

# MOUNTAIN HERITAGE

The Gilmer County Genealogical Society, Inc.

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## John Seth Hyatt, Texas Frontiersman

BY PATRICIA HENSON

He saw the advertisement on the posted flyer. The year was around 1860. The requirements for the job as advertised according to Samuel Hopkins Adams' book, *The Pony Express*, page 28, are as follows: "Be between 19 and 25 years - strong and healthy - weigh under one hundred and thirty pounds - be of good moral character - be able to read and write - and have previous experience with horses". It went on to say that it would pay one hundred



*John Seth Hyatt.*

*Picture submitted by Patricia Henson*

dollars a month, include food and lodging and that they would carry the mail ultimately from the eastern United States to California. The young man reading the advertisement thought to himself, "I can do that. I fit all the qualification." I am twenty-one years old, small, lean, and wiry and I have been on my own since I came to Texas from Georgia. He knew the job was dangerous. There were Indians, outlaws and the weather to contend with. All of this did not stop him. John Seth Hyatt, that young man, applied to be a mail rider and was accepted. He was told that way stations were to be situated every so many miles where the rider would stop, change horses, pick up his food and water and be on his way in two minutes. Each rider would travel for a specific number of miles, and then another rider would take the mail bag and continue on the journey. Adams' book further stated that all riders would be required to sign an oath that while they were employed they would not use profane language; not drink intoxicating liquors; not quarrel or fight with other employees; they would conduct themselves honestly, and be faithful of their duties. The *Midland Reporter-Telegram*, Midland, Texas, on the 24 October 1965 reported that John Seth, noted to be a daring rider and rated as an expert pistol shot, carried the mail from Fort Belknap, Texas to Fort Griffin, Texas for the entire length of the pony express existence. This is a distance of about 60 miles by today's standards.

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### Mountain Heritage Books Are Here!

These books are \$20 and available at the Gilmer County Library (ask the front desk to purchase). IF YOU ALREADY PAID FOR A COPY, YOU MUST contact Brenda Cochran at 706-635-7454 to pick up. If you paid for shipping, the book will be mailed to you. The library will not give out any pre-paid books.



## **John Seth Hyatt, Texas Frontiersman (Cont. from Pg. 1)**

However, with the coming of the Civil War, the completion of the railroads and telegraph lines the pony express mail program was closed for lack of funding and need.

John Seth was born in Reems Creek, Buncombe County, North Carolina on August 29, 1839 to George W. and Hettie Mahala O'Neal Hyatt. His great grandfather Hezekiah Hyatt moved to Burke County, North Carolina from Maryland around 1778 when he purchased "100 acres on Shedricks Creek". John Seth's grandfather, Shadrack Hyatt and his family were living in Buncombe County as early as the 1800 census and by Shadrack's death in 1845 he possessed over 800 acres of land in the Reems Creek and Ivy townships of Buncombe County. John Seth's family moved to Gilmer County, Georgia around 1845/46 where he lived with his parents, three brothers, Samuel, William Jesse, Peter Glenn and a sister Louise Elizabeth in the small village of Ellijay. Life was tough. As one person stated "it was a hard scrabble life". By the late 1840's most people still lived in log homes and raised the foods they needed to subsist on. The majority of residents listed their occupations as farmers or laborers, however, other occupations often listed were blacksmiths, gunsmiths, shoemakers, merchants, clerks, and owners of hotels/boarding houses. According to George W. Ward's book, *The Annals of Upper Georgia Centered in Gilmer County* on page 110 is the statement that in the very early days the city of Ellijay had five stores, a court house, and a jail with a population of 150. He further asserts that by the 1850 census Gilmer County, which had boundaries that reached from Talking Rock to the Tennessee/North Carolina lines, had a population of 1,396 families with a total "free" population of 8,240. Since Gilmer County did not have a great deal of prospects for employment and growth, John Seth at about age 20 left Georgia for the adventures and opportunities that existed in the frontier states of the western United States. He rode on horse back to Texas accompanying the wagon train of the Percy family from Gilmer County. Once there he continued on to the Oliver Loving Ranch near Weatherford, Parker Co., TX. It is assumed that he worked as a hired hand on the cattle ranch that ran over 1500 head of cattle to the market each year. This area was frontier in those days (1859) inhabited mostly by native Americans and the few hardy pioneers that were willing to tackle the hard life they led. It is assumed that it is from the Loving Ranch that John Seth moved on to the pony express rider job described above. After all the beginning of the route that he is reported to have ridden as a pony express rider ended only about ten miles from the Loving Ranch.

