



THE TOWNS HISTORIAN

The NEWSLETTER of the TOWNS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOL. 1 ISSUE 2

JUNE 2017

The Towns County Historical Society
is dedicated to preserving and
sharing the rich history of our area.
We meet the second Monday of each
month at 900 N Main St., Hiawassee, GA.

P.O. Box 1182
900 North Main St.
Hiawassee, Georgia
(706) 781-8611



From Left: President- Sandra Green, Secretary & Publicity- Betty Phillips,
Vice President- Nancy Cody, Treasurer- Frances Shook, Publicity- Joan Crothers
Not Pictured- Ina Kozesky

2017 OFFICERS

Sandra Green
President

Nancy Cody
Vice President

Betty Phillips
Secretary

Frances Shook
Treasurer

Ina Kozesky
Membership Secretary

HISTORIANS

Jerry A. Taylor

Jason Lee Edwards

Put together by
Betty Phillips &
Mountain Graphics

"GRAPEVINE", "HAIR AND BONE"

What do those words have in common and what in the world do they have to do with our Old Rock Jail Museum?! Well, let me tell you!

"Grapevine" is the type of mortar used to hold the rocks in the ORJ together. It is a unique style that was used during the era in which the jail was built. You can spot a few additional examples of grapevine mortar around Towns County. The well at the Wishin' Well, the foundation of the Franks house and the well at the old McKinney house on Bell Street are some that still exist in the Hiawassee area, this work is attributed primarily to a mason whose last name was Cunningham. In the Woods Grove community and in Young Harris, Drake was the family name of the person credited with grapevine masonry. They were wonderful craftsmen and the examples of their work that are left are to be treasured.

"Hair and Bone" is a phrase I just recently learned. It is the old timey interpretation of the word herringbone. That is the pattern of the subfloor of the ORJ that we discovered once the many layers of carpet, plywood, and linoleum were removed. Unfortunately, part of the original oak flooring has rotted so subfloor timbers are exposed in some areas. Those timbers are at a diagonal to the oak used for the floor therefore the word herringbone or "Hair and Bone"!

I hope you've enjoyed reading this tale about the ORJ and some of the things that make it so unique. I'm sure there is more to discover as we continue to work on bringing it back to life!

I encourage you to attend our monthly meetings held on the second Monday of each month at 5:30 in the old Rec Center, 900 North Main street. It's a great opportunity to learn more about our heritage and our beautiful mountains. By: President Sandra Green

Mountain Moments

Aunt Hattie



To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; Ecclesiastes 3:1-2

Four seasons in every year bring major changes in our environment. After the long, cold and drab winter, seeing the yellow bells starting to bud and bloom, and the daffodils appearing and stretching their pretty faces upward to meet the first warm days of spring, causes a rush of anticipation and joy to rise in my heart. I begin to look around for what I cannot yet see, but that I know is there. Little bunches of green grassy foliage are coming up in flower beds, along rock walls, in the local parks and on the sides of the road. Always more seem to appear in the new year than in the last. Yet I find myself looking for Aunt Hattie's daylilies.

Known by many names, such as Mom, Grandma, Aunt Hattie, Miss Hattie and Lady of the Lillies, Hattie Caroline Howell Kimsey was born in Franklin, North Carolina, in 1892 and in 1908 moved to and lived out her life of 104 years in Hiawassee, Georgia. Hattie saw many seasons

in her lifetime, 416 to be exact. She was alive when the Wright Brothers took their first flight, when men landed on the moon, and when women were first allowed to vote. She lived through twenty different presidents. She celebrated the arrival of electricity and indoor plumbing. She saw the transition from horses and buggies to automobiles. She was a school teacher in a one room school house. She was numbered with the many people who lost their homes and had to move when Chatuge Dam was built and the Hiawassee River flooded the bottom lands to form Lake Chatuge. She lived through the Great Depression. She saw family and friends leave for World War

I, World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War, many of whom never returned.

Aunt Hattie, however, is best known locally for her daylilies. She knew everything about daylilies and could talk for hours about them. She could tell customers that they belong to the genus *Hemerocallis*, a word derived from two Greek words

meaning "beauty" and "day." Thus, the name *day-lily* was given to this flowering plant

whose flowers only last one day. The beautiful flowers open in the morning and die by nightfall. But each stem has at least a dozen flower buds; thus, the plant stays in bloom for several weeks.

