

Highlands Historical Society

Spring 2016

To preserve and promote the rich heritage of Highlands

Highlands, N. C.

SAY AHHS: THE DOCTORS OF HIGHLANDS

Highlands is not a buzzing metropolis, to put it mildly. This is a good thing for those of us who want to get away from traffic nightmares and year-round crowds. But the situation makes it tough on doctors who need to make a living 12 months of the year.

Dr. Albert Hawkins came to Highlands in its earliest days after studying homeopathy. He did not get a paycheck but traveled far and wide on foot to help those who were sick. He harvested wild berries, poke sallet and yellowroot to name a few of his cures. The Hawkins family is still a part of our community.

When Hawkins died in 1883, Dr. William Anderson moved in and rented space in the Central House (now Madison's Restaurant of Old Edwards Inn). In 1884 he treated three cases of Scarlett Fever, and, as noted in Ran Shaffner's Heart of the Blue Ridge, he became Highlands's first health officer and closed the school to prevent further spread of the disease. Dr. Anderson also tried to encourage more sanitation in the disposal of offal. He practiced medicine here for 28 years.

Dr. Charles Frost moved to Highlands in 1880, when he was 59 years old. He was in poor health himself but thought that the climate here would be beneficial to his health. He practiced general medicine here for 12 years. He actually refused medical care when he was close to death.

Herman Rideout learned much about medicine from Dr. Anderson and became Town Health Officer in 1911, one year before Anderson's death. Dr. Rideout graduated from Harvard and used his knowledge to find cures for people with complicated illnesses that other doctors had thought "incurable." It was said that he was able to reattach a boy's hand, which had been cut off in an accident with an axe.

After staying here as a visitor for four years



Dr. Mary Lapham

and noticing Highlands's beneficial climate, Dr. Mary E. Lapham moved here in 1887. Mary Lapham had had a successful banking career but had a heart for helping people get well. She returned to Women's Medical College of Philadelphia and did advance study in Vienna and Switzerland after she had bought property on Satulah Mountain. She felt that women needed more care than they were getting. In *Heart of the Blue Ridge* Dr. Shaffner tells of Dr.

Lapham's treatment of Tuberculosis using the Swiss therapy. In 1908 she bought land where the present Rec Park stands and turned it into a sanatorium, which became known as "Bug Hill." She had 60 open-air cottages with wooden floors and sides and canvas roofs. The patients slept exposed to the clear mountain air. Though no Highlanders contracted TB, her patients came to Highlands from all around for her cure. Mary Lapham died at 75 in 1936 after becoming world famous for her research and leadership in the study of pulmonary diseases and tuberculosis research.



Highlands TB Sanatorium "Bug Hill"

Dr. H.P.P. Thompson came to Highlands to recover his health in 1919, and not only did he recover his health, he married the widow Helen Cleaveland and fathered five children. Dr. Thompson and his family lived on the site of Bryant Funeral Home and raised

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A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

We are so excited at the Highlands Historical Society to kick off our 2016 season with many new and exciting happenings! The museum and Prince House opened earlier this year to accommodate early season visitors. We began our regular visiting hours in April and have had a great response. Our resident docent Pat Griffin is doing an outstanding job for us. The museum will be open to the public from 10 AM – 4 PM on Fridays and Saturdays and by appointment this year through November.

There are some new exhibits this year and special events planned. Check our Event Calendar on our website at www.highlandshistory.com for updates and also in the local newspapers. Private tours can be arranged by emailing us at highlandshistory@nctv.com or calling our office at 828-787-1050.

We want to say a very special Thank You to all our donors and organizations whose gracious contributions have allowed us to complete the needed repairs and upgrades to the Prince House! We could not have accomplished this without your generosity. Please come by and see how effective and accurate the repairs and restoration have been. We are hard at work landscaping our grounds to make your visits more enjoyable. We also want to thank all our members and contributors who, through their contributions, allow HHS to continue operating in a manner which allows our community to be proud of the facilities and our heritage as a town.

Two new additions for this year will be the display of the Vinson boat, which was recovered last year when Lake Sequoyah was drained for dam repairs, and a refurbished look for the old jail located on Maple Street just around the corner from the museum.

Come visit us often this season. We look forward to seeing you!

