

Newsletter

OF THE ATHENS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MARCH 2007

P.O. Box 7745 • Athens, Georgia 30604-7745

Valley of Kings: Native Tribes of the Oconee River Valley

Sunday, March 25, 2007 – 3:00 p.m.

note date change!

Athens-Clarke County Library Auditorium



Most of us are familiar with the Creek and Cherokee tribes who inhabited the upper Oconee River valley before the American Revolution, but we may not know that native tribes have inhabited the state for more than 2000 years. In addition to building a number of mounds scattered around the area, these natives may have also constructed Rock Eagle, below Madison, and a second rock effigy, Rock Hawk, near Lake Oconee. Research by archaeologists at UGA and our speaker, Tom Gresham, has found that there was a thriving Native American population in the Oconee River Valley as recently as the middle 1500s when the Spanish explorer Hernando DeSoto came through the area.

Learn more about these people, what may have happened to them and what they left behind. ***Please note date change for this meeting!*** The meeting is free and open to the public.

Tom Gresham is the president of an archeological consulting firm that, among other things, locates, evaluates and excavates prehistoric archeological sites. He is also president of the Oglethorpe County historical society and is secretary for the Society for Georgia Archaeology. He also serves on Georgia's Council on American Indian Concerns, where he helps protect American Indian grave sites. Tom was born and reared in Aiken, South Carolina, where he collected arrowheads with his parents from a very early age. He pursued his hobby and received a bachelor's and master's degrees in anthropology (emphasis in archeology) from the University of Georgia. He worked for the University in its massive archeological salvage project prior to the construction of Lake Oconee. In 1983 he and two partners founded Southeastern Archeological Services, based in Athens. Tom is now president of the company and directs a wide variety of archeological projects throughout the Southeast, but mostly in Georgia. He lives with his wife and three dogs in rural Oglethorpe County.

[Graphic from "Hernando DeSoto's Trail through Georgia" website at www.floridahistory.com/inset7.html.]

Time to renew your membership - if your mail label has 2007 on it, your dues are current.

Name _____

(Please give name(s) as you want it/them to appear in the yearbook)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Choose membership level: (Dues cover the upcoming calendar year)

_____ Individual - \$10.00

_____ Patron - \$50.00

_____ Family - \$15.00

_____ Business - \$100.00

_____ Supporting - \$35.00

***Print this form and mail with your check payable to the Athens Historical Society
to AHS, P.O. Box 7745, Athens GA 30604-7745! Thank you!***

President's Corner

Mary Hoit Abbe

Our society is fast approaching its 50th year. This year we will be reprinting some of the earlier works of the society that have been unavailable for many years. In addition, we will use the latest technology to reproduce some of the items, such as changing from *Presence of the Past* video to DVD format. And the long-awaited cemetery book on Oconee Hill Cemetery should be available for the 50th anniversary.

If you have ideas of what we can do to celebrate our 50 years, contact any member of the Board. It is not too early to begin planning. If you will volunteer to serve on a committee, let us know.

History is not just the big events, but the daily activities of ordinary people like you and me. We are now in the 21st century and we are fast losing our knowledge of history and landmarks from the 20th century. Our programs in May and October will focus on 20th century events. If you have memorabilia from this period of time, please share it with us.

In particular, our May program will focus on the restaurants and cooking in Athens. Do you remember Tony's, Poss' Barbecue, Snack Shack, Gigi's or even earlier ones? I have never heard of the Pig, but others have mentioned it.

We would like to have a display in the library of pictures, menus, or other memorabilia from the restaurants that made life in Athens special. Call me at (706) 354-8107 or email me at mhabbe@aol.com if you would like to lend some of your "eatery" memorabilia for us to make digitized copies for the display.

Come to our March meeting – **note the date change to March 25th** – to hear Tom Gresham speak on our 18th and 19th century history.

Athens Historian, Volume 11

The latest edition of our annual volume of papers will be in the mail to paid members in the next few days. This volume covers not only the colonial and Revolutionary War era of our state, but also the 19th and 20th centuries as well. Edited by Jenny Best, this issue has something to interest everyone. A complete index is included in the volume.

Dr. Dana Anderson has done extensive research to locate and map ***Revolutionary War Patriot Graves in Clarke and Oconee Counties***. Especially solicited by the editor, this article also poses interesting questions as to other residents of the area who may have performed some service to the country (patriot), or who actually fought in the Revolutionary War (veteran). The importance of supporting documentation for Revolutionary service is clearly outlined. A commemoration service for patriots William Daniell, John Stroud and Stephen Crow will be held Saturday, March 24, 2:00 pm at Mars Hill Baptist Church by the SAR.

