

Alleghany Historical-Genealogical Society, Inc.

Preserving Alleghany's Heritage Since 1979

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History of Alleghany County Schools Issue

Volume 32, No. 3

July 2011

Bulletin No. 103

New Exhibits at the Museum

Burton Osborne and his family have loaned to the museum a rare print called *Christ Before Pilate*, by Mihály Munkácsy. It was printed in 1887, as part of a limited edition of 100. Munkácsy was born Michael von Lieb, February 20, 1844, in Hungary, but his parents were German. He lived in Paris and is known for his biblical scenes, as well as painting the poor and landscapes.

Right, Christ Before Pilate, by Mihály Munkácsy and below, Laurel Springs School by Ruth Richardson Bryant



*Have information on the old Stratford Academy/
Second Elk Creek Academy? See page 6.*



In August 2005, Ruth Richardson Bryant and Charles Pugh were discussing the school building at Laurel Springs, North Carolina, where they finished elementary school. The building was propped up with large pine logs to stabilize its height of two stories.

They remembered that:

- the pine logs were installed in the early 1930s.
- there were two cast iron stoves on each floor. The teachers and the boys kept the fire going.
- there were outhouses (Girls and Boys) on the back left side of the playground and building.

Since they could not find any photos of this building, Ruth said she would make a painting, and that she did!

The painting, which is now on display, will be donated to the Alleghany Historical Museum, later this year.

From the President

Spring of the year is the busiest time of the year. Not only is the work around the home and garden a busy time, we the people of AHGS have been there also.



Roy at the Education in Alleghany Event- (See page 5)

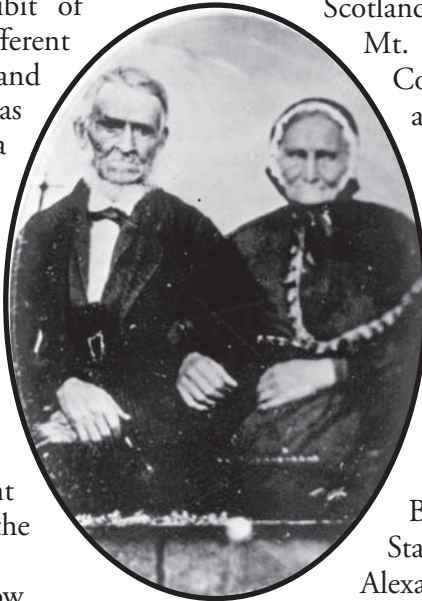
The New Exhibit of and about the different schools (80 or so) and the educators has been a chore. Not a one of the Museum Committee members could believe that there were so many different schools. In putting this exhibit together we all had a good time and learned so much about the different communities of the county.

Take 10 or 15 minutes and sit down and see how many schools you can come up with in the community that you lived in. Remember they had to walk to and from school. There were no school buses back in the 20's, 30's and most of the 40's.

AHGS President
Roy Hunt

New Book From the Black Family

Lorene Sturgill has compiled a new book for the Black family called *Descendants of William Black & Nancy Allison*. William emigrated from Glasgow,