With gratitude and appreciation,
Brian McClellan

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

- Brian McClellan, President
- Bill Edwards, Vice President
- Linda David, Corresponding Secretary
- Glenda Bell, Recording Secretary
- Linda Clark, Treasurer
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- Associate Archivist, Sue Potts
- Assistant Archivist, Anne Sellers
- Glenda Bell, Newsletter Editor

RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

We hope you will renew now.
 Family \$50 • Individual \$35 • Sustainer \$100
 Business \$250 • Promoter \$500 • Preserver \$1,000
 Protector \$2,500 • Highlander \$5,000
 And we hope you will add a donation, as many of you have done so generously in the past.
 To join or renew membership by check or credit card, visit highlandshistory@nctv.com.
 Highlands Historical Society
 P. O. Box 670, Highlands, NC 28741-0670

**KELSEY KIDS DAY CAMP
JUNE 13-17**

This is a free one week Day Camp for children (8-12 years old) learning and experiencing Highlands’s early history and life in the late 19th and early 20th century. The days are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Each day begins and ends at the Highlands Historical Museum. We will have activities at the museum, outings that involve group travel and hiking. We also ask that each child attend all 5 days, excluding emergencies or illness. Applications may be found on the Historical Society Website at www.highlandshistory.com or may be picked up at the Museum on Friday or Saturday. They should be mailed to Linda David, P. O. Box 2409, Highlands, NC 28741, or emailed to lindawd@hcgexpress.net. Questions? Please call Linda at 828-526-3374.

GET YOUR SHOVELS READY!

It's the season and time to plant your dahlias so you'll be ready to enter the 2016 Dazzling Dahlia Festival. As you know, our Highlands plateau is the perfect climate and soil for growing these easy flowers that fill your yard and vases with so many varieties and colors of the Dahlia. So we are asking you, the amateur gardener, to select your bulbs, a sunny spot in your yard, and start planting!

Registration cards will be placed around town and at the Historical Society very soon. Early registration will be on Friday afternoon, Sept. 9, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 at the Highlands Rec Park and 600 N. First St. and on Saturday morning, Sept.10, from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00. Bring your cut dahlias at either time with a \$10 registration fee for as many entries as you like. Judging will begin promptly at 10:00 a.m. Saturday for this much awaited amateur flower show which has brought so many people and gardeners together in our town.

At 1:00 on Saturday, the Rec Park will open the doors for the public to enjoy the beautiful perennials and your first chance to see all the ribbons won.

At 2:00 enjoy a speaker on growing your dahlias, stroll through isles of categorized dahlias, and enjoy thinking about more varieties to add to your next year's garden. Last year we had over 300 flowers entered. Hope to see you there.

THE DAHLIA PATRON PARTY

Mark your calendars for the 2016 season's "can't miss" event: the sixth annual Dahlia Patron Party! On September 8th at Highlands Falls Country Club, patrons will be entertained by the popular Joe Gransden Trio and regaled by a profusion of beautiful dahlias gleaned from some of Highlands's best gardens. The wheelbarrow raffle will be back, better than ever, thanks to the generosity of our Highlands merchants! Additionally, there will be a silent auction featuring art by area residents and artists, including Ruthie Watts and Jill Wolfe, as well as Katherine McClure, an Atlanta artist and daughter of Glenda and Griffin Bell, and photographer Dr. Murphy Townsend. Invitations and patron information will be mailed this summer. For further information please email Mary Ann Hardman at hardmanathns@aol.com or Raya McArthur at nmcarthur@aol.com.

We look forward to seeing YOU there!!

2016 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April – November: Museum and Archives
(Open Fridays & Saturdays 10:00 - 4:00)

June 13-17: Kelsey Kids

September 8, 10: Dazzling Dahlias Festival



Tony Vinson, Frances Bantum, Betty Conard, and Dale McCall, four of Furman Vinson's ten descendants, stand by their father's boat.

In February, 2015, Lake Sequoyah was lowered for dam repair. While walking the banks of the drained lake, Chip Wisdom discovered an old boat half buried in the sand and clay. How long it had been under water and to whom it once belonged was a curious mystery—but not to anyone who had known Furman Vinson.

Eighty-five years earlier, in 1930, Kenyon Zahner had hired Joe Webb and Furman Vinson to build a cabin on the edge of the new Lake Sequoyah west of the Big Creek bridge. To create a boat landing underneath the cabin, Vinson built a boat to remove the dirt. Unfortunately, he over-estimated the boat's capacity and filled it too full. The boat promptly sank to the bottom of the lake.