Over the years, Aunt Hattie became a master at hybridizing her daylilies, earning her the name "Lady of the Lilies." The process was not simple. It required her picking two pretty specimens that would blend beautifully, then fertilizing one at the perfect time of day by taking pollen from one flower and placing it in the other flower. She then had to wait for the bloom to fall off its stem and hope that a seed pod had formed from the cross fertilization. This took about 40-60 days. If the seeds successfully formed, she would put them in a bag, usually an old bread bag, and put it in the refrigerator for four to six weeks and then plant them in the soil in early fall. While she waited, she would water and fertilize the seeds, and hope the plant would bloom in spring. But, it doesn't



Mountain Moments

always work that way and can take up to three springs for the blossoms to appear. All the time, she still didn't know if the flower would even be pretty.

Galatians 6:9 says "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." Aunt Hattie never gave up on her gardens. She spent many seasons in her gardens fertilizing, cultivating, protecting, pinching off the bad leaves, loving and preparing them to send all over the world to blossom to their full glory and to share their beauty with others. I can just imagine her now in her garden in the early morning mist watching for the first bloom to open on one of her treasures. Oh, the joy she must have felt when she saw the "Jay Shell



Red" or the "Ernie Abbott" open to reveal its beauty.

Through the seasons of Aunt Hattie's 104 years, she had many gardens that were filled with much more than lilies. One such garden was filled with students in a one room school house, where she planted seeds of knowledge. Another garden was filled with her husband and children, and later grandchildren, where she lovingly nurtured and planted seeds of a legacy of love and the importance of family that would continue for generations to come. But, her largest and most beautiful garden was filled with four generations of church

family, Sunday School classes, and brothers and sisters in Christ. In this garden, Aunt Hattie had faithfully planted seeds whose results were eternal. She cultivated and cared for them most carefully, because this garden would never wither and die. It is a garden where, with every change of season, we can ever see new growth and beautiful blossoms.



Written by Emily Phillips who is an adult class Sunday school teacher at Friendship Baptist Church in Hiawassee, Georgia, where she lives. She and her husband, Steven, have two sons and a daughter.



Contact us
by Email!

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Oral History News



LOUETTA MOSS

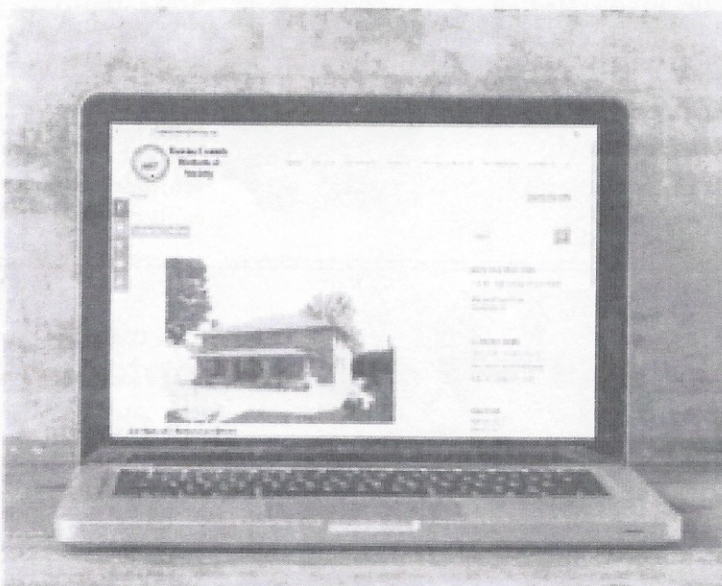


IRMA NICHOLS MCCLURE



Nancy Cody and Annette Cooke interviewed Louetta Moss and Irma Nichols McClure. Sally Louetta Moss was born February 1, 1932 on Shooting Creek Clay County, N.C. She married R.J. Silvers and they had 5 boys and one girl. She attends Macedonia Baptist Church.

Irma Nichols McClure is the daughter of Ralph (21 Nov. 1912-25 Sept 1982) and Hazel Coker (25 Nov. 1915- 29 Mar.2009) Nichols of Young Harris, Ga. Irma married Carrolll C. McClure (16 Nov.1933-13 Dec. 2016) from Hayesville,N.C. They were married 61 years and had three daughters. Their daughter Mickie Morgan (18 July 1962- 29 Mar.2009) and her husband Kevin Mark Morgan died in 2016. Their twin daughters Jenny and Julie are still living.



townscountyhistory.org

Check out our website townscountyhistory.org. We've got lots of information and photos of people in military service in WWI and WWII as well as historic churches of the county. There's a slide show tracking progress on the Old Rock Jail. We will post more pictures as we continue the journey toward making the museum a reality!

