

MOUNTAIN HERITAGE

The Gilmer County Genealogical Society, Inc.

December 1, 2017

Volume 5, Issue 4

ELLIJAY IN THE PAST

By Rebecca Burrell

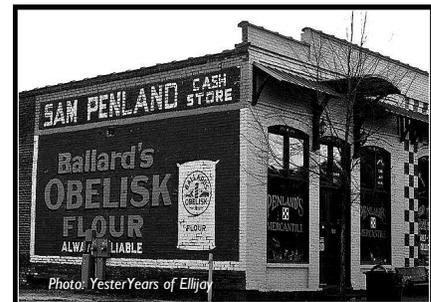
Life for us was routine when I was a child. Daddy usually worked 5 days a week on a public job. Mama stayed home looking after the kids and the housework, cooking a big breakfast before getting us off to school on the bus, and then cooking our supper when we returned at the end of the day. She set aside certain days for the different jobs such as washing and ironing our clothes and for mopping and cleaning and so on.

On Saturday night, Sunday and Sunday night and lots of nights and days during revival season we would be at church.

Major changes in our routine had to be made for hog killing day; garden plowing, planting, hoeing, harvesting, and canning; berry picking; sewing; and wood chopping.

Saturday was the day we all loaded in the car and headed to town. Our first stop was usually Ernest Silvers' Service Station (where Bob Worley's insurance office is now located) for gas, oil, and car service.

We would shop at the clothing and shoe stores such as Reba and Ermel Wright's, Roy Rackley's, Richard and Elsie Eller's, Parks' Dress Shop with Mrs. Goldie Clayton, the Reece's, the Penland's, and on occasion Mrs. Maggie and Louie's Toggery where I remember getting a red cashmere topper once - they must have had a really big sale that day! The dime store in the area of the present Times-Courier office was also a weekly stop.



Cox Drug Store

Suffering from a cough or cold? The name Rexall on cough and cold needs is your assurance of safe, sure, pure products . . . products which will bring you pleasant, effective relief from cold discomforts. Rexall products include Cherrrosote, Cherry Bark and Rexillana Cough Syrups, Aspirods Cold Capsules, Quick-Rub (Chest-rub) Puretest Aspirin Tablets, and Rex-Seltzer Effervescent Tablets.

Don't forget to bring your prescription to Cox Drug Store. A Registered Druggist will fill it as your Doctor writes it.

Photo/Ad: Times-Courier, March 3, 1949

The Cox Drug Store on the square, now an antique store, was visited often - will I ever taste another Coke like the ones served there at those little round tables with the curvy metal chairs or on the stools at the fountain?

While the rest of the family shopped, Daddy went to the City Barber Shop. When we got a haircut, we'd go see Mrs. Estelle Davis down on River Street, where Mama got her perms with a very weird looking contraption on her head. (Her location was the parking lot between restaurants.)



ELLIJAY IN THE PAST
-continued-

Andy's Jewelry is now closed, but was located on River Street next door to Parks' Dress shop. Only on rare occasions did we shop there. Santa probably got my portable typewriter and my 2 pieces of Samsonite luggage there. Across the street was the Times-Courier office, with its peculiar smell, where we'd stop in yearly to renew our subscription for the paper. Green's had a café on the corner and Huff's had a drug store. Wright's store was beside Huff's. The Byrds had a small café beside the City Barber Shop.

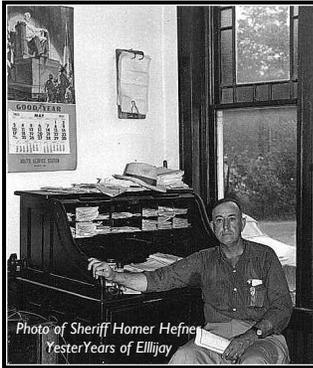


Photo of Sheriff Homer Hefner
YesterYears of Ellijay

When we'd be waiting in the car and getting rowdy, Mama would try to scare us into quietening down when Sheriff Hefner would walk down the street. (Little did I know then that one day he would be my "Pop" when I married his grandson Kem.)

The Bank of Ellijay was beside Cox's Drug Store (later Starnes, then Thomas & Hall, now closed.) It later became the fabric store where Mrs. Floy Tankersley and Mrs. Garland sold us lots of goodies for Home Ec. Projects (remember the apron, the blouse, the gathered skirt?) and fabric for me to sew into dresses for my sisters and myself.

I remember seeing pretty Mary Jane Weeks working in the Georgia Power office. Bowen Qualls had a clothing store on N. Main. Harry Puckett had a 5 & 10 on down the street at one time. A highlight of 3rd grade was being allowed to walk up the street from the school to eat lunch at the Busy Bee Café. Also in 3rd grade, the class went uptown to the theater to see a movie. Being a preacher's kid, theaters were taboo, but a classmate paid my way and I did go.