When the War of the Rebellion broke out, John Seth returned to his roots in Gilmer County, GA and on 12 May 1862 he joined the 65th Regiment of the Army of Tennessee for the Confederate States of America. John Seth's rank was Private when he entered, but he attained the rank of Captain before he mustered out 11 February 1865. In July 1864 Captain Hyatt was wounded in the leg during the battle of Kennesaw. When he realized he was going to be captured and taken prisoner, family lore states that he buried his sword and pistol rather than have to surrender them to General Sherman's forces. The battle of Kennesaw Mountain in which John Seth participated was one of the bloodiest in the civil war. Most of us cannot imagine how dreadful it was, however, the following passage from "The Battle

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## John Seth Hyatt, Texas Frontiersman (Cont. from Pg. 2)

of Kennesaw Mountain, The Perfect Pandemonium” by John Fowler, an Associate Professor of History at Kennesaw State University, seems to be a straightforward description of chaos and horror these soldier endured.

“Although twenty years had passed, Sam Watkins, a Confederate veteran, still vividly recalled the savage struggle for Cheatham’s Hill, the climax of the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain and one of the bloodiest days of the Atlanta Campaign: A solid line of blazing fire right from the muzzles of the Yankee guns . . . poured right into our very faces, singeing our hair and clothes....., the blinding smoke and stifling atmosphere filling our eyes and mouths, and the awful concussion (from the firing of nearby Rebel batteries) causing the blood to gush out of our noses and ears, and above all, the roar of battle, made it a perfect pandemonium. . . . When the Yankees fell back, and the firing ceased, I never saw so many broken down and exhausted men in my life. I was sick as a horse, and as wet with blood and sweat as I could be, and many of our men were vomiting with excessive fatigue, over-exhaustion, and sun stroke (July 1864); our tongues were parched and cracked for water, and our faces blackened with powder and smoke, and our dead and wounded were piled indiscriminately in the trenches. There was not a single man in the company who was not wounded, or had holes shot through his hat and clothing.”

After the War was over John Seth rode with a wagon train as far as Jefferson, Mississippi and according to family lore he walked the remaining 300 miles to Meridian, Texas. By 1868 he was in Stephenville, Texas. He is said to have “arrived driving six yoke of oxen”. In the 1870 census of Erath County, Texas he is found living in Stephenville in the William S. Keith’s hotel/boarding house. His occupation is listed as a merchant. Later that same year on December 27, 1870 he married Mary Cordelia Keith, daughter of William S. and Nancy Roper Keith at the family hotel on the northwest corner of the square in Stephenville. In the 1880 Erath County census, J.S. Hyatt and wife M.C. Hyatt are shown with three sons. At that time he was serving as County Clerk and he was also a banker. By the time the 1900 Erath County census was enumerated, John S. Hyatt was listed as a proprietor of the telephone system and Mary Cordelia was the mother of five children: daughters Roxy age 19, and Inez age 17 and sons Rosco age 15, Rolla age 11, and Ray age 9. The other children, Eugene, Walton, and Ed had moved on with their own families and lives. The Hyatt family moved to Midland, Texas in 1910 in time to be listed on the census where John , Mary Cordelia and sons Rolla and Ray were listed. Their home was listed as being located on Baird and Michigan Streets. In the 1920 census John and Mary Cordelia were the only individuals in their household. By this time their children had married and scattered to other areas of the country which included Texas, New Mexico, Wyoming, California, and Arizona. Their eclectic occupations included educator, merchant, banker, miner, telephone owner, and a photographer.



Rolla Walter Hyatt  
Picture submitted by Patricia Henson

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## John Seth Hyatt, Texas Frontiersman (Cont. from Pg. 3)



Back Row: Roxie, Gene, Inez?, Walton, Ed Front Row: Roscoe, John Seth, Mary Cordelia (Keith), Ibey  
Bottom: Turk, the dog, Rolla sitting on John's lap, Ray sitting on Carrie's lap. Picture submitted by Patricia Henson