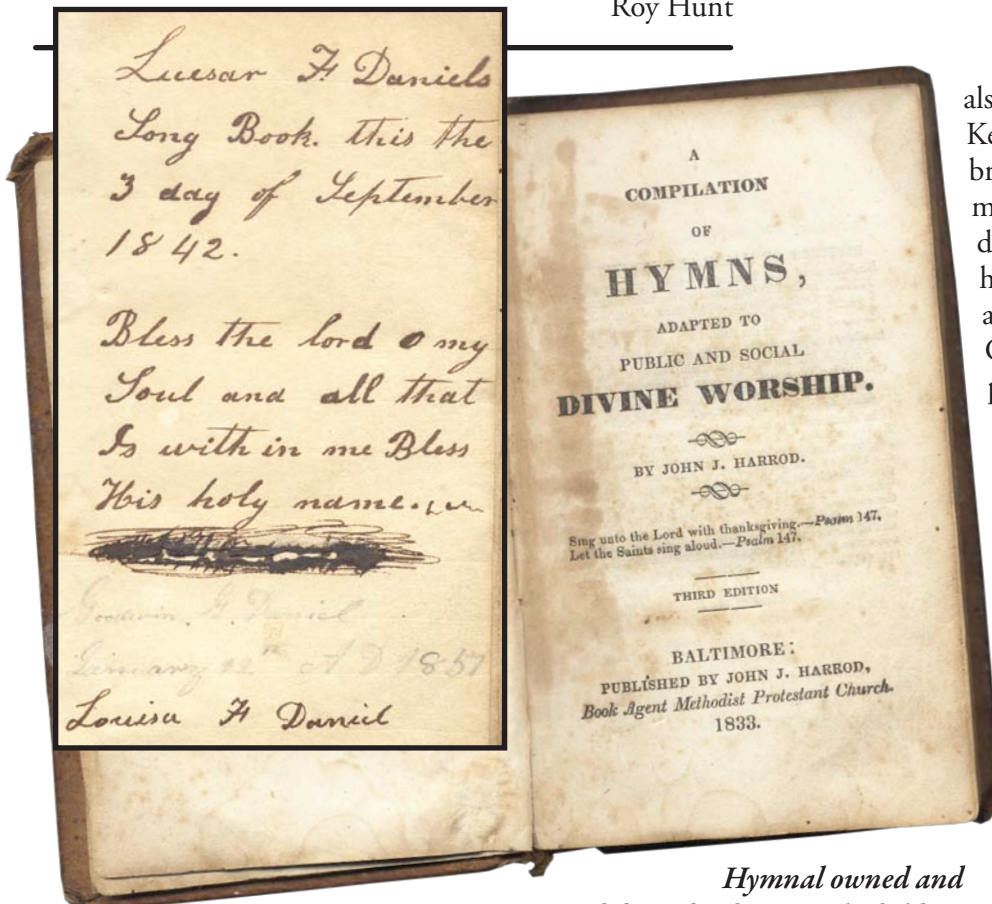
William & Nancy Black

Scotland around 1817. He settled in the Mt. Zion community of Alleghany County, married Nancy Allison and together they had 8 children: John Black married Mary Ann Reedy, Jane Black married James Reedy, Alexander Black married Martha (Mattie) Hampton, Elizabeth Black married David Pugh, David Black married Jennie Zilphia Virginia (June) King and later married Irena Jane Cox, Mary Black married Daniel Alby Taylor, Martha Black married John Harrison Stamper, and Nancy Black married Alexander Pugh. Almost two centuries later, their descendants number in the thousands.

Learn more about the book, *Descendants of William Black & Nancy Allison* at www.starroutebooks.com.

In other book news, the Friends of the Library (once again) proved they are also Friends of the Historical Society! Alice Keighton, manager of Books N Friends, brought us some new treasures for the museum. The used-book shop regularly donates to the Society, books of local historical interest. This time, she brought a copy of the Methodist Episcopal Church South book, *Songs of Zion* published in 1851, a copy of *Methodist Protestant Hymns* from 1833, and two New Testaments, one printed in 1864, and one from 1906.

In researching names written in the books, we found they were originally owned by the family of John Goodwyn Daniel, born in 1891. His parents were S. Emmet Daniel and Rosa Whitfield Jordan. It appears they were in some way, cousins, and were descended from James G. Daniel, born in 1768, and Judith Harding. This family was from Northampton County, NC.



Hymnal owned and passed down by the Daniels children



This article by Alleghany librarian, Carrie Hamm Miller, was first published by The Alleghany News on June 9, 1949. It is included in a book of her writings, "The History of Alleghany County, scanned and edited by her great-nephew, David L. Ham," now available at the Alleghany Public Library. It is reprinted here by permission of The Alleghany News.

Civil War Letter Reveals Alleghany Casualty List

Last week the Librarian and a friend visited Mrs. Matilda Collins, age 98, widow of James Collins at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Sarah Fender. Mrs. Collins was born Jan. 2, 1851. She was born and reared near Old Town, VA. She married William Cheek at the age of 17, moved to Alleghany and lived where Clayton Evans now lives.

When their two children, Crocket and Sarah, were very small her husband died. He was 18 during the Civil War and served with the Confederate army until he became sick with a fever. He never entirely recovered and only lived six years after their marriage. Mrs. Collins lived on at their farm for four years, then married James Collins and moved to Virginia. They had six children and, after Mr. Collins' death 16 years ago, Mrs. Collins moved back to Alleghany.

