

Highlands Historical Society

Summer 2018

To preserve and promote the rich heritage of Highlands

Highlands, N. C.

A HISTORICAL HIGHWAY MARKER IS APPROVED TO HONOR DR. MARY LAPHAM'S TB SANATORIUM IN HIGHLANDS

On May 22nd the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources approved a North Carolina Historical Highway Marker to honor Dr. Mary Lapham for her groundbreaking innovations in the treatment of tuberculosis in Highlands during the early 20th century. The marker will be cast and delivered around mid-November for installation on U.S. 64 East near the entrance to the Highlands Historic Village.

Born in 1860 in Northfield, Michigan, Mary E. Lapham came to Highlands in 1893, where she enlarged a home on Satulah Mountain, which she named "Faraway." Her father intended that she work in his bank, but she discovered the need for medical attention, especially for women, on the Highlands plateau and left for Philadelphia to earn her M.D. from Women's Medical College. She continued post-graduate study in Europe, where she learned the Swiss method of curing tuberculosis, which was killing one in seven people in America.

Returning to Highlands in 1908, she established a T.B. Sanatorium comprised of 60 open-air tent-houses surrounding an infirmary where the Recreation Center exists today. Her method of treating tuberculosis was by artificial pneumothorax: the gradual collapsing of the diseased lung by injections of nitrogen to allow it to rest and heal.

She became the first physician in the U.S. to adopt this treatment successfully. When she began its use in 1909, lung collapse was not generally used and faced a great deal of skepticism by the medical profession. But she successfully demonstrated full recoveries,

gave talks before medical societies, and published seminal articles in medical journals. She trained many of the physicians who later performed outstanding work in curing desperate cases.

Known locally as "Bug Hill" after the tubercule bacillus, Dr. Lapham's sanatorium closed when it burned on January 13, 1918. She left for France and Czecho-Slovakia to head Red Cross missions during World War I.

In 1920 she returned to the U.S. to conduct research

work at Johns Hopkins University and served as the first woman president of the American Thoracic Society. In 1926 she retired to St. Augustine, Florida, but continued to summer in Highlands until her death at age 75 in 1936.

There are visitors to Highlands today whose parents or grandparents came to Dr. Lapham's sanatorium in their twenties and thirties on stretchers expecting to die but lived into their eighties and nineties. Between 1908 and 1912 her technique of collapse therapy resulted in full recoveries for an astonishing 240 advanced and hopeless cases in Highlands.

After the sanatorium burned, Dr. Lapham's trained nurse, Bernie Durgin, moved 25 of the tent-houses to her family property on Chestnut Street, where she continued to run a treatment

center until the early 1930s. The last of those tent houses is preserved at the Highlands Historic Village, where the N. C. Highway Marker will be installed and where Dr. Lapham's life and work are documented in the archives. You'll be amazed at how tiny she was to fit into her dress on display at the Museum.



Mary E. Lapham, 1903

PRESIDENT’S LETTER MAY, 2018

Greetings from the Highlands Historic Village. You’ll notice that this term “Highlands Historic Village” is being used more and more when speaking of efforts to preserve Highlands history. We are so much more than a museum with over 4,000 cataloged artifacts, the Prince House with its new “Historic Register” designation, and the last remaining Bug Hill tent-house. Our goal is to continue making Highlands past a living history that will appeal to everyone from the 15 Kelsey Kids campers to the many old-time residents who still have memories and connections to our rich heritage.

We have great plans for the 2018 season! Welcome new board members Tommy Thompson and Dennis DeWolf. Welcome also Highlands native Tammy Lowe (see picture in this issue) as our expanded-hours docent and administrative assistant. I want to say welcome to Carolyn Patton, who has been assisting our archivist, Ran Shaffner, in cataloging and filing new artifacts (see picture in this issue). These new folks bring a spirit of energy to an already motivated board of directors.

We did receive approval from the N.C. Historical Markers Committee for a roadside marker to be erected in front of the Historic Village to pay tribute to Dr. Mary Lapham and her leading the way in successfully treating tuberculosis on the site where the Bug Hill tent-house now sits (see article in this newsletter).

Our stated goal for the year will involve a laundry list of over 15 items ranging from maintenance on a 140-year-old house to updating our exhibits to looking at ways to better utilize our space. Fortunately, our Board is so talented and brings so much to the table that I feel confident that most of this list can be accomplished.

Finally, all of this would be to no avail if we didn’t have wonderful supporters and interested visitors who stop by and make our efforts all worthwhile. To you, we say “Thanks.”

Osborne Oakley

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

- Osborne “Obie” Oakley, President
- Bill Edwards, Vice President
- Linda Clark, Treasurer
- Sally Caffery, Tommy Chambers, Linda David, Dennis DeWolf, Fran Leftwich, Erik Nielsen, Tommy Thompson, Bob Trevathan, and Judy Taylor.
- Ran Shaffner, Archivist and Ex Officio Director
- Carolyn Patton, Associate Archivist
- Tammy Lowe, Docent
- Fran Leftwich, Newsletter Editor
- Sandra Carlton, Corresponding Secretary

RENEW 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

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!