The Hyatt family evidently enjoyed having numerous pets. In the family portrait taken in 1892 in Stephenville, Texas their dog Turk, thought to be a cattle herding dog, was included. They also had a myna bird that not only could talk but could sing. Dawn Hyatt Darling, a great granddaughter of John Seth and Mary Cordelia, stated the following story: "His name (the Mina bird) was Dickie and they called him Dickie-bird. My grandmother told me that Mrs. Hyatt (Mary Cordelia) loved to sing hymns while she was working and that Dickie learned to sing "The Old Rugged Cross" and could carry a tune and sing the words as well. He also had an uncanny habit of being able to embarrass the ladies of the house. Whenever someone came to the door and asked for either Mary Cordelia or Carrie, Dickie would say "She's out back, she's out back!" "Out back" was the euphuism for the outhouse and this was not what they wanted their visitors to know. Dawn did not know how long the bird lived but she got the impression that he was quite old. She further stated that he was buried next to John Seth but that his grave was unmarked. Also in one of his letters to my great grandfather, Peter Glenn Hyatt, John Seth mentions, "We have nine little chicks that

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## John Seth Hyatt, Texas Frontiersman (Cont. from Pg. 4)

“Gotch” wants to play with.” As to who or what “Gotch” was no one seems to know. With the family’s penchant for exotic pets, we have all enjoyed speculating about Gotch’s origins and who and/or what it was.

His granddaughter described John Seth in the following manner. “He was a tall erect man, wearing in later years, a silver moustache that gave him the appearance of “Mr. Texas”. She further stated that John Seth, was an educated man, justly proud of his beautiful penmanship and that he was “a civic minded progressive citizen, a business person, a merchant, a banker and he established the telephone system in Stephenville, Texas”. John Seth died of heart disease June 5, 1923 when he was eighty-four years old. At that time he was described as still erect, alert and an interesting man with many captivating stories of pioneer life in the wild west of the Texas frontier. It would have been a pleasure to have known this great grand uncle who had lived such an eclectic, fascinating, intriguing life on the cusp of the founding of the of the frontier of the United States.



## The President’s Desk

BY KAREN TITUS, PRESIDENT

The society has decided to gather information about the members of the First Families of Gilmer County and turn it into a book for future generations. Of course, we will be adding additional information to this in order to make it a fuller, richer history while recognizing some of our early settlers. A number of folks have agreed to be on the committee and we are thankful for their participation. Some live too far to attend meetings but have volunteered to edit or type or whatever they can contribute.