Mrs. Collins well remembers the Civil war. She was ten years old when it started. She told about her father and mother taking her and the rest of the family in an ox wagon to Old Town, Virginia to see the first company of soldiers leave. She remembers the great crowd and the fine horses and good-looking soldiers in their gray uniforms. Rich Boren was their captain and led the company on a fine horse. Then, as the war went on, times started to get hard.

She told me how well the slaves were treated in the homes she knew near her. The white folks ate their meal in the huge dining room and after they were finished the colored people carried the food they left to the kitchen table and ate it there. Their beds and clothes were always nice and clean. Their master told them that if they would stay on after they were free, he'd treat them as he always had, but if they left, not to come back.

In spite of this they all left and not being capable of looking out for themselves some of them had a bad time. Her first husband's father, Chestly Cheek, was killed by deserters on his son's farm where Kenny Truitt now lives. Mrs. Truitt is his grand daughter. One of the neighbors was able to overtake these men and killed one of them. All three of Mr. Cheek's sons were in the army at the time of his death.

They showed me in the home a woven coat and vest and the had Mr. Cheek had on at the time of his death. The bullet hole is easy to see yet and it's been 86 years since this happened. These things were treasured by his grand daughter, Mrs. Fender.

Both of Mrs. Collins' husbands served in the Civil war. Mr. Cheek was in the Infantry and Mr. Collins in the Cavalry.

She had one uncle killed in the war. They let me read letters written during the Civil war by Abner, Richard and

William Cheek. Also, one by Mrs. Fender's son's sent letters to her during World War I.

Following are parts of a letter written by Abner Cheek to John Anders, a relative, after the death of his father. In it he tells of the death of Doctors Bert and Leff Choate's grandfather and of Sergeant Fulks' death in a battle.

"Near Richmond, Va. June the 7, 1864."

"Dear and kind relatives; after my love and best respects to you, I am very much troubled about the death of my poor father who was murdered so brutally but I hope he has gone to rest where the righteous are and always will be while those who were so brutal as to murder him receive their reward for the offence they committed on him. I will say something about the times here. Times here are very gloomy and the missles of war are sounding regularly."

"I will you that I was in the battle of Drnes Bluff which was fought on Monday, April the 16th. It was a bloody fight and both sides suffered a great loss but we had the best of the fight. A great many of our company were wounded there but I suppose you have heard their names sometime ago. Brother Richard was wounded and I have not heard from him since he went to the hospital. I think he will get to go home if he has not already gone. We have been in two fights since we got here."

"The enemy charged our breast works last Thursday and Friday. We repulsed them, killing a great many of them. I can't give you all of the particulars of the battles. I am sorry to relate to you that Capt. Choate was killed. He was shot by the enemy's sharpshooters last Friday and died Saturday night. Sargt. Fulks was killed last Thursday evening in the fight. Granville Edwards was wounded in the head but I hope he will get over it. James Grimsley was slightly wounded, cousin Merdy Cheek was struck with a ball but it did not break the skin."

"I'll bring my remarks to a close, hoping to hear from you soon. Yours very respectfully, Abner Cheek to John Anders and family. Write soon, direct to Richmond, Va."

This letter was written 81 years ago and is still readable with lovely old time handwriting. Mrs. Collins had three sons who moved to Canada to live. One son, Crocket Cheek, is now with his mother and sister. He told me he lived in Canada for 44 years. He likes Canada fine, but said it was much cooler there than it is here. He remembers once when he sold 3500 bushels of wheat for 29 cents per bushel. The most that his wheat brought was \$1.00 per bushel.

I certainly enjoyed talking to this remarkable old lady. Her eyesight is good with glasses. Her mind is keen and memory good. They insisted that we eat dinner with them and this we did, enjoying it very much.

It is indeed wonderful to have this wonderful to have this splendid old lady in our County. May she have many more happy years to live.

Ed. Note: Sadly, Mrs. Collins, who was the daughter of Warren Rector and Nancy Edwards, died less than a year later, on February 18, 1950 near Ennice. She was 99.