The subject of the May 2006 meeting, ***The History of Newspapers in Athens*** was given by Don Nelson, long-time business editor of the *Athens Banner-Herald*. A brief history of each newspaper and their publishers also gives insight into events that shaped the lives of Athenians as well as this country of ours.

The Dedication of the Abraham Baldwin Monument at his Connecticut Birth Site honors a man who continues to have an impact on our society to this day, from the ideals he held and the work he accomplished to establish the University of Georgia as well as the forging of a new nation during the turbulent years following the American Revolution. A videotape of the monument dedication ceremony in Connecticut was annotated at the March 2006 meeting by Milton Leathers, who had played the role of Abraham Baldwin on the "Ride of Five" for the Clarke County bicentennial in 2001.

[Photo from Roots & Routes, www.rootsandroutes.net/uga.htm]



In ***Remembering the Southern Mutual Building***, Upshaw C. Bentley, Jr., talks about the numerous businesses and people who have worked in this downtown landmark during the last half of the 20th century.

Meet Your Officers for 2007

Mary Hoit Abbe, president, was a high school math teacher for 29 years. She has been a member of AHS for about seven years and a member of the Clarke-Oconee Genealogical Society (COGS) since 1990. After retiring and recovering from cancer, she became very active in COGS. Since 2002, with the help of COGS members and funding from the R.J. Taylor Foundation, she has published four genealogical resource books – *Oconee County Marriage Records, 1875-1920*; *Clarke County, Georgia, Tax Digests, 1847-1850*; *Clarke County, Georgia, Tax Digests, 1811-1820*; and *Clarke County, Georgia, Tax Digests, 1821-1830*. She is currently working on the tax digests of Clarke County for its beginning years, 1802-1810. And she and AHS Board member Elaine Collier Neal have nearly completed a book on the tax digests of Greene County prior to 1800. Mary is married to Dr. Winfield J. Abbe, a former physics professor at UGA, and they have two grandchildren. But since the grandchildren live in Florida, they do not compete with Mary's interest in history and genealogy.

A. Blair Dorminey, vice president, is a native Georgian, has served on the board of Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation since 2002 and the AHS board 2004-2006.

Betty Alice Fowler, secretary, is past president and vice-president of the society. She also serves as Assistant Editor of the *Athens Historian*. A native Athenian, she resided for many years in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She works at the Georgia Museum of Art as Assistant to the Director and Grant Writer, where, in 2002, she was guest curator of *The Art of Lucy May Stanton* and author of the post-exhibition catalogue of the same title. She is a member of Saint Stephen's Anglican Catholic Church, and a free-lance floral designer and videographer.

George W. Smith, treasurer, retired last year from UGA where he was head of the Printing Department. He is interested in history in general and of the War Between the States in particular, as well as vintage automobiles. George is married to Nancy Inglett Smith, a native Athenian. He keeps busy as a member of Sons of Confederate Veterans, Early Ford V-8 Club, and Gideons International, and attends Stevens Grove Baptist Church.

Eve B. Mayes, historian and AHS webmaster, has history and genealogy literally in her blood and enjoys doing research as time permits. She works for the UGA Extension Food Science Outreach Program, and does desk-top publishing at home with husband Rick in her "spare" time. She and Rick are proud grandparents of one sweet girl and three lively boys.

Board Members for 2007-2009 Term

Wilson Elder is a seventh generation Athenian and lives with his wife Tracy on Cloverhurst Avenue. He is a real estate broker specializing in affordable housing development and is a past president of AHS. A non-fiction junkie, he is presently reading *Albion's Seed* and *Wikinomics*.

Jenny W. Best is a past president and vice president of the Athens Historical Society and the current editor of the society's journal, the *Athens Historian*. She is retired from the University of Georgia, where she was coordinator of special programs and publications for the Division of Student Affairs. A native Georgian, she has lived in Athens since she came as a freshman to the university. She and her husband, Edward, a retired classics professor, travel frequently and are doting parents and grandparents to their three children and three grandchildren. Jenny belongs to a number of organizations and pursues her lifelong interest in history and literature.