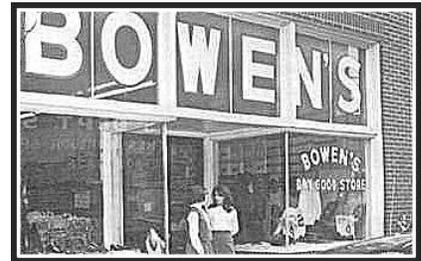


Photo: YesterYears of Ellijay



Mrs. Jewell Burnette
1969 Southwestern School Yearbook
Johnny Davis

Drs. James and John O'Daniel had an office upstairs on N. Main Street. One of them was supposed to attend Mama at my birth, but I arrived before they could be summoned from town to our home. Mrs. Jewell Burnette, who was a midwife, was there to help in the delivery while her husband went to get the doctor.

Dr. Feagan, the dentist, was also located upstairs in the area. I remember screaming very loudly while in his chair. Dr. Ed Watkins' office was on Dalton St. where the library was once located, now Dalton State College. He really had some bad tasting medicine. Mrs. Wood, the public health nurse, was located upstairs in the courthouse. She gave us our first immunizations, again invoking screams. Our later health care was provided by Dr. Burdine, Dr. Watkins, and Dr. Berry with their able assistants Mrs. Addie Holt, Ms. Mae Bennett, Ms. Jo Dover, and the svelte Mrs. Esther Hefner, among others.



ELLIJAY IN THE PAST

-continued-

We did our grocery shopping at Wright's, Whitaker's, C & K, Red Dot, and Reece's and Penland's for feed and seed. We got oil from the company out from the depot behind Jarrett Cemetery and coal from the Wests.



There were a number of hardware and furniture stores in town back then, including "Dink" Waters', where Kem and I first started to establish our credit after we were married by purchasing a portable TV and stand, and in a few months added about 3 rooms of furniture. I don't believe there was one antique store in the whole town!

Rebecca "Becky" Burrell is a native of Gilmer County, the daughter of Hoyt and Beuna Keener Hales. She is a graduate of Gilmer High School and married her high school sweetheart Kemuel Burrell. She has two sons, Tim and Greg, and three grandchildren, Savannah, Chandler, and Braxton. Becky is a retired Licensed Practical Nurse and now occupies her time with traveling, reading, sewing, genealogy, and Words with Friends.



MEMBERSHIP DUES REMINDER

GCGSI is a non-profit all volunteer organization whose aim is to promote and preserve family history. Our goal is to have all necessary tools available in the Gilmer County Library's Genealogy Room to help you in your search. We also encourage donations of family histories for preservation. We invite you to join us in our effort to attain our goal. The Membership Drive began at the November meeting for the 2018 Calendar year. Please note that First Family Membership covered the GCGSI membership for the year that you joined First Families. If you joined the First Family in 2016, your membership to GCGSI will be due by January 2018.

MEMBERSHIP:

PATRONS: \$50 CORPORATE: \$100 SPONSOR: \$250 BENEFACTOR: \$500

Annual Dues: Single \$10 Family \$15 (everyone living in same household) \$5 Student

(If you are unable to attend an upcoming meeting, please visit our website at <http://www.gcgis.org/membership.htm> for a membership form and mailing information.)

Thank you for your support!



THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Sylvia Johnson

Starting in January of 2018, we will hold Beginning Genealogy Classes for our members. They will be held on the first Friday of the month from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. We will not publicize these to the public. The Board felt there was enough interest within our membership to try this. John Davis and I will be presenting the classes and will be using the same workbook that was used in a previous Genealogy 101 class. We will also demonstrate how to use Ancestry.com. The focus of our monthly meetings is history of the area and many other topics of local interest, and we do not often discuss genealogy. This will give our membership an added opportunity to create their family tree. Our research assistants are available on Fridays to help those who are researching their roots in Gilmer County and surrounding areas. This will help those who are not from this area begin their research.



I will continue to make appointments for those who need help understanding their DNA results. I will primarily do this on Fridays at the Gilmer County Library Genealogy Research Room, but will also come in on a Saturday or late afternoon for those who work. You may contact me either via email: carolinaandbuddy@yahoo.com, or via phone. My cell phone number is 770-722-3658 and my home phone is 706-636-4671. Contact me if you want to meet or if you just have a question. There is the possibility of having a group get-together once a month to help each other with DNA results and share resources. Please let me know if this group is something you may be interested in.

On October 28, 2017, Becky Burrell and I attended an all-day meeting of Genealogy Groups from around the state at the Georgia Archives in Morrow, Georgia. This was organized and facilitated by the Georgia Genealogical Society. This organization has a lot of resources available to us including webinars on different subjects. By having our Gilmer County Genealogical Society join the Georgia Genealogical Society these webinars are available to us. We are looking at the possibility of viewing a live one in June or July in the evening since we normally do not have meetings; or if we find a topic of interest from a past webinar, we can also view those. The Georgia Genealogical Society can also provide speakers for us. We were very pleased to find this valuable resource. While we were there we had a brief tour of the Georgia Archives and the National Archives that are located next door. They were very easy to locate, and a possible field trip for this upcoming summer would be a good idea if there is interest.

I personally want to thank everyone who has helped me with my first year as president. We have so many people who volunteer to help in so many ways. It takes a lot of work to make this genealogy society a success. Thank God for this wonderful place where we live.