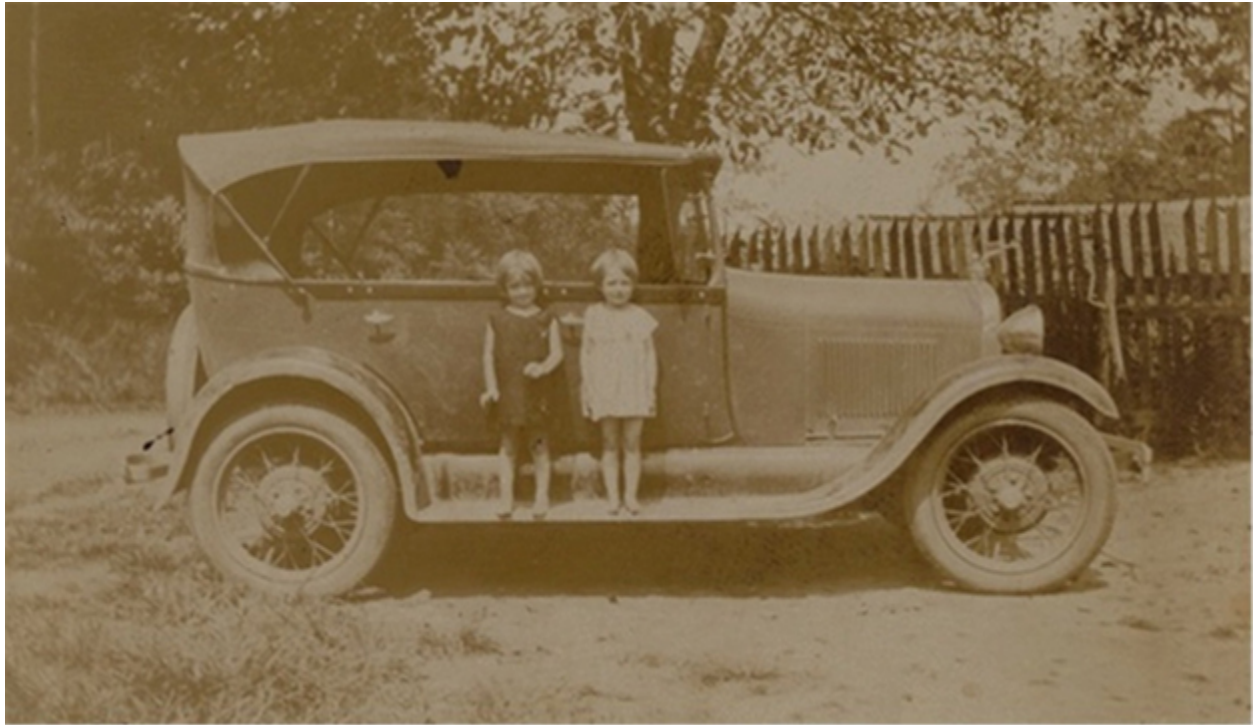


As for all descendants of the First Families, we are asking for a story of one individual or a family of your early ancestors or their homestead to include in the book. It will be helpful if in your research, you have determined where they settled in the county. Any photos will be especially appreciated. Remember, we are leaving a legacy of our ancestors to our descendants.



## A Look Back in Picture:

PHOTO SUPPLIED BY BRENDA COCHRAN



Gwendolyn M Crane & Cecil Cantrell, Dawsonville, GA

## New Research Files Online

BY KARLA DUKE, PUBLICATIONS CHAIR

GCGSI has posted some of our scanned Research files from the library to our website. You can now look at some of the files in the comfort of your own home!

The files added include:

- Church Minutes, Church History, Records and Cemetery Records
- School Records and Gilmer County Marriage Records
- Post Office Records and Cherokee Rolls

Check them out online at <http://www.gcgisi.org/Research.html>.



*James Cochran, 2013*



## Family Research Center

Susan Noles is researching the Bennett family (Marcus, specifically) who were originally from Haywood County, NC.

Marcus F. Bennett married Manerva in Gilmer Co. in 1882, but I cannot find his death date or where he is buried. The 1890 tax digest lists Manerva Bennett but not Marcus so I'm assuming he died before 1890.

Please email Susan at [susan@bobnoles.com](mailto:susan@bobnoles.com) if you have any information on Marcus Bennett. And/or his family.



Sara Bennett and Andrew Jackson Fore  
Picture submitted by Susan Noles

### About the Family:

Six of Hardiman & Permelia Young Bennett's offspring moved to the Mountaintown Area of Gilmer County around the middle of the 1840's.

They were:

- Mary (Polly) Bennett who was married to Benjamin H. Wood.
- Marcus F. Bennett who was married first to Mary (?) and secondly to Manerva Boen.
- Holliman Bennett who was married to Margaret Rogers.
- Sarah Jane Bennett who was married to Andrew Jackson Fore.
- James H. Bennett who was married to Lydia E. Harrison.
- Elizabeth (Betsy) Bennett who was married to Samuel Wood, brother of Benjamin Wood.

buried at Nine Mile Cemetery. Manerva Boen's son, Jesse and his family are buried at Nine Mile, too.

### Marcus F. & Mary Bennett's children's names:

- Thomas H. Bennett married Sarah M. Stephens in Gilmer Co. 1866
- Rawlin/Rowland/Rollin B. Bennett trying to prove if he married Nancy Crawford in Whitfield Co. 1861
- James A. Bennett married Permelia Loduski Spears
- Nancy M. Bennett
- Matthew C. Bennett married Elizebeth (Betty) McDowell in Bartow Co. 1871
- Margaret Bennett married Isaac Taylor in Murray Co. 1878
- John S. Bennett
- Newton Bennett married Emalie Boen in Gilmer Co. 1882

Thomas, Rawlin, and James served in the 60th Infantry from Gilmer Co.

Sarah Fore and James H. Bennett are

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## Family Research Center *(Continued from Pg 7)*

### Do You Know Them?

#### Cantrell Unknown:

The Picture to the right was submitted by Brenda Cochran. Do you know who this couple is?

Please contact Brenda at

[brenda@fstravelspecialists.com](mailto:brenda@fstravelspecialists.com) or  
706-635-7454.

Ann Schlemm is researching the  
Bishops, Chadwicks and Wades in  
Gilmer County from 1840-1870.

[annschl@aol.com](mailto:annschl@aol.com)

Dave Kingsella is researching the  
Dillards and Hutchins.

[davekingsella@msn.com](mailto:davekingsella@msn.com)

Evelyn Walters is researching the Cooper family.

