

Alleghany Historical-Genealogical Society, Inc.

Preserving Alleghany's Heritage Since 1979



President Roy Hunt
Vice-President Jeff Halsey
Secretary-Treasurer Irene R. Wagner



Volume 32, No. 1

January 2011

Bulletin No. 101

Historical Museum's Grand Opening

The Alleghany Historical Museum had its Grand Opening in the snow on Saturday, December 4. The museum was open from 10am to 5pm with a ribbon cutting at 2pm with light refreshments at the Alleghany Jubilee afterward. Alleghany Historical - Genealogical Society President Roy Hunt, Sparta Mayor John Miller and Alleghany County Commissioner Chairman Ken Richardson officiated.

The museum honored Veterans through the months of November and December. We had examples of uniforms different branches of service on loan from the VFW, Red Cross nurse uniforms, and displays on the

Continued, see "Museum" on page 7

A Woman's Work Was Never Done



We're starting the year by honoring the women of Alleghany County.

The exhibit, *A Woman's Work Was Never Done*, will start this month and last through the end of March, Women's History Month.

There are already several items from the county's mothers, grandmothers, and great-grandmothers on display, but we want to include everyone, so if you have something you think would be appropriate, please consider loaning it to the Society for display in the exhibit.

The museum is open Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, 10am to 5pm. across from the courthouse.

Star Press on Display

Burton Osborne of Piney Creek has been very generous to the Alleghany Historical Museum, bringing several items for long term loan. The list includes a washstand, a 200-year-old pitcher, a muzzle loader and musket bag, milk bottles, a churn, a Victrola, a pair of hand-made crutches, tobacco tins, bottles and many, many more items. He has collected and saved for years in hopes that someday the artifacts could be displayed for everyone's enjoyment.



One of the largest examples is a century-old printing press that was used by the Alleghany Star newspaper office in the 1890's to print small jobs. Burton's grandfather, Lewis Napoleon York, originally ordered the press from Sears & Roebuck. It was shipped by train to Elkin- then Mr.

York brought it up the mountain on an oxcart.

Mr. York used the press for years to print booklets and tracts. The book *Footprints on the Sands of Time* by A.B. Cox was originally printed on his press. The press was last used in 1965 at the Reins-Sturdivant Funeral Home to print funeral and visitation memorials.

It is still in working order and with very little work, could print a job today.



Lewis Napoleon York with his Bible and tracts printed on his press.

From the President

The fall season ended with a flurry of activities for the Society.

We appreciate all the hard work that the Museum Committee has done putting together another great exhibit called *A Woman's Work Was Never Done*. They have gone from canning, putting the food on the table with all kinds of glass ware, to sweeping the floor, to making the clothes and washing them with all kinds of different machines.

Don't forget our membership dues are due the first of the year for those of us who pay by the year. We hope to have something for each of us to enjoy in each of our news letters for the coming year.

As the new year gets on its way, it seems hard to believe that this concludes another year as president of the society. It is a reminder to me that we should make the most of all our opportunities in life because they pass with amazing rapidity.

I wish to thank all those who have given direction and support to me during my tenure. It has been both an honor and a privilege to serve the Alleghany County Historical-Genealogical Society, Inc. Sincerely,

AHGS President
Roy Hunt

AHGS meets WGHP

We've gone Hollywood! Or at least Greensboro. Roy Ackland from WGHP Piedmont Channel 8 stopped by last week to talk about the museum and our latest displays. To see the *Roy's Folks* spot, go to our web site (www.ahgs.org) and click the link at the top of the page. Thanks to Roy and producer David Weatherly for giving us some great publicity below the mountain!



www.AHGS.org Site Stats

For the past 4 weeks:

Total page loads 359

Unique visits 152

First time visits 125

Returning visits 27

Most popular referrals (sites visitors came from):

newrivernotes.com

sparta-nc.com

moonzstuff.com

Our most popular pages were:

Home, Books, Links, Newsletters, Inquiries



Preachers Association photograph from Burton Osborne. Attendees include: Wiley Combs, John Hoppers, Quincy Higgins, M. E. Poole, Andy McKnight, Coy Walker, Jimmy Barker, Corthy Barker, Fields Osborne, Mack Anders, Willie Hamm & John Evans. Sorry, we don't have the order or all the names.