THANKS FOR A GREAT YEAR!
Sylvia



FOURTH QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS, 2017

By Rebecca Burrell

SEPTEMBER 14 MEETING

Mr. Tom Cox was the speaker for this well-attended meeting. His presentation was “Before The Cherokee,” and he spoke about colonization before the Cherokee and Creek were here.



SPECIAL SEPTEMBER 30 EVENT



Georgia genealogy researcher and columnist Kenneth Thomas, Jr. was our guest speaker for this special event. He spoke of the multiple ways that DNA can be used to further one’s interest in accurately documenting a family lineage. The meeting was well attended and very informative.



FOURTH QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS, 2017
-continued-

OCTOBER 12 MEETING

Authors Ren and Helen Davis presented the program for our October meeting. They spoke about the lasting legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps, a work-relief program instituted by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Work done by the CCC in our area is evident in Fort Mountain, Vogel, and Kennesaw Mountain State Parks.



Photo provided by the authors.

NOVEMBER 9 MEETING



Sandy Lyons

Gilmer County Veteran and Historian Sandy Lyons was our guest speaker for the regular November meeting. We enjoyed having him speak to us. His topic was “The Making of the Veteran’s Memorial Bridge: Idea to Dedication.” Mr. Lyons was the driving force behind the building of the Veteran’s Memorial Bridge and Park.



Guest Speaker Sandy Lyons and member Linda Wolfe discuss his books.



CCGSI's Donations to the Lions Club White Christmas Program.



HOW 19TH CENTURY WOMEN WERE TAUGHT TO THINK ABOUT NATIVE AMERICANS

From dailyjstor.org



*Portrait of a Young Choctaw Woman, 1850
via Wikimedia Commons*

What did nineteenth-century Americans know about Native Americans? For years, scholars have focused on stereotypes of indigenous Americans as brutal and sadistic—depictions that dominated press portrayals and that reverberate in culture to this day. But a look at these portrayals with an eye on gender reveals a slightly different story, writes Linda M. Clemmons—one that suggests that Native American women were portrayed as equal with their white sisters.

Clemmons draws her conclusions from the women's magazines that proliferated during the nineteenth century. These publications often contained depictions of Native Americans that suggest "a public fascination with a people who were believed to have vanished from public scrutiny." Through captivity narratives and domestic love stories, these magazines experimented with a stereotype of the Indian woman that countered the one assigned to men.

Native American women's moral natures were celebrated in stories of their self-sacrifice and submission, and their beauty was described at length.

Native American women were depicted as attractive, desirable, and pious. Interestingly that beauty was one that depicted nineteenth-century beauty ideals for white women: light skin, carefully groomed hair, and a thin and shapely body dressed in popular colors.



HOW 19TH CENTURY WOMEN WERE TAUGHT TO THINK ABOUT NATIVE AMERICANS

-continued-

“The writers focused on physical attributes that linked (white and Native American) women together, rather than on their heritage,” Clemmons notes. The Native American women that white women encountered in women’s magazines were, in a sense, white women.

This fictitious Native American woman was also morally upstanding. Narratives focused on her superior housekeeping, her fierce devotion to her children, her piety and self-sacrifice. But how exactly did she gain these virtues? Clemmons identifies two conflicting theories: speculation that Native American women learned their values from their natural surroundings, another that they were transmitted through contact with missionaries and white settlers.

Native American men were another story. Repeatedly portrayed as violent, ruthless, and cruel, they reflected nineteenth-century sexual, racial, and colonial fears. These portrayals reflected popular values by suggesting that ruthless Native American men could be tamed by civilization or the tempering influence of a woman.

It would be easy to cast these gendered portrayals of indigenous women in a positive light, but for Clemmons, they ended up hurting Native Americans more than they helped. By comparing white and Native American women, white Americans justified forced assimilation, the denial of native traditions, and the theft of native land. “While the articles portrayed women in a positive light according to the criteria of the day,” she concludes, “they simultaneously created a fictional Native American woman, divorced from her cultural heritage and male counterparts and dependent on the white population for her identity.” Making over native women in white women’s image might have been a seductive narrative strategy, but in reality it may have well hastened the decimation of real-life Native Americans.

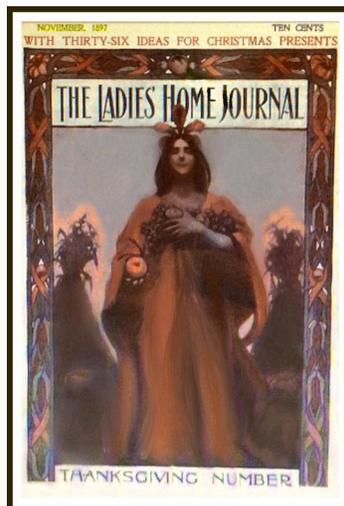


Photo: *The Ladies' Home Journal* - November, 1897
googlebooks



JEWELL'S HOME REMEDIES

By Gladys Spivey

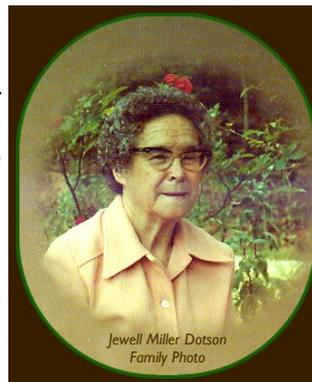
Author's Note:

Jewell Miller Dotson was born January 16, 1915 to parents Ray and Emily Sanford Miller. She grew up in the Great Depression and learned early on the importance of being self-sufficient. She only completed the third grade, but in my mind's eye was a genius. In those days there was not an emphasis on education, especially for women. Working on the farm was the priority to survive.