The website will be updated periodically so make sure you get in the habit of checking it out.

DVD's of all programs and interviews are available for \$5. Contact any officer (pg. 3)



The Towns County
Historical Society
Presents

"Old-timey Ways"

April 10, 2017
5:30 PM

Bill Cody will bring back memories as he speaks about an era when people took their corn to the mill to be ground into cornmeal and made hominy over an open fire. He will also share his experiences grinding corn for himself and neighbors in his 1940s corn mill.

900 North Main Street, Hiawassee
www.townscountyhistory.org



The Towns County Historical Society
Presents

"Towns County Medicine 1900-2000" by Dr. W. Lanier Nicholson

Monday, May 8, 2017
5:30 PM

900 N. Main St. Hiawassee, GA



The Towns County Historical Society
Presents

"The Osborn Family: Early Settlers of Towns County"

By Daren Osborn

June 12, 2017
5:30 PM



900 N. Main Street, Hiawassee, GA



SrSgt. Richard Allen Schmidtke
9612th Special Engineer Detachment
Los Alamos, New Mexico 19 years old



IN HONOR OF RICHIE SCHMIDTKE AND HIS WIFE
BETTY PHILLIPS FOR ALL THEY HAVE DONE FOR
THE TOWNS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Old Rock Jail Museum Restoration

Chris Turpin (electrician) replaced all the old wiring and now the new wiring meets all required codes. The bill for all of this work came to \$5,190.00 and was paid from the \$6,000.00 donation from Betty Phillips in honor of our late anonymous donor (Richie Schmidtke). Several people have been busy working on the interior walls trying to get them ready for painting. We are still in need of volunteers for this project. Just let any member of the executive board know if you would like to volunteer for this group project.



Top and bottom picture, new wiring throughout the Old Rock Jail



Jerry Taylor working hard on cleaning up the Old Rock Jail



Historic Picture of the Old Rock Jail

UPCOMING EVENTS

NANCY CODY ANNOUNCES THE UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

▶ Heritage Day will be held on July 8, 2017 at 11:00am to 12:30pm. Honoring our Veterans (those living and deceased that served either wartime or peace time). A group of young people from Friendship Church will be helping with our program. Also, Nancy's granddaughter Carlaye Cheeks will be singing the National Anthem. Sack lunch will be provided. Please send names of people who have served in the military to Betty Phillips (bbphillips1943@gmail.com) or any executive officer (pg. 3). Encourage everyone to attend and show appreciation to all veterans in the area.

▶ Dr. Richard "Richie" Allen Schmidtke, beloved husband to Betty Phillips, our secretary, passed away unexpectedly on Monday, March 27th. In keeping with his wishes, no service was planned. They were married July 3, 2014 and had 998 wonderful days together. Please consider a random act of kindness in honor of his memory or a donation may be made to the Towns County Historical Society, P.O. Box 1182, Hiawassee, GA 30546. He was a lifetime member and truly loved doing anonymous things for the society. The family will have a celebration of life in honor of his 92nd birthday on July 23, 2017 from 2-4pm at the Towns County Activity and Enlightenment Center for Seniors, 954 North Main St (US-76), Hiawassee, GA.

▶ August 14, 2017, Hilda Thomason, General Manager of The Georgia Mountain Fair, will be speaking on the history of the Fair. The dates for the 67th fair are July 21-29, 2017. Jerry Taylor will have his organs on display (3 rooms) in the Exhibit Hall.

▶ GREAT AMERICAN ECLIPSE TAILGATING PARTY, Hiawassee, GA. Monday August 21, 12noon-4pm at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds parking lot, 1311 Music Hall Road, Hiawassee, GA 30546. \$5/car load. Bring a tent, chairs and a picnic lunch! There will be a live band, (Steven Phillips) eclipse expert from Atlanta, vendors, food, games for kids. Sponsored by Towns County Chamber of Commerce 706-896-4966 or 1-800-984-1543.

▶ September 11, 2017, Shape Note Singing

▶ Visit Bell Mountain County Park and Historical Site. 900 Bell Mtn. Park Rd. Hiawassee, GA 30546. Summer hours are 8am to 11pm. Towns County Historical Society Designated "Keepers of the Mt."



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P.O. Box 1182
900 North Main St.
Hiawassee, Georgia 30546

COME OUT AND CELEBRATE OUR
MILITARY HERITAGE AND HONOR
OUR VETERANS



Towns County Historical Society

Saturday July 8, 2017

11am-12:30pm

Sack Lunch Will be Provided