

FOOTPRINTS OF THE PAST

PRESERVING FUQUAY-VARINA'S HERITAGE

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FUQUAY-VARINA MUSEUMS

HERITAGE DAY 2022 Part 1 Our High School History Celebration

After two years with covid and no Heritage Day, the Friends of the Museums again celebrated on May 7, 2022 at Ashworth Historic Park. Two important programs were planned "Under The Tent."



President Orlean Newton welcomed the crowd for "History Under the Tent."

First, at 11:00 a.m. "Our High School History Celebration" opened with Orlean Newton welcoming the public. She invited our new mayor, Blake Massengill to also welcome the public. The National Anthem rendered by a girls' choir from Willow Spring High opened the program.

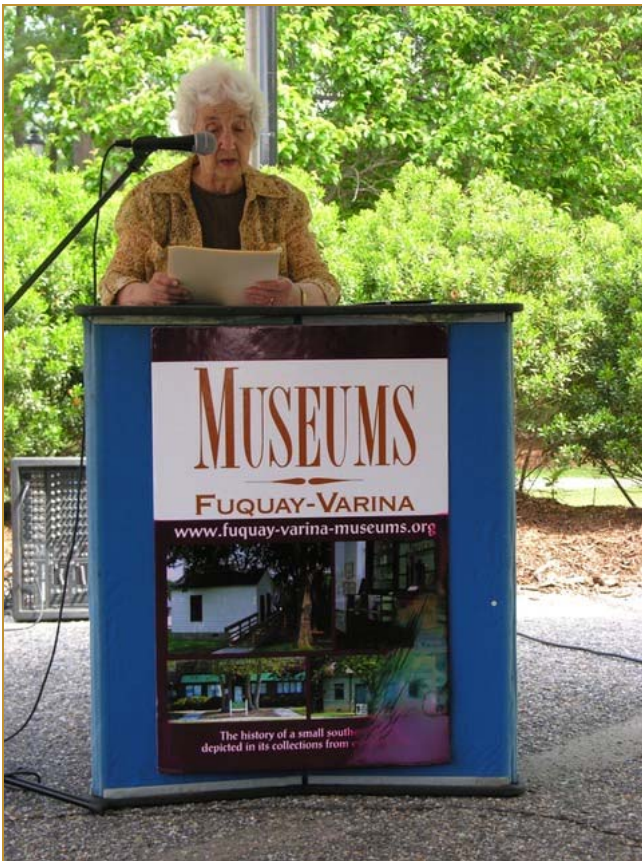


Mayor Blake Massengill attended his first "Heritage Day" to welcome the crowd.

Shirley Simmons gave a brief history of our high schools. Once we were TWO: Fuquay Springs High School which opened in 1918 and Fuquay Consolidated High School which graduated its first senior class in 1938.



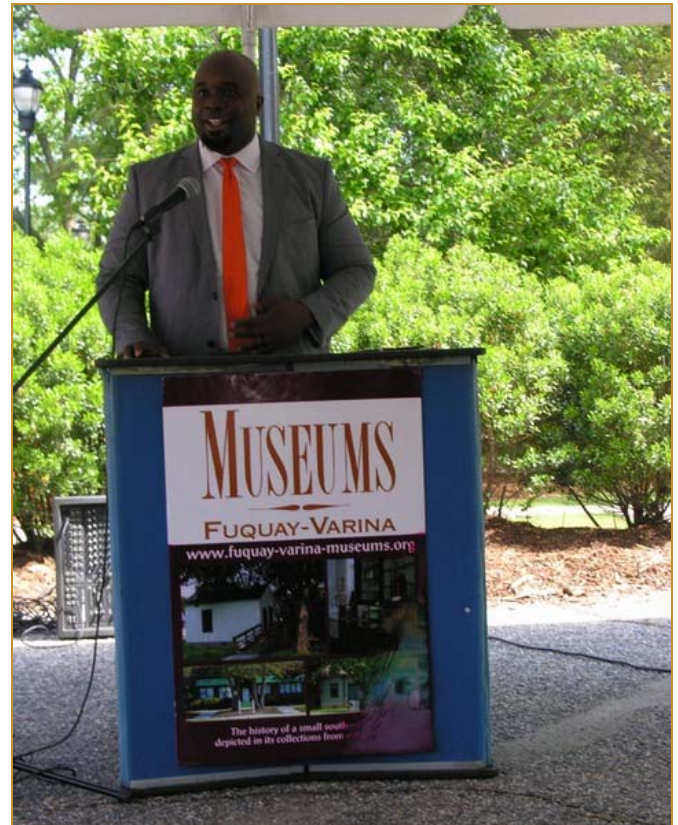
A Choral Group from Willow Spring High under the direction of Mr. Kevin Still opened the program with The National Anthem.