Jewell was taught early on how to use the gifts of nature to treat medical issues. In that time doctors were few and far between, and often there was not enough money to go see a doctor. Jewell could walk into a field or forest and name plants that could be used for medicinal purposes. She could also tell what plants were edible and what plants were dangerous or deadly if consumed.

It seemed that Jewell had a green thumb and could grow anything. She maintained a garden until the age of 87 from which she preserved some for the winter and shared most with her neighbors. In the winter months, she had her quilting frames hanging from the ceiling where she quilted many beautiful quilts that are probably still used in the community today.

Not only was Jewell an herbalist, she was a one-of-a-kind "Mountain Woman" and my Mom.



Jewell Miller Dotson
Family Photo

Sore Throat

Blackberry leaves for sore throat. Pick leaves, wash. Pour boiling water over leaves and let steep. Cool. Gargle with liquid.

Swab with turpentine. (For any turpentine remedy, make sure it is made completely from pine resin with no additives.)

Gargle with warm salty water.



Headache

Scrape potato and place on paper bag. Put bag on forehead and secure with rag or scarf.

Chest Cold

Mustard plaster. Crush mustard seeds and mix with lard. Place on cloth and secure to chest.

Make a tea from rabbit tobacco.

Earache

Blow pipe smoke into ear.

Scrape juice from a cabbage stalk and pour into ear.

Drop a few drops of warm sweet oil in ear.





JEWELL'S HOME REMEDIES

-continued-

Whooping Cough



Drink mare's milk. When we had whooping cough, Dad went to Penland's farm and milked a mare and we drank the milk. Horehound candy is also good for whooping cough. Mom had horehound plants and she made a tea from plants, added sugar, and made candy.

Rickets

Take cod liver oil according to directions on the bottle.

Diarrhea

Take a saucer of white lightning and light on fire to burn off alcohol. Drink. Paregoric.

Gas

Put a small amount of soda on a teaspoon in a small amount of water. Drink.

Stomachache

Make tea from Gall of the Earth and drink a small amount. (Gall of the Earth is a plant that has a big bulge on the plant and a bitter root.) Wash root and boil a short time to make tea.



Swelling of Legs

Make a tea from chestnut leaves. Drink a small amount at a time.

Congestion

Place Pinetro or Vicks salve in bucket of hot water. Cover head with blanket and breathe the steam.

Colic

Tie an Asafitia bag around neck. If you can stand the smell it will probably cure the colic. Paregoric for babies and kids. Take according to directions. Rub warm Castor Oil around baby's navel.

Female Problems

Make tea from Witch Hazel. Drink a small amount.

Bee Sting

Rub snuff on area stung.

To Cleanse Body

Put a tablespoon of sulfur in syrup in the spring. Don't get wet. If you do, your teeth will fall out.



JEWELL'S HOME REMEDIES

-continued-

Muscle Aches and Pains

Turpentine, Camphor Gum mixed with whiskey, Watkins Liniment, British Oil. Rub on aching muscles.



Wound Cleanser

Use clean white rag and rub turpentine, lamp oil (kerosene) on wound

Croup

Rub Save The Baby on chest.

Leg Cramps

Place 2-3 drops of quinine on teaspoon of sugar and swallow.

Female Cramps

Cardui. Use as directed.

Immune System

Mom made us eat three messes of poke sallet every spring. It was supposed to keep us from catching any kind of disease.

Burns

Linseed oil was used for burns. Rub the oil on the burn.

A paste of soda and lard will stop the pain. This is what Mom did when I pulled the coffee pot off the table and poured the coffee on my hand.



Sore Eyes

Wash out with Yellow Root tea. (Yellow Root grows on creek banks.)

Babies with Hives

Make tea from fodder. Fodder is the blades of corn that has been dried in the sun. It is also used for feeding the animals in winter.

Ground Ivy Tea. Ground Ivy is a ground cover that grows in the mountains.

Alder burrs were used for hives. Gather the brown burrs and make a tea.

Bloody Flux (Bloody Diarrhea)

Dig Goldenrod. Clean the roots and make tea.

Canned blackberry juice is also good, or use blackberry root to make tea. Wash root and cover with boiling water. Let steep for 10-15 minutes.



JEWELL'S HOME REMEDIES
-continued-

Babies with Insomnia

Make a tea from catnip and have babies drink.