Blue Ridge Mountain Poetry

by Lucy Roe

Kathleen Maxwell, a native of Alleghany County, wrote poetry honoring our mountains. Her book, *Mountain Echoes*, is filled with poetry and folklore and is currently on display in the Historical Museum.

Throughout poetry and art she instilled love for the mountains, Sparta and Alleghany County to her Sparta High School students. For many students she was the first poet and illustrator to come into their lives. Hearing Mrs. Maxwell recite her poetry was awesome.

-The Museum's exhibit this month will include photos and stories of Alleghany women. If you want to honor someone, bring in a story and a photo if you have one. We will keep them on display through March.

My Genealogy Research Project

by Claire Halsey

I recently completed a book, *The Families of Nels Peter Nelson & Hedvig Augusta Sandstrom* about my great-great-great-grandparents. Before I started the project, no one in the family knew much about them. We just knew they emigrated from Sweden and that Grandpa Nelson had changed his name when he came to America.

I knew the Alleghany Library sometimes helps with genealogy searches, so I hoped other libraries would help me. My first step was to contact one in Sweden. I googled "Sweden library" and clicked the first result, Norrköpings City Library. I found an email address, sent a request for information and what little information I had (in English), then waited and hoped.

Soon I heard back from Anders Åklint, a genealogist there, at the library. He had found Hedvig's emigration record and the rest of her family's names and birth dates in a church book. In Sweden, the church records are very detailed. They even showed the dates each person emigrated. Using this information, I was then able to find (and follow) the family in American census records using web genealogy sites like familysearch.org.

American immigration records show her arrival at

Castle Garden, the largest immigration port before Ellis Island was established. At Google Patents, I also learned that her brother was a prolific inventor in Indiana, holding several U.S. and Canadian Patents.

Everything I found on Hedvig's Sandstrom family, I found online. I believe the reason for this is that most of the family settled in the older, eastern states.

My grandma had a book about Lindsborg, their hometown in Kansas, that included a mini biography of Nels and the names of his father and brother. I searched online for articles mentioning Nels and found information about a sister who married a Civil War veteran. I also learned about Nels' business ventures. I found he had been a store clerk, a businessman, a Government Scout, a United States Deputy Marshal, an Inspector of Customs, and even a Deputy Sheriff of McPherson County, Kansas. I found that he was a member of the I.O.O.F. (the Odd Fellows) and, politically, he was a Republican.

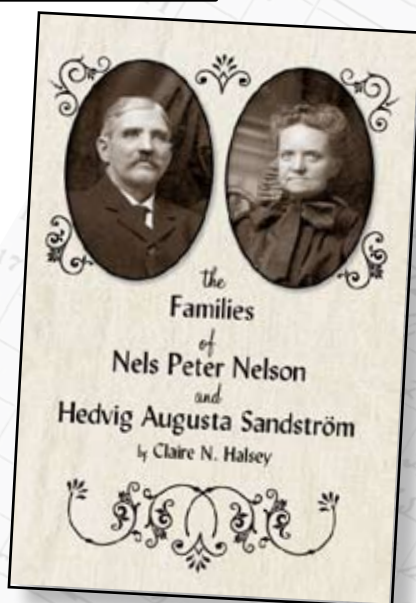
Nels' birth was listed at familysearch.org and I was able to find names and birth dates for most of his siblings there, as well. But, there was little information online about the rest of the Nelson family in Kansas - I had to go offline.

I contacted the McPherson County's Historical Museum, the town Library, and the Freemount Lutheran Church, where Nels' parents and siblings attended. They sent me obituaries, Swedish emigration records and church records, and from that I was able to find them in census records and in other family trees at rootsweb.

Nels' name-change was even interesting. His father (and he) used the old country tradition of *patronymic* naming. Nils Nilsson was *Nils, Nils' son*. His father was Nils Olsson or *Nils, Olaf's son*. When Nils came to America, he just kept the Americanized Nels Nelson, from then on.

Ultimately, I discovered a variety of sources for my book, including libraries, churches, censuses, emigration records, web sites, and obituaries. I even met two new cousins, descendants of Nels & Hedvig's siblings.

Before this project, I thought genealogy work would be impossible! I didn't think I'd be able to find anybody in census records. But I soon learned there's a ton of information available. The people I met were helpful and it's really easy. You just have to try.



