard) detailed the life of these two historical figures of our history.

The Ashworth Park history was covered through the appearances of R. S. Ashworth and wife Cornelia Buchanan Ashworth, played respectively by grandchildren, Milton Senter and Lisa Ashworth. "History can be fun," everyone concluded from this rendition.



Lisa Ashworth, Milton Senter, Marilyn Gardner, Dan Turner, and Sara Ragan are the actors in the playlet.



History Under the Tent crowd is fascinated by the characters.



Tar Wheel A's on display.



Shirley Simmons helps visitors to playhouse.



The food tent presided over by Donald Cotton & Ernest Simmons.



Julia Yeargan teaches how to blow soap bubbles as Tar Wheel A's relax.



Earl Butts has cobbler!

The Friends hope to continue this Historical Presentation series adding other figures each year. Docents will incorporate the materials in their tours. The museums continue to address local resident memories with taped interviews which are archived in the museums. Sara Ragan is a recent contributor.

A major portion of the Heritage Day program was a SCAVENGER HUNT of games and activities designed for children. More than 100 children participated throughout the day in the following:

1. Blowing Bubbles - Julia Yeargan
2. Jack Rocks - Debbie Semple

3. Jacob's Ladder - Diane Schurr/Scouts
4. Pick Up Sticks - Gail Woolard/Scouts
5. Hopscotch - Kim Johnson
6. Paper Roll Animals - Betty Vaughan
7. Whimmey Diddles - Scouts
8. Marbles - Scouts
9. Painting - FVHS Art Students / Blair Hale
10. Can Jo - Larry Summerlin
11. Ornaments & Dried Flowers - Brenda Johnson & Judy Stephenson
12. Hula Hoops - Arthur Johnson



Fuquay-Varina High School Art Students prepared tiles and pictures and helped children color them to take home for mother's day presents.



Brenda Johnson and Judy Stephenson helped children make ornaments from dried flowers, wood and shells.



Scouts taught Pick Up Sticks to children.



Larry Summerlin taught children and adults to play a CAN JO.



Paper roll animals were taught by Betty Vaughan.

Finally, the Friends were excited to open for the first time, our Norfolk Southern Caboose # 375. Tim Carroll presided as guest docent in the project he has led. Some work remains to complete the wooden interior and to paint the outside logo. Sometime this summer, a **GRAND OPENING DEDICATION** will be held. Thereafter, the caboose will be a regular museum within the complex.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT UNDERWAY

A candidate for Eagle Scout, Daniel Rice, organized his project to improve the physical appearance of the museums complex and to augment the flora of the Ashworth Park. Based upon a public request to identify trees and plantings unknown to new residents of the area, his project will involve identification markers within the park.



Kathy Dean & grandchild among first visitors to the Caboose.



Helping with his project, the Fuquay-Varina Garden Club members, upon a request by Shirley Simmons, donated multiple iris and day lilies along with a few other sun-loving plants for the improvement around the playhouse, school house and post office.



Tim Carroll, head of caboose project, presided over the first opening of the interior of the caboose on Heritage Day. Tim is a member of the board of Friends of the Museums, too.



FUQUAY-VARINA LION'S CLUB UTILIZES MUSEUM ARCHIVES

Donald Cotton and Terry Tutor organized the anniversary materials for the Fuquay-Varina Lion's Club 75th anniversary in February. Utilizing our museums archives, the staff researched the organization of the Lion's, their prior anniversary celebrations, and the photographs accessioned in our collection.



FEDERATION OF NORTH CAROLINA MUSEUMS VISIT

Adriene Berry, director, and associate, Vivian Douglas, visited the museums and included the complex in their Federation News. Vivian is a native of Fuquay-Varina and a graduate of Fuquay-Varina High School Class of 1976. The Fuquay-Varina Museums are a member of the Federation.



Working on April 21, 2018, Rice had his crew organized to perfection. Grandparents, parents, friends in the scouts and other scout parents provided the man power for several days before, during and after this date.



EN PLEIN AIR RESEARCH REQUEST

Painters for En Plein Air used the Ashworth park as subjects for two painters on May 4-5, 2018. Prior to the organization of this project of Fuquay-Varina Downtown Association, the staff provided a series of history articles to enlighten the visitors to sites being painted around town.

SCHOOL GROUPS CONTINUE TO VISIT

The Staff of the Museums would like schedule as many school groups as possible to visit our museums. Many docents are retired teachers who identify with students and really enjoy spending time helping them learn history.

A large group of home school students have visited this year and have already scheduled for next year.

Fuquay-Varina Elementary brought an entire class of students on three different days. Among these was a great granddaughter of Frances Ashworth Senter, along with her mother. Grace Senter sat on Miss Frances' bench under the family pear tree.



We invite schools and teachers to consider scheduling students. The Staff can arrange the program for special emphasis of topics, even fitting to artifacts found in a specific book. One small class tour saw the "two person desk" for the school room mentioned in their study, a "milk can" and "milk bottle" used in delivery of milk to the home milk box, and a "fountain pen" used in writing among other artifacts.

MUSEUMS ARCHIVES CONTINUOUS PROJECT

Among our recently archived photographs is this one of "Sadie." A wonderfully preserved photograph, it was donated by Blair Hale, local art teacher, who found it used as backing in a frame she purchased. The caption reads "from your little niece, Sadie" Dates given are: "Christmas Day 1880" and "November 20, 1901."

We are led to assume that the picture was taken on Christmas Day and presented to an aunt or uncle on the 1901 date. What a wonderful picture? Does anyone recognize Sadie?



Upcoming Museums Schedule

Monday mornings: 10-1

Wednesday afternoons: 1-4

Saturday, May 26: 10-4

Special Tours: The staff arranges tours for all groups as mutually worked out. This is better than a regular schedule because it involves weekends, nights, or meeting dates when museums are not generally open.