Constipation

Swallow a teaspoon of castor oil if you can.
Dilute a teaspoon of Epsom salts in a glass of water. Drink.
Use Black Draught according to directions on bottle.
For babies, use Fletchers Castoria according to directions.

Foot Punctured with Nail

Get a wool rag. Place in a steel bucket and set on fire. Make the rage smolder so there will be a good smoke. Hold foot over the smoke for awhile.

Nosebleed

Read Bible verse - Ezekiel: Chapter 16, Verse 6.



Baby Teething Pains

Put rabbit foot around its neck.

Warts

Rub warts with a dirty dishrag. Hide the dishrag where nobody can find it.

Worms

Place head of garlic in clean white cloth and crush. Squeeze out juice. Put juice on a little sugar in teaspoon and swallow.

Female Nerves

Lady Slipper tea. Don't know which part of the plant that was used. I just remember hearing Mom say that was what was used.

Sprains, Cuts, and Bruises

Use Balm of Gilead and Mutton Tallow Salve on ailment, **externally only.**

Recipe is as follows:

6 Balm of Gilead buds

2 tablespoons mutton tallow

Heat buds and tallow in a pan, mashing buds while cooking. Strain mixture before completely cool. Put in jars. The salve will last for years and will stay clear.





DNA ROADS STILL BLOCKED!

By Sylvia Johnson

Editor's Note: This article is an update of a column in the September edition of Mountain Heritage: DNA Builds New Brick Walls. In that article, the author describes the use of DNA to attempt to establish a genealogical connection to researcher Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr. Mr. Thomas was the guest speaker for the GCGSI Special Event in September. Referenced in this article is the author's Cousin Edie, featured in her story in the June edition of Mountain Heritage: Choosing a DNA Testing Company (Mama's Hands.)

Well, September 30, 2017's Special Event came and went along with guest speaker Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr, well known genealogist! His mother, Mrs. Louise Brooks Thomas, and I still do not know how we are related even though we do have some new clues. Everyone enjoyed Ken's much anticipated visit to the Gilmer County Genealogical Society and we had a very good turnout. He came early and toured the roundabout and got caught in a goat festival of some sort. He said he had expected this to be a quiet little town. He had excellent handouts which will be valuable to newcomers to DNA. I have offered to help anyone who would like to meet with me individually. My phone numbers and email address are in the President's Corner.



*Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr.
From GCGSI Special Event
Photo: Barbara J. Dover*

One thing that was surprising to a lot of the attendees is that your ethnicity shown in Ancestry.com's DNA results is not always the same as Family Tree DNA's results. I actually transferred my raw data between the two companies and they gave me different information. By the way, after you transfer your raw data over to FTDNA, in order to get the full information, with the Chromosome Browser, etc, there is now a \$19 charge. It is well worth that to get the features of FTDNA. It is still less expensive than retesting at \$79 and you have the new information in 48 hours. You can transfer raw data from 23 and Me and from Ancestry.com to Family Tree DNA (FTDNA) but not the other way around. All of the potential Cherokee Princesses find that DNA is passed from the Female Line so don't be surprised when you don't show any Native American in your report.

Also, FTDNA is the only company that has the YDNA test which test the male line – father, son, father, son. This is the update on the search for my connection with Mrs. Louise Thomas. We found a Johnson male to do the Y37 test to try to get information on my great grandfather William Johnson (b. SC 1814) before he came to Georgia and married my great grandmother in 1854. A third cousin in Seattle agreed to do the cheek swab and Third Cousin Edie (who thinks my hands look like her mother's) and I paid for the test. Of course, Hurricane Harvey hit Houston before he could send his test back. FTDNA's labs are on the eighth floor in Houston and weathered the storm, therefore no samples were lost and everyone is back at work. The results are in and we are now hot on the trail of a mutual cousin to Cousin Edie, Mrs. Louise, and me and we hope we have more news by the next issue of the newsletter.

In the meantime, Kenneth H Thomas, Jr., has received an award of "Excellence in Documenting Georgia's History" for his column in the Atlanta Journal/Constitution for 40 years. Congratulations to Ken!



FIRST FAMILIES OF GILMER COUNTY

By Joy Childress

The First Families program is designed to honor the pioneers who settled in Gilmer County in 1840 or before and to recognize the descendants who become members of this program. We encourage anyone who is directly descended from early settlers whose names appear on the 1840 or any prior Gilmer County Census to apply. Discovering your Gilmer County roots can be challenging and exciting. Your research can serve as a source of information for generations to come. An approved applicant receives a certificate and pin acknowledging this Gilmer County ancestor. Applicants are not required to currently reside in Gilmer County. For more information, please visit our website at: <http://www.gcgsl.org/firstfamilies/html>.

First Families Committee: Gladys Spivey, Patricia Henson, John Davis, Brenda Cochran, Sylvia Johnson, and Joy Childress.