Chip Wisdom's discovery inspired local Highlanders and the Highlands Historical Society to retrieve the boat, still filled with the dirt that sank it, and move it to the Historic Village for preservation.

Of the thirty-six celebrated Joe Webb log cabins, the Zahner cabin was among the first dozen built and one of the most remarkable for its rustic design. Unfortunately the cabin, which was used as a summer home, burned in 1971. The only artifact associated with it today is this boat, rescued from the mud and clay of the drained lake. As an integral part of Joe Webb lore and early Highlands history, it is also a fitting testament to Furman Vinson's high standards of craftsmanship.

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all 8 children there—three of hers and five of theirs. Dr. Thompson served during a time in 1922 when he was the ONLY doctor in town. He ran the tonsil and adenoid clinic for children and died leaving his widow destitute, since the clinic was not a money maker.

For sixteen years after Dr. Thompson’s death there was no resident physician. The flu epidemic occurred during this period which took out 40% of the students, closing the school, along with 250 residents.

In 1947 Dr. William Matthews from Georgia came to the rescue. A polio epidemic requiring quarantine of all children coming to Highlands took place right after he arrived. Dr. Matthews realized a great need in



Highlands’s First Hospital

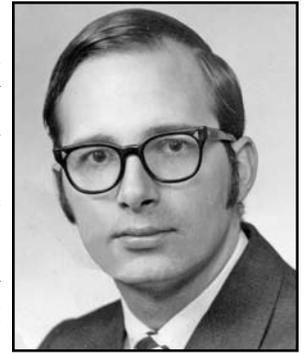
Highlands for either a clinic or a hospital. Many had felt this need, but Dr. Matthews a c t u a l l y organized a hospital. Miss

Eva Cleaveland donated land east of 5th at South Street to the cause. The architect for the project was Upton Ewing. Funds were raised by events and donations. It took four years, and on June 25, 1951, the community hospital opened with Dr. Matthews in charge. The old hospital is now known as the Peggy Crosby Center.

Many doctors came and went during the 50s and 60s. Frustrated by the summer overcrowding and the harsh winters with few patients, doctors left to practice elsewhere. Then came Dr. Carlyle “Mike” Mangum, Jr., who was the first physician to stay. Though many thought little of Dr. Mangum’s bedside manner, still he was an excellent diagnostician and pinpointed the ailments that needed treating. Dr. Mangum served from 1970 to 1987.

In 1971 Dr. John Baumrucker was recruited and is still in our area doing his good works. He has been the longest serving resident physician. Fund raising helped keep the hospital open and steadily grew its patient population. By 1992 there was a successful fundraising effort, which made possible the building of a new hospital between Highlands and Cashiers. Dr. John tells of the harrowing tale of the blizzard of ’93 right before

the new hospital opened. Snow was coming so fast and so hard that 5 to 6 feet of snow blocked the roads. Dr. John could not get up to his house. He went to the hospital and helped to deliver a baby from Scaly Mountain. The old hospital had no fuel for heat, and the new one was not quite finished, but somehow Dr. John and his help siphoned gas from cars stuck in parking lots near the new hospital. He even made a pizza for the new mother, baby safely delivered and new baby and new hospital christened beautifully.



Dr. John Baumrucker

The doctors who have served Highlands have truly had a heart for servant leadership. We are so blessed by some of them still, though time and age have moved many away. Mark Heffington is helping people in Eastern N.C., Dr. Patti Wheeler is a busy, busy physician She has been serving Highlands for many years. Herbert Plauchet is an orthopedic surgeon who “retired” up here from Baton Rouge and has been kept quite busy with all the slips and falls that people take. Robert Buchanan has been busy for years keeping Highlanders beautiful. I suspect he imports a lot of patients that are drawn here for his expertise. Carter Davis has retired but was a popular gastroenterologist for many years. And Dr. Cabiran keeps our skin healthy. Dr. Scott Baker is a family physician who is thorough and caring.

We hope to keep our newest doctors here for the long haul. We cannot say they fit into the history of Highlands until they have practiced here for a while. We have been most fortunate in the kind and caring physicians who have served Highlands through the years.



Highlands-Cashiers Hospital Today