

# Highlands Historical Society

Winter 2015

To preserve and promote the rich heritage of Highlands

Highlands, N. C.

## CONNECTIONS: WE ARE ALL A PART OF HIGHLANDS HISTORY

Highlands, N.C., has a fascinating and interesting history. The goal of our historical society is to keep it alive and available to everyone who has ever lived here. We are a remarkable place when you consider that we could be a ghost town but for the leadership and caring of our citizens through the years. Every “local” has a story to tell that is well worth hearing. We at the Prince House and Historical Society headquarters try to answer your questions and encourage your curiosity.

This past year we were faced with a few challenges to our physical facility. Our front yard bank in front of our buildings was quietly fading and was not very appealing. We needed some money to try to improve our yard before it became too much of a burden. We fortunately were able to raise some money from many generous donors and this money allowed our grounds chair to have our bank replanted and beautified.



**Pat Griffin at Museum door** is the oldest building in Highlands. As you can imagine it has borne the years bravely, but the windows and many of the exterior walls were and are badly in need of replacement. The upgrade turned out to be very expensive, so we decided to repair only two sides at a time: the northern and eastern exposures. We were grateful for a donation from Cullasaja Women’s Club.

Because we are an educational facility and more than interested in involving our youngest citizens in Highlands history, Linda David has for several years led the Kelsey Kids week. Children sign up for

a week of fun-filled historical activities, games, food, and field trips focused on the past in our town. This year each child planted a dahlia at the end of their week. Their dahlias were to be entered in our Dahlia Show, which HHS sponsored in September.



**Linda David waiting to serve**

The Dahlia Show was another activity enthusiastically attended by Highlanders and out-of-towners alike. Held at the Civic Center, which is practically in our back yard, it gave us another opportunity to show our buildings and historical artifacts to all who attended. We even offered refreshments.



**The Kelsey Kids after planting their first dahlia.**  
**First row, seated: Sydney Schroeders, Jessica Thompson, Grace Groupe, Ashton Steelmon, Faith Groupe. Second row, standing: Wolf Albano, Isaac Groupe, Cambridge Collany, Barak Steelmon, Olivia Thompson, Nathan Thompson, Rocco Albano.**

## A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Looking back on the 2015 season at Highlands Historical Society, as the year draws to a close, brings one thought to mind: it has been a tremendous year with many worthwhile achievements for our organization! Our success has been a direct result of the effort put forth by the Board members and volunteers who care deeply about our local history and our mission to preserve it for future generations. Renovations are nearing completion on the Prince House. When finished, the Prince House will be in its best condition in many years. The Dahlia Festival was a resounding hit again this year, raising funds critical to the operation and maintenance of our grounds and buildings. The Festival would not have been possible without the help of our full board and the many volunteers who made it possible. The grounds have been refurbished and maintained in a manner that has improved the attractiveness and curb appeal of our facilities to make them more inviting to those passing by. The Furman Vinson boat, recently recovered from the bottom of Lake Sequoia when the lake was drained for dam repair, will be displayed outside the museum for next season. The Board members all contributed to have a meeting table constructed from materials with a Highlands connection and the result is both beautiful and functional. HHS received multiple grants for the year, and the groundwork has been laid for future successes in the application and granting processes. HHS is in a solid financial condition, thanks to the continued generosity of our supporters and prudent management of the resources in hand. We have established regular hours for our facilities to be open to the public and have a knowledgeable, regular docent to guide visitors through the museum and Prince House.

In closing I am reminded of a quote from *Memory and American History* by David Thelen, "The challenge of history is to recover the past and introduce it to the present." That is our mission at Highlands Historical Society, and we will continue with your help to make it an ongoing reality for future generations. I hope your Holiday Season is a joyous one. Come to see us when the snow melts and we open for a sure-to-be-exciting 2016 season at HHS!

Brian McClellan

## OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Brian McClellan, President  
 Glenda Bell, Vice President  
 Linda David, Corresponding Secretary  
 Bill Edwards, Recording Secretary  
 Linda Clark, Treasurer  
 Donnie Edwards, Mary Ann Hardman,  
 Osborne "Obie" Oakley, Carolyn Tanner,  
 Bob Trevathan, Judy Taylor, and Dennis Wilson.  
 Archivist and Ex Officio Director, Ran Shaffner  
 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](mailto:highlandshistory@nctv.com).  
 Highlands Historical Society  
 P. O. Box 670, Highlands, NC 28741-0670



For the Highlands Historical Society the Town Crew moved Furman Vinson's 18-foot boat into dry dock until it can be prepared for display next year at the Historic Village. The historic boat had lain at the bottom of Lake Sequoyah for 85 years until the lake was drained last spring and it was discovered and salvaged. Left to right in the photograph are Chris Parker, Melvin Spanlan, Joe Allison, Jon Shaheen, Norman Houck, Yogi McCall, Wade Shope, and Tim Lovel. Not shown are Gene Ramey, Stan Houston, and Dustin Jones.