Logo: Leslie Barker Thomas

FIRST FAMILY MEMBERS ADDED DURING THE FOURTH QUARTER

NEW MEMBERS	ANCESTORS
Richard Gray Holt	Larkin Holt
Deborah Miller Wilcox	John Whitener (Whitner on 1840 Census)

**Please note that First Family Membership covered the GCGSI membership for the year that you joined First Families. If you joined the First Family in 2016, your membership to GCGSI will be due by January 2018.*

GCGSI CHRISTMAS GATHERING



*Brenda Cochran and GCGSI Christmas Tree
Photo courtesy of Michael Andrews/Times-Courier*

The annual GCGSI Christmas Gathering will be on Thursday, December 14 at 11:00 a.m. in the Coosawattee Shrine Club Lodge at 102 Shrine Club Drive.

This gathering is an opportunity for us to celebrate our love for family, history, and genealogy and each other during the holiday season. Bring your friends and family as we again enjoy this time of fellowship. Ham and fried chicken will be provided by GCGSI and all are asked to bring your wonderful side dishes and desserts to share. Please bring a recipe card of your dish if you would like to share that as well. Merry Christmas!



RESEARCH CORNER

By Rebecca Burrell

New members Thomas Davis, Jr. and Theresa Cantrell Davis are researching surnames, Davis and Cantrell. We are happy to have them join us.



New member Linda Lawrence is interested in her Native American heritage. Welcome, Linda.

Sherri Graham Schwartz is looking for photographs of her grandparents, Lenora Miller Bates and William Poley Bates.

Gwen Lopez gwen_l@msn.com, a descendant of Jesse J. Holden, has portraits of Jesse J. Holden and Asbury Holden (originals in fragile condition and reproductions). Contact her if you are interested in these portraits.

Anyone who is interested in helping the research team, meet us at the library at 10:00 a.m. on the last Friday of the month unless the library is closed.

GCGSI Research Team: Rebecca Burrell, Sylvia Johnson, Susan Noles, and Gladys Spivey.

2018 GCGSI Executive Board-Elect

By Gladys Spivey, Recording Secretary



At the regular monthly meeting on November 9, Gladys E. Spivey, the chairperson for nomination committee presented a list of nominees for officers for 2018. Past President John Davis asked for nominations from members present. There were no additional nominations submitted from members. The list of nominees for 2018 were approved by members.

The 2018 Executive Board is listed below. Officers will be sworn in at the Christmas luncheon on Thursday, December 14.

President: Sylvia Johnson

First Vice President and Program Chair: Donna Lehr

Second Vice President and First Family Chair: Susan Noles

Treasurer: John Davis

Corresponding Secretary and Publicity: Rebecca Burrell and Sherry Blomeley

Recording Secretary and Historian: Gladys E. Spivey

Additional Chairs for 2018:

Publications Chair: Barbara J Dover

Events Chair: Rob Hicks

Membership Chair: Mary Hicks



FIRST FAMILIES BOOK

By Karen Titus

For all interested in the First Families of Gilmer County project:

We have such good news! Brenda Cochran, John Davis, and Karen Titus met with our book editors on October 21st and I am so excited about how the book is shaping up. There are quite a few chapters finished and what we have seen so far is beautiful! There have been trials and errors in the layout and re-thinking and negotiating submissions that have been sent by FF members and how to deal with materials as you can imagine. The editors wrestled with family tree formats and how to get trees from different descendants of one original ancestor to look good on the page. Our original thoughts did not work as one family in particular had enough descendants to fill 26 pages in the book.

The editors really dug deep into their creative wells and came up with some amazing formats with great family trees as well as pictures and stories about these families descended from the original settlers of Gilmer County. Brenda Cochran and Gladys Spivey have spent hours and hours researching, double checking facts and then doing quality control when the final material is ready. Along the way we have had project managers drop out leaving very few of us to manage a great many submissions. As a result, our timeline to publication has been pushed back. I am not concerned about that as the committee determined from the beginning that we wanted to produce a quality, historically correct history of the First Family members. We firmly believe that is exactly what we will achieve. Sadly, some families have decided not to participate with anything other than their originally submitted family tree. I am very disappointed about this as I believe this would be an excellent way to share their family history with their descendants.

If you are a First Family member who has NOT contributed photos or family stories, please consider contacting me and we can help you make your family chapter a legacy for your descendants. My email address is katitus73@hotmail.com.

The end result is going to be a beautiful book we can all be proud of and share with all those who come after us. Personally, I can hardly wait to see the finished book.

Book Committee: Karen Titus, John Davis, Gladys Spivey, Patricia Henson, Tina Peavy, Brenda Cochran, Kathryn Watkins, and Sylvia Johnson.





WHY EARLY APPALACHIAN SETTLERS ORIGINALLY CELEBRATED CHRISTMAS IN JANUARY

From Appalachianmagazine.com

Ask any of the millions of children scattered throughout the Appalachian Mountains what day of the year Christmas is on and you will undoubtedly hear, “December 25th”. Everyone from Northern Alabama to the Katahdin Summit in Maine knows that it is on this date that Santa Claus comes to town. Interestingly, if you had been roaming the Appalachian hillsides only a few centuries ago, the answer to this same question would have produced a far different date: January 7.