Get more information at:
www.imagingspecialists.net/SN

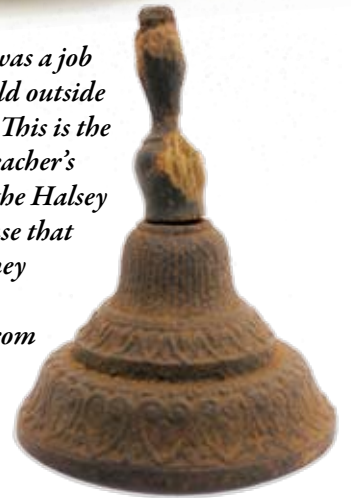
What's ~~New?~~ Old

*Hand Made Basket by
Clara Halsey Loaned
by Claire Halsey*



*'Hazel Atlas' Cobalt Salt & Pepper
Shakers from Margaret Crouse*

*Teaching was a job
women held outside
the home. This is the
original teacher's
bell from the Halsey
Schoolhouse that
was in Piney
Creek.
On loan from
Burton
Osborne.*



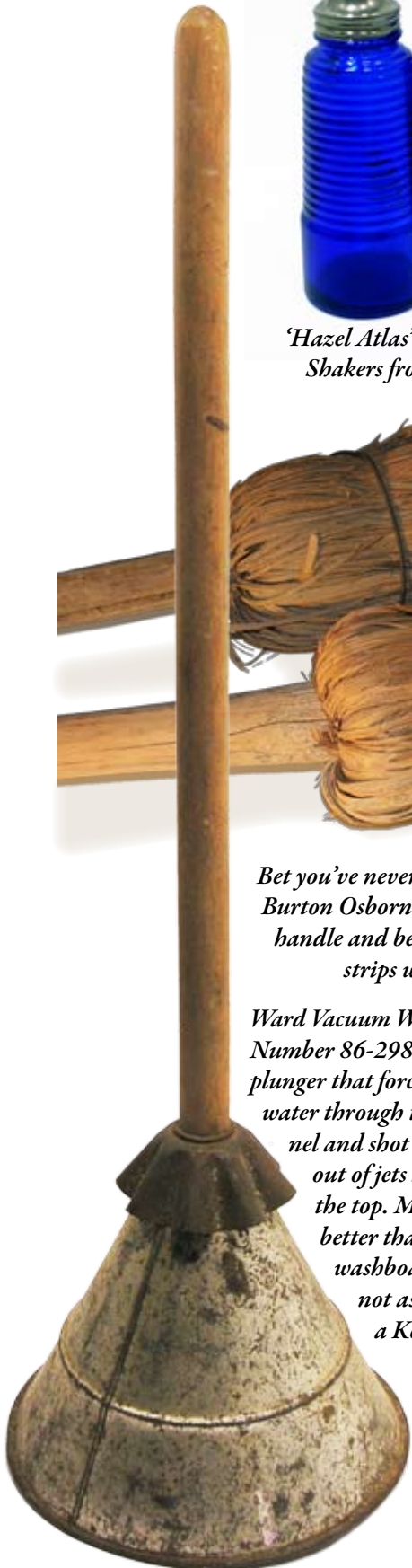
*But you've never seen anything like these Hickory Brooms from
Burton Osborne. The brooms were made by shaving down the
handle and bending the strips over. Afterward all the wood
strips were simply secured with a sturdy wire.*



*Vintage Sugar Canister made by
Owens Illinois from Faye Reeves*



*Ward Vacuum Washer
Number 86-298- is a
plunger that forced sudsy
water through the fun-
nel and shot it back
out of jets around
the top. Maybe
better than a
washboard- but
not as good as
a Kenmore!*



*Pretty glass
basket is part of
the Depression
Glass on display
this month.
From Pauline
Jolly*



If you have items to loan or donate, stories to tell, photos to display or add to the database, or if you just want to volunteer, contact us at info@ahgs.org. The Museum Committee would love to hear from you. Got an idea for a display? Give us a call!

Contact Pauline Jolly at (336) 363-2282, leave a message at 336-372-2115 or email us at info@ahgs.org.

If you've been thinking about giving this year, please consider the Historical Society. The Alleghany Historical - Genealogical Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, so all contributions are tax deductible.