Elaine Collier Neal, a charter member, was born in Athens and graduated from Athens High School and the University of Georgia, BSed, and MS, 1969. She retired with 30 years of federal government service. Elaine and her husband Richard live on her grandfather's farm in Oconee County. She is an avid genealogist.

Board Members for 2006-2008 Term

Leonidas Milton Leathers III attended Barrow and St. Joseph's schools before going off with several other "bad Athens boys" to Baylor Military Academy in Chattanooga, Tennessee. He attended the University of Virginia and five more colleges before securing a degree in English with a minor in linguistics and Russian from Western Carolina University. He was a Russian translator at the U.S. Army's 500th Military Intelligence Group at Pearl Harbor and married Deborah Kehaulani Kam Yuk Young of Haleiwa, Hawaii. They are parents of three sons and a daughter, who now live in Atlanta, Bangkok, Honolulu and Chuluota, Florida. He has been president of L.M. Leathers & Sons and Erwin & Co., Inc. He has been president of the ACHF, Family Counseling Service of Athens, Historic Cobbham Foundation, and the Clarke Central Soccer Boosters Club. He is enjoying being an AHS board member, the only position he has held since he and Kammy returned in August 2001 from two years of teaching English in China. He traces his interest in Athens history to his many years spent listening to his delightful grandmother, Camilla McWhorter (Mrs. Andrew Cobb) Erwin, who lived until 102 in 1986.

Morgan R. (Bucky) Redwine graduated from Athens High School, Virginia Military Academy, was a Major in the Army Air Corps where he was a P-51 pilot on Iwo Jima. After the war he went Yale and was an officer with Athens Federal Savings & Loan for many years. He has been president of Georgia Museum of Art, Athens City Club, district chairman Cherokee Council, BSA from whom he received the Silver Beaver Award, Clarke County Board of Education, director of Athens Clarke Heritage Foundation, Athens Tutorial Program and Athens Chamber of Commerce. His hobbies include Civil War & Athens history. He and wife Karen enjoy traveling.

Natalie Wellman was born and raised in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Before moving to Athens in 1970, she lived for six years in Boston and ten in Rock Hill, South Carolina. She says her career was composed of many jobs, each one thoroughly enjoyed – she taught school, sold real estate, was a sorority house mother, was administrative director of Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation. The best of all, however, has been the role of mother to her four children and step-mother to her late husband's six. She remarks, "Sometimes I feel as if I'm mayor of a small village!"

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AHS Officers – 2007

Mary Anne Hoit Abbe – President
A. Blair Dorminey – Vice President
Betty Alice Fowler – Secretary
George W. Smith, Jr. – Treasurer
Eve B. Mayes – Historian

AHS Board of Directors

Jenny Best
Wilson Elder
L. Milton Leathers
Elaine Collier Neal
Morgan R. (Bucky) Redwine
Natalie Wellman

Upcoming AHS Meeting Dates – 3:00 p.m., ACC Library unless otherwise stated

May 20, 2007 – The Lost Flavors of Athens
October 21, 2007 – Salute to REM
December 3, 2007 – AHS Christmas Party
at the T.R.R. Cobb House!

AHS Website & Information

www.rootsweb/~gaahs
email: ebmayes@windstream.net (new email)

OTHER MEETINGS OF INTEREST

The Clarke-Oconee Genealogical Society (COGS) will host its annual **Genealogy and History EXPO on Saturday, April 21, 2007 at the Overlook at Town Center** in Watkinsville, Oconee County, Georgia from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Come browse booksellers, listen to lectures, pick up information on and try out genealogy software, get catalogs on materials preservation, and talk to folks from lineage societies and historical societies. COGS outgrew the Oconee County Library so we have moved to a spacious event facility, with an elevator, located on the third floor of Town Center in downtown Watkinsville above Quizno's. For more information, contact Laura W. Carter lwcarter@negia.net, or Nona Thornton gagenlady@charter.net. It is free and open to the public.

Madison County Bicentennial in 2009 – Our neighbor Madison County will be celebrating its bicentennial in 2009. The Madison County Heritage Foundation is seeking memorabilia that documents the county's past. John Barton or others will be happy to make copies of your pictures or other items. Email John Barton at jbarton@ix.netcom.com.

Mark your calendar for upcoming AHS meetings – see list in the box to the left. More details will be given in future newsletters and on the AHS website (see below).

Bring a friend – We'll be happy to send a sample copy of the newsletter to your history buff friends. Just email Eve at ebmayes@windstream.net with "AHS newsletter" in subject line.