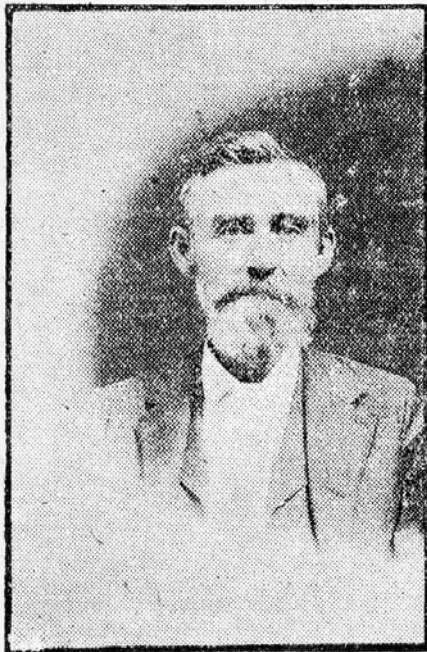
Dr. Terry Johnson shares an article from Raleigh's, Sunday morning Daily News And Observer describing the state of North Carolina's education systems in the period following the Civil War. Articles were written for individual counties by local leaders.

WHAT EDUCATIONAL CAPTAINS ARE DOING FOR THE SCHOOLS.

THE DAILY NEWS AND OBSERVER.

ALLEGHANY COUNTY.

The close of the Civil War found our little mountain county in a deplorable condition, as it now presents itself to me. Nearly all of our best young men were left lying on the battlefield; and the county filled with widows and orphans. Property gone, and almost every disadvantage confronted us; and worse than all this, by reason of our isolated condition, bad men were found, sought refuge here, who were disloyal to the country, that gave them birth.



Superintendent C. J. Taylor.

My observation has been so far, that all such men have contributed very little to the building up of society; but amidst all these conditions, a few men who were the preservers of society put forth a heroic effort. They went into the woods, began to cut and hew logs, and erect school houses. Some old farmers entered the school and began to teach the children to read and write. Elder C. J. Taylor and J. H. Doughton, I will here mention without any hope of remuneration. We soon got small log houses, dabbled with mud, within reach of almost every child. Teachers were secured and insufficient, having never had any training for the important duty of training the minds of children.

Time rolled on, and we were cheerful and hopeful of the future. Finally Prof. S. W. Brown established a good school at Sparta, which resulted in much good for the country. Many young men and women went out from under his inspiring influence and all now bearing a good share of raising the standard of society and bettering everything that it came in

contact with. Later J. H. Doughton, of Laurel Springs, visited what was then known as the State Grange where the subject of the betterment of schools were the overshadowing issue. He returned home filled with hope and determination to inspire his neighbors to action through his devotion to the educational interest of the country and never tiring energy. He succeeded in getting a good house built at Laurel Springs, which was the admiration of the whole country; and soon started an academic school, securing the services of Prof. J. B. Hans, who set about the work of preparing men and women, and sending them out as leaders among those with whom they came in contact with. Others soon saw the fruits of a good school by their position taken in society; and were inspired to do as Laurel Springs; and bring home to their children the same opportunities that the Laurel Springs children enjoyed, believing their children were susceptible of the same achievements if an opportunity was offered.

Four years ago the county was ripe for action when the Board of Education and Supt. E. Leff Wagoner was sworn in under the present law. They found the county with but few houses fit to teach children in, and districts badly arranged. They, with the approval of all the progressive men of the county, entered into redistricting and consolidating small districts with a view of putting a good school house in reach of every man's child if possible with the help of our able State Superintendent and the generous manner in which the State came to our relief.

Nearly every district has a good house. A number of them built on State plan, four months school being taught. A number of them having two and sometimes three teachers. Good houses have taken the places of the little log huts, and fairly well trained teachers have taken the places of untrained men.

The salary of teachers has been advanced some, but still too low to hold our best teachers, only as they are supplemented by the patrons. School property has greatly increased in value in the last four years.

In truth, the school interest in general has been advanced more in the last 4 years under the energetic and able supervision of Supt. E. Leff Wagoner than it has before in many years.

The time had come for a revival in the educational work in this county. I sincerely hope it may not cease until we shall be able to cease crawling and get upon our feet and walk off, hand in hand, with our sister counties, who have more favorable opportunities and have been so kind to us in taking us by the hand and lifting us up from a two and a half to a four months school.