If you'd like to volunteer or contribute to the Alleghany Historical Museum, contact us at:

Alleghany Historical - Genealogical Society
336-372-2115, P.O. Box 817, Sparta, NC 28675.

Books For Sale

HISTORY OF ALLEGHANY COUNTY, NC 1859-1976 - 272-pages not indexed - \$45,
S&H \$3 NC residents \$3.04 tax.

ALLEGHANY COUNTY HERITAGE - 555-pages indexed - \$48, S&H \$3 NC residents \$3.24 tax.

ALLEGHANY COUNTY CEMETERIES THROUGH 1986 - 261-pages - \$15, S&H \$2.75
NC residents \$1.01 tax.

ALLEGHANY ARCHITECTURE: A PICTORIAL SURVEY - 101-pages not indexed -
\$30.00, S&H \$3.00 NC residents \$2.03 tax.

ALLEGHANY COUNTY, NC MARRIAGES: 1849-1900 - 354-pages indexed - \$32.00 plus \$4
S&H from Heritage Books Inc., 100 Railroad Ave., Ste 104, Westminster, MD 21157 1-800-876-6103
www.heritagebooks.com.

ALLEGHANY COUNTY COURTHOUSE ORNAMENT - Gold-colored metal ornament depicts
the county courthouse. \$11.21 NC residents \$0.76 tax; no shipping & handling.

MARY'S MEMORIES - 74-pages Published by Mary Lyon Harless in 2000 on the occasion of her 100th
birthday. \$8.00, S&H \$1.50 NC residents \$0.54 tax.

FOOT PRINTS ON THE SANDS OF TIME - 75-pages Subtitled "A History of Southwestern
Virginia and Northwestern North Carolina," first published in Sparta, NC in 1900 by Dr. Aras B. Cox. Indexed.
\$15.00, S&H \$2.00 NC residents \$1.01 tax.

1938 VIDEO OF SPARTA, NORTH CAROLINA - 20-minute video, by Ben Reeves - Trip to the
1939 Worlds Fair in New York, with 1938 Sparta. VHS tape or DVD \$11.00, S&H \$1.50 NC residents \$0.68
tax.

RECIPES THAT RAISED US - 230 pages Memorial cookbook \$20, S&H \$3.00 NC residents \$1.35
tax or (3) books for \$45.00, S&H \$7.00 NC residents \$3.04 tax.

Find all our items online at: www.spartastore.com

Or to order directly from the Society, send your check, payable to Alleghany Historical-Genealogical Society, to:

Alleghany Historical-Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 817, Sparta, NC 28675.

info@ahgs.org

336-372-2115

www.ahgs.org

Membership Form

Please enroll me as a member of the Alleghany Historical-Genealogical Society, Inc. in the classification below:

New Renewal

Individual \$10.00 annually

Business, Institutional or professional \$20.00 annually

Sustaining \$ 50.00 annually

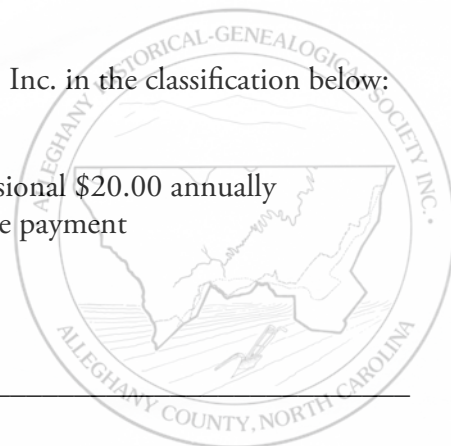
LIFE MEMBER \$100.00 in one payment

Enclosed is a check or money order for membership.

Please send membership card to:

Name-_____

Address-_____



Inquiries

I am in CA. I am trying to locate the marriage records for John Nelson and Mary Ethel Parsons, married June 17, 1917. I have already contacted the Alleghany Co records office and they have no record of their marriage. Might it have been published in a local newspaper? Where else might I check? Thank you so much for your assistance. *Phyllis Garratt, 418 Ridge Road, Novato CA 94947, 415-730-4060 Best Time to Call: Anytime pgarratt@gessert.us*