Tammy Lowe, Docent and Administrative Assistant

Carolyn Patton, Associate Archivist



GROUPS AND LANDSCAPING REPORT

The final phase of our hillside/bank landscaping project is complete. Cattails Landscaping finished installing the plants to fill out the sparse areas that remained. Cattails and I met with representatives of the Laurel Garden Club Grant Committee to explain a request for funds to accomplish our final phase. After much dialogue and some good recommendations from the ladies of that Committee, our request was subsequently granted.

The other main item of landscaping interest is the upcoming donation and installation of an automatic sprinkler system, which should make a huge difference in the longevity and health of all our hillside/bank plantings. Fred Gehrish, the Greens and Grounds Superintendent, has informed the HHS that Highlands Falls Country Club is donating an automated sprinkler system. Mr. Gehrish has further said he is very excited that Hunter Sprinkler Systems has offered not to only donate the sprinkler heads, etc., but also to provide a battery-powered automatic controller to manage our irrigation. This is GREAT news. Hunter has even volunteered to design the system for us. We are not sure of the scheduling yet, but hopefully it will be installed in the next month or so. Cattails and I will continue to water all the plants until the system is installed.

We at the HHS are very excited to watch our plants continue to mature and give our site a beautiful, native look to go along with our outstanding physical buildings.

—Bob Trevathan



KELSEY KIDS CAMP



Sally Thorne is the new Director of the Kelsey Kids Camp which is scheduled June 25-29, 2018. Sally has put a great deal of effort and planning for this year’s camp with the theme “Appreciate the Land.” The emphasis for the campers will be that Highlands came to be through the foresight of two men Kelsey and Hutchinson who put a tremendous effort into bringing a railroad to the town. Businesses of all types began through necessity, but the most enduring of all pursuits was the appreciation of the land itself. The campers will hike across Highlands, seeing some of the original structures, learning about the inhabitants, many of whose descendants still live in Highlands. An incredible list of host instructors, Dr. Gary Wein of the Land Trust Organization and Sonia Carpenter of the Highlands Biological Station have been scheduled to speak.



The Vittles of Summer 2018

This will be the second season that the Highlands Historical Society will present “The Vittles of Summer” fundraisers that connect the participants with good food and drink, and stories that provide a bit of Highlands history. Below are our events for the upcoming season:

- (1) Moonshine At Meritage
 Wednesday, June 27, 2018
 6:30 PM
 \$125 Minimum Donation

Did you know that the moonshiners of Highlands and those of North Georgia had a skirmish called “The Moccasin War”? Join a select group of 80, and hear Ran Shaffner, author of “The Heart of the Blue Ridge” tell this fascinating story. We’ll have a real still, a live moonshiner, maybe a banjo too! Sip some “shine”, enjoy a full bar, fine wine, and locally sourced Appalachian dinner.

- (2) Big Hats & Bow Ties
 Sullivan Home, Kettle Rock
 Sunday, August 19, 2018
 Brunch 12:30 PM - 2:30 PM
 \$100 minimum donation

Don your finery and enjoy this flapjack and Bloody Mary party, just like the one Annie Linn Armor used to have in the 1950’s. This is a repeat event from last year, and one that sold out in four days. Ann and Claude Sullivan’s view from Kettle Rock is astonishing and a great way to spend a Sunday afternoon! Be one of the lucky 100 to participate!

- (3) Highlands & Hollywood
 Thursday, September 6, 2018
 Highlands Country Club
 6:30 PM
 \$150 minimum donation

Walk the red carpet and celebrate Highlands connection to Hollywood. This year we feature the film, “The Four Seasons” (with Alan Alda and Carol Burnett), part of which was filmed right here in Highlands. The film crew actually burned a house down! You’ll hear all about it at this party, which kicks off our 8th Dahlia Festival, held at The Civic Center on Saturday, September 8, 2018. This is a fun cocktail party with premier wines, mixed drinks and heavy hors d’oeuvres.

Reservations to the above events may be made on our website: www.highlandshistory.com. Or email Kim Daugherty at gatorsinparadise@gmail.com or Kathy Ward at kathyward0426@aol.com. Come join the fun, and learn some history about our beautiful Highlands!

–Judy Taylor, Vittles Chair 2018

THE EIGHTH ANNUAL DAZZLING DAHLIA FESTIVAL

The eighth Annual Dazzling Dahlia Festival will be held Saturday, Sept. 8, at the Highlands Civic Center. Mark your calendars to bring your flowers or come enjoy the flowers and the speaker or come and purchase a beautiful arrangement for your home. The funds raised by the Dahlia Festival go to support the Highlands Historical Society, the Prince House, and the Kelsey Kids Camp. Check our website highlandshistory.com under the Event Calendar tab for further information.





**In fond memory of
 Jim Askew
 1936-2018
 and his 1st Place
 Collarette at last
 year's Dahlia
 Festival**