## Dahlia Patron Party Dazzles!



*Les Scott's group providing music*

The Dazzling Dahlia Patron Party was held on September 10th at the Hudson House at Highlands Country Club and was a HUGE success! Many guests arrived dressed in festive Mexican attire, which lent even more festivity to the delightful evening.

Chairperson Judy Taylor and her dedicated volunteers transformed the Hudson House into a Mexican fiesta with music provided by an authentic mariachi band. Tables were festooned with brightly colored linens and generous bouquets of dahlias gathered from area gardens. Guests enjoyed a Mexican-themed buffet while sipping margaritas and mojitas.



*Dahlia trees in pots*

Corporate sponsorships were a much welcomed addition this year. We sincerely appreciate the generous support of First Citizens Bank, Highlands Decorating Center, Larry Rogers Construction, McCulley's Cashmere, Tom Chambers Builders, and Wilson Gas Service.

Lyle Nichols graciously donated his original painting entitled, "Who Are You to Judge?" and it was offered for sale during a lively and spirited silent auction. Congratulations go to Virginia and Mike Campbell who outbid the competition and took home Lyle's artwork!

The Wheelbarrow Raffle reached epic proportions this year due to the efforts of Sally Caffery and the generous merchants of Highlands! Congratulations go to an ecstatic Kitty Moore, who took home the gold!

We look forward to the 2016 event which will be held at Highlands Falls Country Club on September 8th. We look forward to seeing you then!



*Jessica Thompson wins ribbon*

## HISTORIC TABLE ADDED TO THE MUSEUM

The HHS board members have purchased a table to be used for our meetings. Because we are a historical society we had to pitch in and buy a table with historical significance. The wormy chestnut table, large enough to accommodate our board members, was found by our always-vigilant board member Judy Taylor. The table was made from flooring removed from the old Aethelwold Hotel in Brevard, N.C., when the third floor was removed. The hotel was "the gateway to Sapphire Valley" and was constructed in 1902. The table has been a big improvement over the breakfast-sized table that only half of us would fit around, and it is beautiful. The board members paid for it with personal, not HSS, funds.

Come by to see the table and all of our other historical treasures.

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*Learn about life long ago*

Along with our Dahlia Show we had a patron party to honor those who made it a point to donate to our program.

**A WELCOMING FACE AT HHS**

We have been blessed this year by Pat Griffin, our docent extraordinaire. Pat has willingly learned all

about our history and happily shares the information available to all of us at the History Center. She herself is a true Highlander and loves to be there for all the visitors. Anyone who wants to visit the Prince House, learn when and how our town was founded, find out who were some of our most outstanding citizens through the years, and see photographs that bring to life the hardships associated with building Highlands needs only come to the Society on Friday or Saturday all through the season. Pat will make you feel right at home.



*The Prince House, built 1877*

We have many generous donors who have given us tokens of their family history including papers, clothing, and photos. Our walls are covered with amazing photographs taken long ago of road building, our town before it looked much like it does today, the town builders and their primitive machines, early transportation, and gatherings of people in their fashions of the period. Perhaps you could discover one of your ancestors in these pictures. It would be fun to try. Another exhibit is of the trees and plants through the years and the many challenges that have faced those who farmed up here.

The Prince House opens into another century and makes us feel as if we were walking back in time. Just to see how people lived before all of the gadgets we so take for granted is fascinating.

As you look toward the Rec Park/Civic Center, you

will see one of the tuberculosis tents (pictured below). Many of our early visitors came to Highlands to recover their health in our nearly perfect climate. The walls of the “tent” were originally open to let in fresh air which helped these sick people strengthen their lungs.

We welcome you to the Highlands Historical Society campus. The Board has been assigned the responsibility of maintaining and adding to the history in this place. Our doors are open to visitors on Fridays and Saturdays from May through the last week in December. If you have family in town and would like to show them our beautiful displays, please email [highlandshistory@netv.com](mailto:highlandshistory@netv.com) or call 828-787-1050 for an appointment. Someone will gladly open up for you.

We are all connected. By living in this town of Highlands we connect with people every day, people who have lived here through generations and those of us starting to make our own Highlands history. Whichever you may be, the Historical Society is packed with information to make all of us more knowledgeable about our home. Just as in any home we have spent the past year making repairs, planting our front yard to make it more welcoming, enhancing our displays, educating our children, and just plain maintaining our physical plant.

We saw many of you at the Christmas parade and hope to see you on our campus. You are always welcome.



*Bug Hill Cottage for treatment of TB in 1908*