I am looking for Moses Manassa Woodruff, b 9-12-1734, in NJ. d 10 28 1817. He died in Alleghany Co and is buried in a cemetery named after him, possibly in Glade Valley. May have lived in Surry Co. We visited a Woodruff Primitive Baptist Cemetery in Cherry Lane but it doesn't have any graves that old listed. Any help will be appreciated. *Loyeen Woodruff, 2905 Hickory Court, Woodridge IL 60517, 630-985-5651 Best Time to Call: 12n - 5p woody0@comcast.net*

I am looking for the following book and wondered if you still have copies: Hoppers, Moxley, Toliver and related families" by Lorene Moxley Sturgill. *Jacqueline Blocklyn, 106 Nevada Street, Hicksville NY 11801, 516-681-8379 Best Time to Call: 8a - 12n blocklyn@optonline.net*

In the late 1800s was there a town named Anna in or near Alleghany Co.? If you know of anyone working on the Hawthorne family of Ashe and Alleghany Co. (1802 - 1980) please let me know. *Jack Hultquist, Minden NE, 308-832-2386 Best Time to Call: 8a - 12n jahultqu@yahoo.com*

Would like to have a death notice for a William Griffith in the prathers creek area 1870-1880. Was griffitts in the 1870 census-wife Mary (Polly) *Marjorie Griffith, 3319 Stonehenge Sq. Roanoke VA 24018, 540-819-7878 Best Time to Call: 5p - 9p, ssmkg1@yahoo.com*

I am interested in purchasing the book, "Choates of the South," by Irene Choate Williams. Thanks for your help. *Jennifer, 541-369-2796 Best Time to Call: 8a - 12n, loolylok@hotmail.com*

I am originally from Ashe Co. and am descended

from Samuel Johnson. I am looking for the book: CAPTAIN SAMUEL JOHNSON OF WILKES COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA - Ancestry and Descendants, Volume One, Descendants of Robert and Celia Bourne Johnson. Do you have any leads or suggestions? *Melanie Reeves Miller, 137 Claybrook Lane, Cane Ridge TN 37013, 615-975-8310 Best Time to Call: 12n - 5p, melanie_reeves@comcast.net*

I was hoping you could point me in the direction of my family geneology...I have traced my great grandmother to your area...Lessie Jane Cheek...I was wanting to find living relatives, if that is possible...Please help me! *Tracy McGee, 1542 Palm Spring Dr, Chambersburg PA 17202, 717-446-0411 Best Time to Call: 12n - 5p, tracy6878@yahoo.com*

I'm researching my great-grandmother, Mary "Ellen" Toliver. Was known as Ellen Toliver. Believed to be born in Alleghany or Ashe Co Jan 1862. Jesse W. & Louisa Toliver cited as her parents. Ellen Married. Thomas Hudson Nov. 1877 in Alleghany by Rev. Eli Billings. I have their 1877 Marriage Certificate. They had a daughter Louisa Jane Hudson, (b. May 29, 1879, m. John R. Crouse, d. Nov. 1961. Thomas Hudson was Louisa Jane's father and died in Aug. of 1880. Louisa Jane was adopted by Jesse & Louisa Toliver (Date unknown). Ellen's 2nd marriage to David A. Taylor was in Alleghany NC. Until recently, it was believed that Jesse & Louisa Toliver were her parents. Although, I've been told that Susan Hash is her mother. Any information would be appreciated. *Jane, 7726 N. Jefferson Place Circle, Apt. P, Baton Rouge LA 70809, 225-993-6030 Best Time to Call: 12n - 5p, carmella913@aol.com*

Do you have any obits? I am really wanting to find one for Dallas Glenn Parsons b 1926 & died 25 Jul 1981. Thanks for your time. *Bette Nelson, 4 Tall Tree Way, Georgetown MA 01833, 978-352-2765 Best Time to Call: 8a - 12n, bette_nelson@comcast.net*

I am working on a family research project about the William Harris family who lived for at least 3 generations in Alleghany County at Cherry Lane. Could you please let me know if this family is included in some of the history books already written about the area. I am also interested in the civil war service of William Harris

who was born in 1834. Also, I would like to know how to get a copy of the Harris wills. *Patty Conroy, 20171 Leroy Drive, Castro Valley CA 94546, 510-828-1082 Best Time to Call: 8a - 12n, yornoctap@uahoo.com*



