

FOOTPRINTS OF THE PAST

PRESERVING FUQUAY-VARINA'S HERITAGE

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 9 AUGUST 2015

MUSEUMS OF FUQUAY-VARINA

ASHWORTH PARK DESIGN PROVES EXCITING

Ashworth Park, the official name of the park which is home to the Museums of Fuquay-Varina, has benefited from recent work on the design and implementation. The Town of Fuquay-Varina, as per its agreement with the Friends of the Museums, was to be responsible for sidewalks, design, landscape and the lighting of the park and museums.

The layout of walks with concrete and brick has received many kudos. Handicapped persons, baby strollers, and walkers can now enjoy a delighted stroll around the park. Only the lighting awaits completion so that night tours are possible everywhere.



Up into the Park from Aiken St., the old Ashworth homeplace.

Since the master plan was not implemented as originally agreed upon, the placement of the caboose and eventual depot are being reviewed by the Friends Board and the volunteers who are working on plans for both. Some adjustments have been necessitated before we arrange to move the caboose this fall.

Jon Cox of Parks and Recreation and Max Ashworth from the Friends Board have been the chief persons responsible for the new park design and implementation.

The town let the contract for all the work. The Friends plan a special grand opening when work is complete but citizens are welcome to visit anytime.



A Cool walkway laid out



Cool Green places



Teaching circle graded



Walk completed



Teaching circle finished

A major benefit came with the layout of the sidewalk beside the Johnson Playhouse. The height and placement of the sidewalk have made the installation of the handicapped ramp much easier to plan. The Friends are working on the details necessary to complete the playhouse museum. A number of furnishings have been accepted for the playhouse. Still being sought are a small child's table and chairs and a small bookcase.

ART AFTER DARK PROGRAMS

The Friends of the Museums and staff work to plan a cooperative program for the Art After Dark tours implemented by the Fuquay-Varina Arts Council. Every other month, when the tours are based in Fuquay, the museums are on the program.

In June, Wes Deyton, a local photographer, was featured by the museums. The display he arranged was impressive. Wes presented a video program replete with photographs, the details of which he narrated. A most patient artist, Wes spends hours waiting for a shot such as the tree frog. Most of our visitors could not fathom what a tree frog might actually look like. Equally impressive were his waterfalls of Western North Carolina.

Wes can be reached at Last Mile Photography. He does some photographs for individuals, too, but specializes in nature and natural life scenes. Visitors enjoyed meeting this young artist.



Work underway by playhouse



Tree Frog



Waterfall



The whole gang

The current August 14th program will return to the Fuquay locale. The staff will open the museum between 5:00-7:00 p.m. for visitors.

There will be caboose postcards, prints, and posters for sale with all proceeds going to restoration of the caboose.

The museums staff is planning to present the NS CABOOSE project. Visitors should expect to view the caboose "as is" and "as we hope it will be."

On hand will be Tim Carroll who is heading this project for the Friends. Persons interested in volunteering hours on this project may talk to him and learn further details. Invite all "rail buffs" and all civic-minded individuals to come and be a part of the plans.



Tim & Max beside caboose

NS CABOOSE # 375 HAS ARRIVED IN NORTH CAROLINA

On July 19, at 10:00 p.m. Main Street of Fuquay erupted in cheers upon the arrival of the NS Caboose # 375. Transported by Ben Slaughter with help from Tim Carroll, the caboose was lifted by crane from its site in Cedar Bluff, Alabama and trucked to Fuquay-Varina. Separately the wheels arrived on Friday, July 24th under the auspices of Lane Baker. The Museums are deeply indebted to all these gentlemen for hours of arrangements, travel, and work to bring this project to the arrival point.

The caboose will remain off-site until sandblasting and painting are completed. Tim is working with volunteers to accomplish this first phase of the restoration. Look for an arrival in the Ashworth Park sometime in the fall. Details of the pad and rail location and the accompanying depot to be constructed are in the planning stages.

Volunteer opportunities can be discussed with Tim. Interested persons may contact the staff at the museums to apprise us of your talents or proposed contributions. Needs include wood for inside restoration, glass for windows, and paint for the interior, among other things. We are hoping to have an interior restored to 1940's NS vintage.

This is a work in progress! Join these civic minded gentlemen who are seeking to provide a historical restoration for all generations. Join the Friends of the Museums in helping to fund our caboose and depot.

The railroads were a vital part of the history of Fuquay-Varina. Countless families arrived here with the rail industry: Brown, Barham, Fish, Adcock are just some examples. Picnic trains brought visitors to the mineral spring. The railroads boasted that one could travel anywhere from Fuquay-Varina. At one time 10 trains a day traversed these rails. This history is what we hope to preserve and share!



Outside of Caboose as it looks today



Inside of the Caboose as it looks today



Crane works to move the caboose



Rail and wheels departing Alabama



People watching & waiting for arrival in Fuquay

ANTIQUES ROAD SHOW EVENT

When: September 19th 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Where: Carillion Assisted Living, Johnson Pond Road

What: Expert evaluation of any item one brings in

How: \$10 ticket per item, purchased in advance

Purpose: Funds for the Caboose Restoration

SAVE THE DATE!

SPECIAL SUMMER VISITORS

Three daughters of Daniel Mack and Rachel Frances Spence were able to tour the museums to see the trunk of their mother. The trunk, whose existence was completely unknown to the girls, came into the museums collection as a gift from Shirley Hunsberger.

Found in the attic of the Ballentine-Spence House when owned by the Hunsberger family, Shirley recognized the historical value of the "old trunk." However, even she did not know the identity of Frances Spence. It remained for Heulon Dean, on a routine visit, to provide the staff the facts.

Rachel Frances Smith married Dan Spence, Jr. in England and was brought to Fuquay-Varina as a "warbride." The daughters, Mary Lou Hartman, Annette Hutchenson, and Elizabeth Zigler, contributed pictures for the display notebook and information on their family. The Staff worked them into a display with the trunk. The Spence family founded Fuquay Motors (Ford) and bought the J. D. Ballentine home on Spring Street.

Following the visit to the museums, the girls enjoyed a tour of the Mineral Springs and environs. Growing up on Spring Street gave them a special perspective as visitors.

Joined by their Aunt, Jane Spence Person and her daughter, the tour became even more delightful. Jane, who experienced much of the museum history first hand, has contributed much to Fuquay-Varina research.



Girls joined by Aunt Jane Person

Stephen left to return home and research his genealogy further. He seems to definitely be a descendent of the family and hopes to return to continue his study. Cousin Patty Fleming was very excited to hear about these relatives and promises to aid his efforts.



Three Spence daughters at Mineral Spring

Another family of Fuquay heritage came as quite a surprise to the staff and to the family themselves. Having been told by his parents that their ancestors came from Fuquay-Varina, they decided to conduct a WEB search.

The director received a call from a Stephen Fuquay asking about a tour of the museums and information on the historic family name. They booked a stay with Mayor and Patty Byrne at the Mineral Spring Inn and gave an entire morning to visiting the museums and learning about their family connections. The staff enjoyed showcasing all the materials on the family for their consideration.



The Stephen Fuquay family