I will close by extending the gratitude of our little county to the State for the gifts to us to have a four months school.

C. J. TAYLOR,
Supt. of Schools of Alleghany Co.

ASHE COUNTY

Perhaps in no county in the State can more substantial progress along educational lines be shown than in Ashe county. Judge O. H. Allen in his charge to the grand jury, at a recent term of our superior court counted upon the imprisonment of school houses, he had noticed since his last visit to our county and congratulated our people upon the progress made.

Since the present superintendent took charge nine school houses have been erected, costing from \$500 to \$1100.00. All built in accordance with the plans approved by the State superintendent. In every instance, districts have been enlarged or two or more small districts consolidated. Before this year closes a number of consolidations will be effected, and modern houses built. It is the aim of our superintendent to build a first-class house in every district in the county during the next two years, and consolidate districts wherever practicable.

We have one local tax district and others will vote local tax during the year.

The total school fund for this year was \$130,55.89. There are 7296 pupils of this number, we enrolled 6208. We have 46 first grade teachers, average salary paid was \$26.00 per month.

For the year of 1903-'04 only two schools in the county employed more than one teacher, this year there were ten. All our teachers attended teachers' institutes last year, and a number of them attended the training school at Boone this summer.

Hon. R. A. Hamilton, A. A. Price and W. F. Lewis compose the Board of Education. They are earnest, energetic men, anxious to advance the cause of education in the county. Our superintendent, W. H. Jones, has been engaged in school work for the last 18 years, serving as president of Fairview College, Southerland Seminary County Supt., and member of Board of Education, while principal of Southerland Seminary he made it the best known and most largely attended school west of the Blue Ridge. He enters on his second term as superintendent without opposition from any one, and the next two years will show marked progress along educational lines in Ashe county.

Caswell Jesse Taylor (1850-1931) served as Superintendent of Alleghany Schools from 1905-08. He was also a cattle farmer, Justice of the Peace, County Commissioner and a State Representative. Mr. Taylor was well educated and traveled "most of the time...on horseback and did a lot of talking to himself. When asked, 'Why?' his answer would be, 'Where could I find a better audience?'"
-Alleghany County Heritage Book

The Ashe article is unattributed. It is probably safe to assume Judge Allen remarked on the improvement of the school houses, not the "imprisonment"-- no matter how the students might have felt. It's nice to see typos aren't just a 21st century phenomenon!
-Editor



Thelma Davis with event organizer Margaret Crouse.



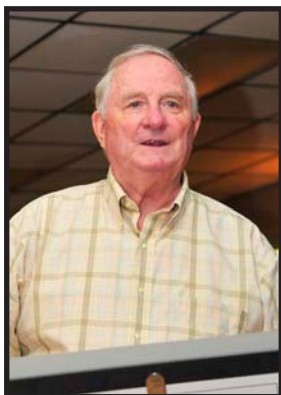
Thelma with her friend Duane Davis and Allegheny Ambassador of Heritage and Culture certificate awarded to each at the event.



Clarence Crouse



Dr. Suzanne Mellow-Irwin



Mayor John Miller



Dr. Jeff Cox

Wednesday, June 23, members of the Allegheny Historical-Genealogical Society met at the Allegheny Jubilee and were the recipients of a donation from Thelma Davis. Mrs. Davis was a long-time school teacher in the county and helped to develop Allegheny's Special Education Department.

Years ago, a neighbor loaned Thelma the Methodist Episcopal Church Quarterly Conference Records from the area. She took them to the Adult Developmental and Vocational Program to get them copied. ADVP works with the handicapped in our county, giving them jobs that match their skill level.

Later, she brought the copies to Duane Davis and charged him with the task of making them accessible for researchers. Duane brought them to Imaging Specialists, Inc. and ISI's intern, Beth Triplett, scanned the pages. ISI then placed the scans into a digital book format, and saved them to DVD. These records which span the years from 1883 through 1940 will soon be available in PDF format on the Allegheny Historical-Genealogical Society website, www.ahgs.org.

At the event, Duane presented Mrs. Davis, AHGS' new *Ambassador of Allegheny Heritage and Culture* award- and we surprised Duane by

giving him one, also!- recognizing their work with the church records.