I would like to purchase a book by Lorene Moxley Sturgill, "Hoppers, Moxley, Toliver and Related Families" if possible. Any suggestions? *Shirley M. Jones, 6516 Matchett Rd., Orlando FL 32809, 407-859-3766 Best Time to Call: 12n - 5p, cjones21@cfl.rr.com*



Dear Sir/Madam, I found a reference in your newsletter from Sept 1983 for a book on the Sturgill Family, written by Mr. David Andrew Sturgill. Do you by any chance know where can I find it? My husband would love to have it, I want to buy the book for him. Thank you in advance, *Ivana Flanary, Athens AL 35613, moyra_bodin@yahoo.com*



What is the old building located on the corner on Wolf Branch and Mahogany Rock Rd. It looks like an old school or church. Just email me at your convenience. Thanks, *John Turpin, King NC 27052, 336-591-1108 Best Time to Call: 8a - 12n, jmturpin@windstream.net*

Attention: Membership Dues are now due! (I guess that's why they're called that!)

Newsletter Wins Award

The AHGS newsletter has won our second Joe M. McLauren Newsletter Award from the North Carolina Society of Historians. Members traveled to Mooresville, in October, to accept the award. NCSH Judges' Comments of our newsletter:

"This newsletter was interesting from cover to cover. It contains eye-catching vintage and current photographs that draw the reader toward the text; has a fantastic layout and design; is nicely published; and serves its membership well. We could find no fault with this publication which is slated to receive recognition via the unanimous decision of this panel. We found it to be both professional and informative. Editor Halsey is doing a tremendous job in every avenue of the craft and should be highly commended for his work."

-Except for when we mis-number issues!

Museum continued from page 1

Civil War, WWI and WWII. Don Conrad of Piney Creek loaned us several interesting items from WWI. We displayed information on local veterans including Walter Bell, the only Alleghanian captured and held by the Japanese in WWII, and Earl Davis, who was badly wounded on Omaha Beach in the D-Day invasion. We also shared information on the Bruce Wayne Osborne Post 7034 VFW Post and the Walter Frank Osborne, Jr. Marine Corps League Detachment 1298.



Alleghany native, Walter Bell, survivor of Bataan, imprisoned by the Japanese in WWII.



Left to Right: Sparta Mayor John Miller; AHGS President Roy Hunt & Alleghany County Commissioner Chairman Ken Richardson cut the Ribbon at the snowy grand opening of the Alleghany Historical Museum, December 4, 2011.

Mildred Torney, who founded the Alleghany Historical - Genealogical Society; Pauline Jolly, Museum Committee Chairperson; Sandy Carter-Herndon who helped AHGS acquire the display cases from the Sparta Teapot Museum, and each member of the Historical Society who has worked so diligently to make the museum a reality.



Alleghany County "is bounded on the south by Blue Ridge and Wilkes County line, west by Ashe County, north by the Virginia line and east by Surry County line. The county is divided into two valleys, Peach Bottom mountain passing through the county from east to west, valley of Little River on the south, New River and tributary streams, Prather's Creek and Elk Creek on the north.

"The surface is uneven, ridges and valleys along the streams of water, beautiful springs gushing and gurgling from hills and dales, forests of trees such as oak, pine, poplar, maple, ash, hickory, chestnut, abundance of granite and fine species of soap-stone rich mines of iron and copper.

"The productions are wheat, rye, corn, oats, buckwheat, sorghum-cane, flax, potatoes, and garden vegetables of great variety that mature in luxury and perfection, fruits such as apples, peaches, pears, quinces, plums, cherries, blackberries, strawberries, currants, whortleberries, and grapes.

"...Sparta is county capital, a most beautiful location, admirably arranged in streets, business houses, residences, hotels, churches, academy, law and medical offices, furniture manufactory and one of the best printing presses... in Western North Carolina. "

- Dr. A.B. Cox, Footprints in the Sands of Time

Originally published by The Star Pub. Co. Print, Sparta, N.C. Aug. 1900



Old photo in Alleghany from National Park Concessions, Inc. Photography by W. Ray Scott

The Alleghany Historical - Genealogical Newsletter is published by Imaging Specialists, Inc., P.O. Box 533, Sparta, NC 28675
www.imagingspecialists.net - To see back issues of this newsletter, go online to www.ahgs.org.

Remembering Alleghany for Over Thirty Years

Alleghany Historical-Genealogical Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 817
Sparta, NC 28675