[evennga@gmail.com](mailto:evennga@gmail.com)



## 2015 Reunion of the Dr. Pierre Chastain Family

All Descendants of Dr. Pierre Chastain are invited to the 2015 Annual Reunion in Lebanon, Tennessee on Oct. 16-18th.

If you or your ancestors have any of the following variations of Chastain as: Chasteen, Chastaine, Chasten, Castine, or Shastid then your are likely to be in the Pierre Chastain lineage.

The event schedule will include a visit to the home of Elisha Chastain and the annual banquet on Saturday night.

For more information or to register for the Reunion, please send a request for information to Carrie Chastain at [jdchastain@centurytel.net](mailto:jdchastain@centurytel.net) or 479-524-3461.







## Family Research Center *(Continued from Pg 8)*

Can you help with information about John Thompson? His descendant Mary Lois Ashley Barnes now lives in New Mexico and is searching for any information. John Thompson's daughter is Sarah Ann Thompson and she was first married to John Shelton. John Shelton took his young wife and expectant mother from TN to GA to be with her folks, while he went to the Civil War--he died in the war and Sarah and their daughter Mannie lived in GA. Seven years later Sarah married Alfred Riley and they had three children. Lois, is descendant from the second husband Alfred Riley. The main search is for John Thompson.

Please Call Lois: 575-763-7678

### Do You Know Them?

#### Picture Below: - Wedding Day:

This picture was found in the closet of the Genealogy Room at the Gilmer County Library. If you know who is in this picture, please email [gcsi@hotmail.com](mailto:gcsi@hotmail.com)





## Bulletin Board

### June:

- No June Meeting of GCGSI will be held.
- GCGSI serves! Seamless Summer School Lunch at the Library on June 16th and June 18th. (11-1) If you would like to help, let us know at [gcgsi@hotmail.com](mailto:gcgsi@hotmail.com)
- [Day Trip to the Cobb Marietta Library on June 24th](#) (See Page 13 for more info on this event).
- 26th - 75th Anniversary Celebration for the Gilmer County Library! Food and Fun!
- Research Assistants available on Fridays from 10 AM—3 PM in the Genealogy Research Center at the Gilmer County Library. Research Assistants for June: Becky Burrell, Gladys Spivey, Shirley Sluder and Leslie Thomas

### July:

- Library Closed on July 4, 2015. Parade and Fireworks in downtown Ellijay, Ga.
- No July Meeting of GCGSI will be held.
- Research Assistants available on Fridays from 10 AM—3 PM in the Genealogy Research Center at the Gilmer County Library. Research Assistants for July: Patricia Henson, and Betty Watson. Volunteers still needed for the 3rd, 10th and 24th of July.

### August:

- No August Meeting of GCGSI will be held.
- 13th - Annual GCGSI Picnic at ETC Pavillion beginning at 11 AM
- Research Assistants available on Fridays from 10 AM—3 PM in the Genealogy Research Center at the Gilmer County Library. Research Assistants for August: Becky Burrell, Gladys Spivey and Karen Titus, John Davis and Leslie Thomas.

## NEW BOOKS ADDED

BY JOHN DAVIS, TREASURER

- History of Twiggs County, GA.
- Early History of Upson County, GA.
- History of Washington County, GA.
- The Wilkes County, GA. Papers
- The Supplement to the Wilkes County papers
- Georgians in the Revolution at Kettle Creek
- Index to Headlight & Bounty Grants
- 1850 Georgia Mortality Schedule
- The Georgia Black Book - Vol. #1
- The Georgia Black Book - Vol. #2
- A Researcher's Library of Georgia History, Genealogy, & Record Sources - Volume 1
- The History of Rome and Floyd County, GA.





## The Heritage Garden

The Master Gardeners invited the Gilmer County Genealogy Society to create a flower bed at the Library that represented the types of flowers that would have been planted by our ancestors. A Big Shout out to Gladys Spivey for her hard work and creativity. The bed is beautiful! She planted heritage plants that consisted of Zinnias, Marigolds, Cockscomb, Cosmos, Bachelor Buttons, and Four O'Clocks. If you get an opportunity, stop by the Gilmer County Library and check out the Heritage Garden.



The photo was submitted by Gladys Spivey.

## Past Quarter Highlights

BY WAYNE HOOPER, PUBLICITY CHAIR

MARCH 12, 2015

Our guest speaker for the March 12th meeting was Lawton Baggs, a retired teacher and principle. Lawton introduced the film made by Lee Roy Abernathy, of the famous Lee Roy Abernathy quartet, "A day in Ellijay, Georgia, Early 1953". This film, which is also sold by the Gilmer Co. library, documents the activities on a winter day in Ellijay in 1953.