To understand why the early inhabitants of Appalachia celebrated Christmas two weeks after December 25th, we must first jump back in time nearly a half-century before the birth of Christ and visit the Roman Empire. In the year 46 BC, Julius Caesar proposed a new calendar to be used throughout the entire Roman Empire — prior to this time, the land had been relying upon a convoluted system in which years ranged from 355 days to 383 days in length and had very little in common with the tropical year. Caesar proposed a 365-day year and changed the first date of the year to January 1st: and the modern-day calendar we still use today was birthed... or at least conceived. Caesar’s calendar, known as the Julian Calendar, was well received and even outlived the Roman Empire that created it.

By the time white settlers began exploring the “Alleghany Mountains” (old name for Appalachian Mountains), the Roman Calendar was serving as the predominant calendar throughout Europe, the settlements in the Americas and elsewhere. In the meantime, somewhere around the year 336 AD, December 25th began serving as a Christian observed holiday — eventually becoming known as “Christmas”, acting as a symbolic observance of Christ’s birth.

Unfortunately for the Julian Calendar, its flaws became so problematic that by the late-1500s, Roman Catholic Pope Gregory XIII felt that it was time to modify leap years and get things back on track with the astronomical calendar — this was primarily done so that the Easter holiday would be restored to the time of the year in which it was celebrated when first introduced by the early Church. Gregory’s revisions, which removed ten days from the calendar was accepted by Spain, Portugal, France and Italy on October 15, 1582, the date that succeeded October 4, 1582. In the centuries ahead, one by one, the nations of Europe followed suit, even protestant Great Britain and her American colonies in 1752.

Staunchly anti-Catholic, the fiercely independent Scots-Irish who had, by the mid-1700s, begun settling the Appalachians were adamantly opposed to the notion of embracing a new calendar, a new calendar invented by Catholics and adopted by some distant government on the far side of the ocean. The people of the mountains were unwilling to allow the government “to steal eleven days” from their lives. “Christmas had long been celebrated... a couple of weeks after the winter solstice, and many people were not willing to celebrate Christmas on an earlier date...” writes Tony Blair, of the *Mountain Eagle*. Thanks to being isolated from the rest of the nation, the pioneers of Appalachia continued “to celebrate Old Christmas 12 Days after the December 25th celebration date set by the new calendar.” The practice of celebrating “Old Christmas” in the Appalachian Mountains continued for generations.

Nearly all of the modern Christmas traditions we know today were born during the 1800s, and it was during this time that the sons of many of the Appalachian mountain folk surrendered to celebrating on December 25. Today, there remain a few holdouts who continue to celebrate “Old Christmas” in the Appalachian hills; however, they are a dwindling number. In another generation or two, celebrating “Old Christmas” will be just another forgotten part of Appalachian history.



HOLIDAY SEASON IN THE NORTH COUNTRY

By Donna Lehr

As Thanksgiving approaches, most of us can't help but let our minds drift back to the past where we enjoyed holiday meals with family and friends back home. Some of you are still lucky to be able to enjoy that special *someone's* apple pie, stuffing or mac and cheese! (By the way, only in the south is mac and cheese considered a vegetable!)



Sweeping Winter Away
Adrian Kaski
Virginia, MN

I grew up in northern Minnesota; about 100 miles south of the Canadian border near Fort Frances, Ontario. The snow would start sometime in late October. (Yes! October!) It would be so disappointing to have to wear our winter jackets and boots over the costumes that we had so carefully picked out. The mask worked two ways; as part of the costume that was now hidden and it also kept our face warm!

As Thanksgiving got closer, the menu was planned, silver was polished and the china dishes were inspected carefully. Because I am a girl, I was expected to set the table and help with the kitchen chores. Have you ever watched someone make a dish or bake bread? My grandmother was a good one for scooping flour and sifting it into the bowl. I'd ask how much she put in and she would open her palm and say, "About that much." The same was true when adding salt or sugar to a dish. I know there were recipes written but that didn't seem to matter.

Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays were special; not only with the food that was only eaten once a year but catching up with family that you only saw on those occasions.

By this time, we usually had a couple of feet of snow on the ground, the outdoor ice skating rinks were in full use! Warm weather playgrounds became sheets of ice in the winter. The snow was packed around the edges that created a 6 foot wall of white fluff! It was great being on the end of a line of skaters when playing "crack the whip" and the last few people would end up in the snow bank! Our favorite place to skate at night was at the old Jefferson Elementary School about a block and a half away from home. The school had been closed for years and had a yellow and black "fallout shelter" sign on the front door. Everyone would be there! The teenager girls showed off for the boys and vice versa! The warm up "shack" was an old classroom with benches. The walls lined were with radiators where we could take off our jackets and get them dry. The middle of the floor was covered with a thick black rubber mat. Everybody walked around in their ice skates like they were walking barefoot.



HOLIDAY SEASON IN THE NORTH COUNTRY

-continued-

Once you came out of the warm up area, it was packed snow and then an icy hill to skate down onto the rink. It was either skate down the 5 foot hill or walk down through the snow next to it. Many times, the Bennick brothers would put us on their shoulders and skate down the hill. I think back to that and how we just trusted that they would not drop us! Those teenage boys were so strong! They were always at the head of the line when we played “crack the whip”.