Historian, Shirley Simmons set the stage of our TWO high school history in Fuquay-Varina: past and present.

After that, in 1970, we became ONE when all students were integrated at Fuquay-Varina High School between Woodrow and Ennis Streets. In 1975 that high school began its move by taking students 10-12 to Bengal Blvd. When the ninth grade followed in 1977, all high school students resided on Bengal Blvd.

After determining that growth warranted two high schools, Wake County Public School System constructed a new facility to be called Willow Spring High School. In 2019, all Fuquay-Varina High School moved to that new campus for two years while the campus on Bengal Blvd was renovated.



Principal Terrance McCotter spoke of the current Fuquay-Varina High School.

This past September, 2021 we became TWO high schools again. Fuquay-Varina High moved back to Bengal Blvd. Under Principal Terrance McCotter, 2007 students began their life on the new campus. Willow Spring High School under Principal Wade Martin enrolled 925 students, grades 9-10 for their inaugural year on Kennebec Road.

Helping us feel connected to these TWO schools, the audience enjoyed remarks by McCotter and Martin. Willow Spring music students, under the direction of Kevin Still entertained us with a special jazz band. Closing the program with a grand finale, Fuquay-Varina music students celebrated with their Fight Song.



Principal Wade Martin gave remarks on the current Willow Spring High School, now our TWO high schools.

A special appreciation goes to the students and Directors, Still and Edwards, for putting together musical entertainment. Fighting a Saturday and Prom Night only gives more appreciation to the wonderful youth who gave of their time and talent.



Jazz group from WSHS entertained the audience under the direction of Still.

However, an important point of historical celebration occurred when the old bell, the original bell which stood atop the “old red building” for Fuquay Springs High in 1918, gave us “My Story.”



Dr. Clinton Robinson, Area Superintendent of Wake County Public Schools presented the gift of the first high school bell to the Friends of the Museums.



Robinson called for back up: Denning, Johnson-Hostler, Newton, Simmons, McCotter & Martin accepting the gift.

TOURS OF THE MUSEUMS

Beginning at 10:00 a.m. visitors were invited to tour all six component museums with docents on duty to assist with information. The buildings generally closed during the morning 11:00 a.m program and the afternoon 2:00 p.m. program. Docents reported record interest and numbers of visitors in every museum.



Simmons and Newton with the Letter of Gift to the Museums.

Written and delivered by Shirley Simmons, the first person account told the bells history up to the present. At that point, Wake County Schools Area Superintendent, Dr. Clinton Robinson presented a letter of gift to the Friends of the Museum. Flanked by the two principals, Wake County Schools Board Member, Ms. Monika Johnson-Hostler, and Wanda Denning, Chair of Chamber of Commerce Education Committee. Dr. Robinson delivered the document to President Newton and Volunteer Director, Simmons. Then the bell completed its "story" by explaining how it would be moved to Ashworth Park to be permanently at home among the historical collection. (Our current expectation is sometime after June 20, the move will be made.)



Centennial Quilt display is an interesting "history" lesson courtesy of the Willow Bees.



Grand Finale: FVHS band group under Mr. Matthew Edwards presented the Bengal Tiger Fight Song adopted in 1970 by vote of the TWO student bodies.



Organizations case holds many artifacts of interest.

Everyone was so busy, we failed to photograph the docents in action. However, we owe a debt of gratitude to the following individuals for their faithful duty: Dot Mays, Curtis Holleman, Kim Johnson, Donald Cotton, Tim Carroll, Faye Cress, Orlean Newton, Brenda Johnson, Debbie Semple, Willa Adcock, Julia Yeargan, Dianne Schurr, Shirley Simmons, Bob Burlock, Jeanette Moore-Burlock. Special assistance was rendered by Arthur Johnson. Parks and Rec set up the tent and P.A. system.

Jessica's Food Truck served dogs of all kinds and burgers to keep us all refreshed over the day.