Several retired teachers were present and people shared their memories of attending school in Allegheny County or about their time working for the school system. Speakers included county school superintendents Dr. Jeff Cox, Dr. Suzanne Mellow-Irwin, Duane Davis, Clarence Crouse and Sparta Mayor (and former principal) John Miller. Thank you to Mrs. Davis and to all of our county's teachers, for your hard work and kind influence!



Thelma's photo from Sparta's first yearbook (and her first year of teaching) in 1938-39.



Irene Wagner, Pauline Jolly & J.M. Sturgill

Inquiries

Inquiries are printed here and posted online at ahgs.org. If you are looking for information, you can mail your question to P.O. Box 817 or email info@ahgs.org. Also, if you have answers or information for these people, contact them!

I am looking for the name of my grandfather's mother. My grandfather, Arthur Joines Taylor, was born out of wedlock in 1885 or 86 to Matthew Taylor and ????. The only clue we have is my grandfather's middle name of Joines. These Taylors were from the Cranberry district of Allegheny Co. Any info would be greatly appreciated. Thank you, **Jim Curl**, 1246 N East Ridge, Strafford, Mo 65757, 417-736-3065, Best Time to Call: 8a - 12n, firedadd@yahoo.com

Hello, I am looking for some information. I recently visited your area, and my friend took [this photo] of an old building we liked. I wrote your Chamber of



Commerce, just looking for any information on the building. I received a nice email from Ashley Weaver, from the Allegheny CoC. She replied that the building is the "old Stratford Academy/Second Elk Creek Academy. It was built around 1900 by Monroe Estep, an Allegheny carpenter-builder".

She suggested that I ask someone from the historical society because I had a few more inquiries. My friend and I were wondering if you have available any old drawings or photos of this school in years past---from when it was first built or in subsequent years. We really like his photos, and would like to have a "before" and "after" collection of the building, if possible. Also, any additional information on the builder and building would be wonderful.

Thankyouso much for reading this and for any help you might be able to offer, We loved visiting your area and we enjoy learning new things about the photos we captured! **Geri Williams and Phillip Smith**, geriwilliams72@yahoo.com

NOTE: The museum is looking for a small apartment-sized refrigerator for the volunteers to use. Please contact Margaret Crouse for details or call and leave a message at 336-372-2115. Thanks!

Hi, I'm descended from the Doughton's and Reeves as discussed in the Allegheny Chamber web site info on early settlers. I'm searching for any documents, books, or any published info on the families for my lineage and genealogy.

Do you know of any books with lineage info on them? I deeply appreciate any help. I working on my DAR papers to add George Reeves to my list of REV WAR patriots and I can use any documentation to help in this for proof. Thank you very sincerely, **Patti Waldron**, imafirebabe@hotmail.com

I am looking for any information that anyone has on my ancestor, John "Anders" or "Andrews". John was born in 1808 and died in 1871. He lived in Ashe County but died in Allegheny County. I believe he always lived in the same place, but part of Ashe County was renamed to Allegheny County during his lifetime. He had five children and the oldest four went by the name of "Anders." The youngest, Calvin, went by "Andrews". I do not know the reason for the discrepancy. All of the children had the same mother, Cynthia Phillips Anders or Andrews.

I am looking for any kind of document that might list John's father as Mark Andrews. This document could be an obituary, deed, family bible records, anything that could verify that Mark Andrews was his father or that Elizabeth Bailey was his mother.

The relationship is mentioned in the book, "The Cheek Family of Allegheny County, NC", however there is no documentation.

I would also be interested in learning which cemetery he is buried in. Any assistance in this matter will be much appreciated. Thank you for your time, **Lisa Andrews Carte**, 442 Township Road 378, Steubenville, OH 43952, 740-282-3107, crli94@aol.com (Ed. Note: Please see page 3 for parts of a letter written by Abner Cheek to John Anders.)