Christmas vacation was always two weeks off from school. The temperatures usually stayed below 32 degrees. As kids, we didn't care. There were snowmobiles that needed to be ridden, guiding a flying saucer down an iced over slide at the golf course, enjoying a small downhill ski resort or cross country skiing, building a snow fort and ice fishing for the really hearty folks who use an auger to dig a hole into the ice which is usually about 5 feet thick and put their “shack” over the hole, add a few lawn chairs, drop a fishing line down in the hole and wait for the walleyes or northerns to bite! It's not for the people who don't like to be cold!

A lot of the fishermen would have campfires or grills on the ice where they would cook the fish while they were really fresh!

There is no feeling so strange as driving across a lake in the middle of winter! In some of the small communities, one of the fund raisers is to bet on what day the old “jalopy” would fall through the ice. That's a true story!

Our Christmas season was always white. The snow plows stayed busy every day because up north, life goes on no matter how much snow is on the ground. On a clear night, we would be able to look up at the northern sky and see the Aurora Borealis. It was like watching a madman paint the sky with brilliant colors. Since we were the last city before International Falls, there weren't any lights to hinder the view.

One of my favorite memories is to see the one of the “nicer” streets; Fifth Avenue South with the beautiful cast iron street lights with the big bulbs perched on the pedestal with snow flurrying around them. It always reminded me of the movie “It's a Wonderful Life” “

No, I wouldn't trade our geographic location to move up north. We love the south but would not trade any of the memories of living in the North Country of Minnesota. It's a great place to be from!

Happy Holidays to you and yours!
Donna Lehr



BULLETIN BOARD

By Donna Lehr

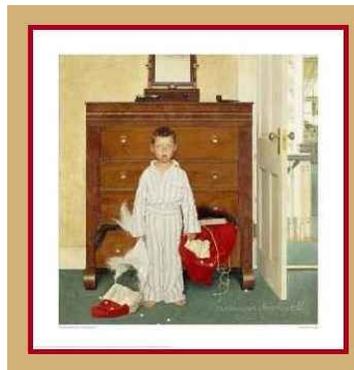
December 2017

- Thursday, December 14
GCGSI Christmas Gathering & Installation of Officers
11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Coosawattee Shrine Club Lodge
102 Shrine Club Drive; Ellijay, GA
- December 12-20 - Happy Hanukkah!
- December 25 - Merry Christmas!
- December 26-January 1 - Happy Kwanzaa!
- Genealogy Research Center Volunteers
Gilmer County Library
Fridays from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
December 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

January 2018

- January 1 - Happy New Year!
- Friday, January 5
Beginning Genealogy Class
Gilmer County Library - 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
- Thursday, January 11
GCGSI Monthly Meeting
Gilmer County Library - 2:00 p.m.
Speaker: Constance Martelia "Telia" Cunningham
(Ms. Cunningham is a member of 14 lineage and family societies including the Jamestowne Society, and Colonial Dames of the 17th Century. She will be speaking about the Midway Museum in Liberty County, Georgia's only colonial museum.)
- Genealogy Research Center Volunteers
Gilmer County Library
Fridays from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
January 5, 12, 19, 26

Mountain Heritage Newsletter
Published by Barbara J. Dover,
Gilmer County Genealogy Society, Inc.
Publication Chair



The Discovery by Norman Rockwell, 1956
(theartifice.com)

February 2018

- Friday, February 2
Beginning Genealogy Class
Gilmer County Library - 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
- Thursday, February 8
GCGSI Monthly Meeting
Gilmer County Library - 2:00 p.m.
Speaker: Brian Quinlan
(Mr. Quinlan is an author, historian, and Revolutionary and Civil War Battlefield war guide. He will be speaking about letters written during the Battle of Atlanta campaign.)
- February 14 - Happy Valentine's Day!
- Genealogy Research Center Volunteers
Gilmer County Library
Fridays from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
February 2, 9, 16, 23

This edition of the Mountain Heritage Newsletter is dedicated to the memory of members

H. Dean Reece.
(1938-2017)

Cecil Evans
(1926-2017)

and to the sister of member Branda Cochran
Faye Baker Burnett
(1917-2017)



MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!



We wish you a mer-ry Christ-mas, we wish you a mer-ry

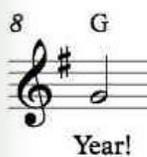


Photo courtesy of Erika Erickson



wish you a mer-ry Christ-mas and a hap - py New Year!

The Gilmer County Genealogical Society, Inc.
P. O. Box 919
Ellijay, GA 30540



The Gilmer County Genealogical Society, Inc.
P. O. Box 919
Ellijay, GA 30540

We're on the web!
www.gcgsi.org
Contact email: gcgs@etcmail.com

What Is Available Online?

- GCGSI Membership
- Book Order Form
- First Families Application
- 1834 and 1840 Census
- Genealogical Links
- Contact Information
- Officers