The fun part was members of the society calling out the names of their family members and naming the characters as they appeared on the screen as children or teens in 1953.

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## Past Quarter Highlights (Cont. from Pg 11)

BY WAYNE HOOPER, PUBLICITY CHAIR

APRIL 9, 2015

The guest speaker for the Genealogical society meeting on April 9th was David Carver, the owner of Watkins and Carver Monuments in Jasper, Ga. David spoke on the care and maintenance of cemetery monuments, which turned out to be very interesting.

David pointed out that stone monuments are porous, that certain household cleaners can damage the stone or turn colors on marble monuments. He went into detail as to the time of day and weather to get the best results without degrading the monument or bronze markers. In short, ask a professional before attempting a cleanup of a monument of a particular problem such as tree sap or bird droppings.

If you haven't visited the cemetery on the hill behind the court house in downtown Ellijay then you have missed some of the history of the town.



David Carver  
Picture by Gladys Spivey



APRIL 14, 2015

April 12th—18th was National Library Staff Appreciation Week. The Society sponsored a "Library Staff Appreciation Lunch" where we provided refreshment for the staff for the outstanding job they do for us and the community.

Thank you to Karen Titus, Patricia Henson, Gladys Spivey, Sylvia Johnson, Charlotte Davis, Lillie Haire, Rebecca Burrell and Karla Duke for the special refreshments!

Photo submitted by Gladys Spivey. Left to Right: Heath Lee, James Dameron, Heather Parker and Karen Titus





## Past Quarter Highlights (Cont. from Pg 12)

MAY 14, 2015

Our guest speakers for May were Ben and Eileen Bailey. Ben and Eileen did their missionary work by serving 18 months at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. They helped members of the community research their genealogy in such countries as England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, the Turks and Caicos Islands. After retiring from the Army Signal Corp. in North Carolina, Ben and Eileen then lived 23 years in Annapolis, MD, before settling in Gilmer Co. They have six children and seven grandchildren.

We learned about "Family History Research on "Wiki" which is a family search engine that has over 81,000 articles about countries and states around the world. Check it out! FamilySearch Wiki [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) - Hover on Search at the top of the page and click on Wiki on the drop down menu.



Ben Bailey  
Picture by Gladys Spivey

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## Day Trip to the Cobb Marietta Library Planned for June 24, 2015

BY SYLVIA JOHNSON, VICE PRESIDENT

The Georgia Room is a genealogical and historical collection. The purpose of the Georgia Room is to develop and maintain an in-depth collection of materials having lasting historical and genealogical value to support the informational, educational, and research needs of its users.

Please take a look at their website to see what is available in their collection that might be of interest to you. It can be accessed at ([www.cobbcat.org](http://www.cobbcat.org)) "Research and Resources" and then "The Georgia Room, Local History and Genealogy". The titles in green are of their different collections. By clicking on them, you can get more details.

Also, of importance is the collections of the Atlanta Journal and Constitution from January 1886 to present. To check for specific resources by subject enter ([www.cobbcat.org](http://www.cobbcat.org) and click on "Catalog Search and Login" Enter your request at the blinking cursor, and your subject, i.e. Gilmer County, GA and hit Search and you will get a list of 12 books they have in their research room). This would give you an idea ahead of time what you might be looking for. They have each county grouped together like we do in our research room.

If you would like to go on the day trip, please plan to meet at the Ingle's Parking lot at 9 AM to carpool. Please let Sylvia Johnson know that you are planning to attend (so no one is left behind) at 706 636 4671 or 770 722 3658 or email at [carolinaandbuddy@yahoo.com](mailto:carolinaandbuddy@yahoo.com).

The Gilmer County Genealogical Society, Inc.

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**We're on the web!**  
[www.gcgisi.org](http://www.gcgisi.org)  
Contact email: [gcgisi@etcmail.com](mailto:gcgisi@etcmail.com)

## What Is Available Online?

- GCGSI Membership
- First Families Application
- Genealogical Links
- Research Files
- Officers
- Book Order Form
- 1834 and 1840 Census
- Contact Information
- *Mountain Heritage* Newsletter



Save a stamp and a Tree!  
Send your email to:  
[gcgisi@hotmail.com](mailto:gcgisi@hotmail.com)