Where can I get copies of Estate Records for my Grt,grt,grt grandparents (Preston and Jane Phipps), that I see on the New River Notes for Allegheny County. Thank you so much, **Marleen Parr**, 2808 Susan St., Fremont, Nebraska 68025, 402-727-4399, Best Time to Call: 5p - 9p, rmparr1@q.com

If you have information, photos or donations for our upcoming exhibit on Agricultural Families, contact the Museum at (336) 372-2115 (If unanswered, leave a message) or email us at info@ahgs.org



What's ~~New?~~ Old

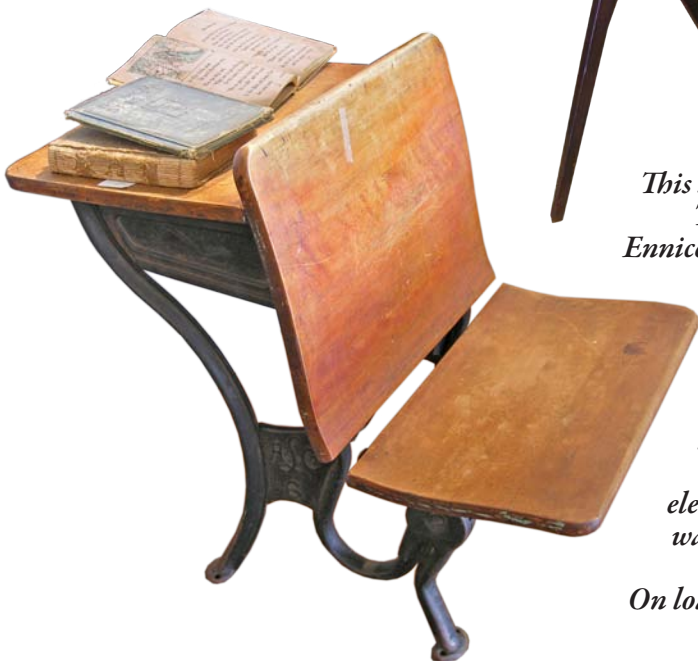


Piney Creek School display featuring Girls' Basketball trophy from Nancy Shepherd and Mary Rector, and portable typewriter owned by L.K. Halsey, principal, loaned by daughter, Sara McMillan

Bible and stand from the entryway at Whitehead School house loaned by Wilma Foster



Small child's desk (just 24" tall) loaned to the museum by Burr Bost



This slate belonged to Emiline Thompkins Murphy from Ennice, around 1900. She used it for her studies at Higgins School, located at the site of Crab Creek Church. Emiline only attended 3 months out of the year and only through the elementary grades as there was no high school at that time. On loan from Kathy Murphy



Our Shared Heritage

Our mountain community has traditionally had a relatively small, close-knit population. This makes for interesting coincidences even today. For example, we received an inquiry about John Anders (page 6) and found a letter to him in another story, (page 3).

Recently, too, in the museum, we were adding items to the display on Sam Brown, Allegheny Superintendent and early educator, in the space above the Clyde Fields exhibit.

You may already know that Clyde and her sister Pearl were teachers, here. You may have also heard that Clyde was the first female Superintendent in North Carolina. You probably don't know they were in Mr. Brown's class.

When we placed Mr. Brown's roll book, letting it fall open to a natural page, for the display, we noticed, Clyde and Pearl's names listed there. Today, the roll book is inches above photographs of them at ages 7 and 9.

Maybe a lesson to take from these mild coincidences is that we should keep a wide scope when researching. We often think about our ancestors as individuals, but we might not consider their relationships.

John Donne said, "No man is an island entire of itself.." Like us, our forefathers were members of a community. The more we learn about that community, that heritage, the more we know about the individuals.

Service to the Society

The *Education in Allegheny* exhibit at the Allegheny Historical Museum ended in June. We displayed items from several schools, as well as a county map of over 40 school locations. Bill Irwin and his grandson, Ian Olson, compiled the list of schools and their coordinates for the map. Thank you Bill and Ian for your great idea!

Also, a volunteer has offered to compile an index to *History of Allegheny County, NC 1859-1976*. Kate Anderson of Columbus, Ohio, was in town researching her ancestors, recently, and purchased the book. She noticed that it didn't include an index and offered to create one. When she's finished, we will publish it at our website, www.ahgs.org. Remember, a couple of years ago, Allan Joyce of Sparta listed the families in Allegheny County Heritage on gencircles.com. A direct link to his project is on our homepage.

Thank You to each and every volunteer. We appreciate your behind-the-scenes efforts!





Is this a photo of the first Tolliver School? Original is property of Rose Rector of Sparta.

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

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