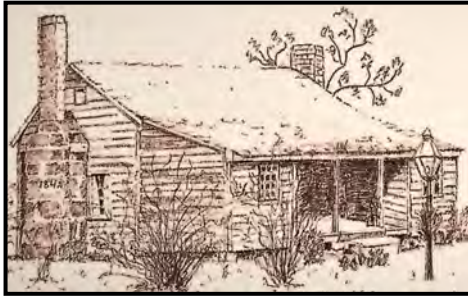


MOORE COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



Shaw House, Garner House, Sanders Cabin & Tobacco Barn in Southern Pines



Carthage



Bryant House and McLendon Cabin in Carthage

NOVEMBER 2024

**MOORE COUNTY
HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION**

**PO Box 324
Southern Pines, NC
28388**

910.692.2051

www.moorehistory.com

**2024 - 2025
DIRECTORS**

**Bill Britton
Carolyn Burns
Carla Butler
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Trent Carter
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Matt Farina
Janet Fowler
Michele Horner
Grace Jones
Dorothy Kicklighter
Cindy Novosel
Dorothy Shankle
Hugh Shepard
Carley Sutton**

PRESIDENTS' LETTER

This letter addresses two issues—volunteerism and our newsletter. I have learned that the Sampson County Historical Society and the Dorsey Pender Civil War Round Table will cease to exist. The cause is not financial but rather a lack of commitment by membership. As in many volunteer organizations, there is a small cadre of members who carry out the tasks of the organization and keep it operating. But if attendance at meetings or events drifts downwards, the end result is predictable. In our Association, that number is less than 30.

While a few new board members have replaced some old members, most have aged with me in my time on the board. That same cadre of volunteers do almost all the work, and frankly, we need help with simple chores such as distributing flyers about our events, assisting a docent on a Saturday afternoon, or baking some cookies for the holiday events. This is a plea for new volunteers, not to run the Association, but to lighten the work of the members who do. Call Sarah (910.692.2051) if you want to help keep the MCHA functioning and growing.

The Finance and the Communications committees of the MCHA have decided to move to an electronic only newsletter in 2025. As a 501c(3) organization, we have a reduced first-class mail rate. A minimum of 200 pieces must be mailed each time, otherwise we pay the standard first class mail rate of 72 cents. The price of paper and printing ink has not gone down. This does not include the volunteer time spent folding, taping, printing mailing labels, placing mailing labels, and stacking in zip code order to be delivered to the Post Office. We will continue to print newsletters for members who do not have electronic access, as well as providing free copies available at Shaw House. Your electronic newsletter will be in color with color photographs. If you have any concerns or comments about this decision, please let us know your thoughts.

Thank you. Sincerely, Matt Farina, Co-President



UP-COMING EVENTS



CHRISTMAS AT THE BRYANT HOUSE

The public is invited to this free event at the Bryant House on 3361 Mount Carmel Road in Carthage on Sunday, December 8, 2024, from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

Get into the old-time Christmas spirit with the annual Christmas open house at the historic Bryant House and McLendon Cabin. The Moore County Historical Association and Friends of the Bryant House host the event so every Yule visitor can get a little taste of how early settlers celebrated Christmas. There will be warm drinks, homemade cookies and live music.



MEMBERS' HOLIDAY PARTY

Members of the Association and their guests are invited to attend the annual Holiday Party at the Shaw House in Southern Pines on Thursday from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm on Thursday, December 12, 2024. This free event is to thank you for your support and to wish you good seasonal tidings. Come join us for holiday cheer and a bevy of delicious finger foods.

CHRISTMAS AT SHAW HOUSE

Come join us on Saturday, from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm, on December 14, 2024, at the Shaw House on Morganton Road in Southern Pines. This is a free event for the general public and especially for children of all ages.

Enjoy old-time decorations, warm apple cider and homemade cookies at the annual Christmas Open House. Tour three house-museums built during the 1700s and 1800s. The event is free to the public to let people see how early Southern Pines and Moore County residents lived.

The Association's gift shop at Shaw House will be open. This is also a perfect time to purchase some of our vintage hand-soaps wrapped in holiday designs.

The scented soaps make perfect stocking stuffers. An assortment of books on local history are available for purchase also.





NEWS



MALCOLM BLUE FESTIVAL

The Malcolm Blue Farm Heritage Day was held on Saturday, September 28th. The weather was perfect in Aberdeen after the rain from the hurricane had passed. A large crowd attended the event all day. The MCHA had an information tent at the farm that was manned by Jim Jones, Gene Schoenfelder and Matt Farina.

Featured was a collection of “What Is It?” items from the 19th-Century. Younger visitors were usually stymied by the items, but many older visitors remembered hearing about some of the items, and even recalled still using them in their childhood. The Association also featured a collection of 19th-Century toys and crafts that fascinated today’s children. There was also great interest in a flint-lock pistol, a cavalry saber, a bayonet and a collection of musket balls. Many parents requested photos of their children immobilized in our reproduction stocks ---- as a reminder of punishment for disobedience in the past.



THE OUTHOUSE IS IN

Over the past several years, outside projects have been added to the Shaw property. These have included a bell for calling workers

and family in from the fields, a well and well cover, a sample of a Virginia worm fence, benches for sitting, and a culinary and medicinal garden. What had been missing was an outhouse. Come see our newest addition thanks to Eagle Scout Joshua Butler.

Earlier in the year, Joshua had contacted the association seeking suggestions for a project he could do to earn his Eagle Scout certificate. There were several suggestions, but Joshua chose the construction of an outhouse. First, he needed approval from the MCHA as well as his Scout Troop leader. He then had to draw up plans for the project, raise the funds for the materials, enlist others to assist in the construction, and supervise in the construction. On Saturday, September 28th, the materials and crew arrived at the Shaw House, and by the end of the day, the project was finished.



The outhouse is a period one-seater structure with a cedar shingle roof. One of our members just happened to have a historic seat cover for the single hole. A reproduction Sears catalog and some corn cobs will be added. The Association had two requests. First, the outhouse is non-functional, and second that it is built on skids so it can be more easily relocated if necessary. Thank you, Joshua.

KENNETH BLACK CEMETERY DEDICATION

On Saturday, July 20, 2024, at least 150 people gathered at the cemetery site in the Morganton South development to celebrate its restoration. The date also was the exact 243rd anniversary of Black's death at the hands of patriot militia. He had been a Tory Loyalist who aided Tory militia commander, David Fanning.

Extensive grading of the cemetery site was necessary for the shopping center. Leaving the cemetery untouched would have left the cemetery at the bottom of an embankment. With consultation of the Moore County Historical Association, GPS recordings of the gravestones and rock walls were recorded and then the object placed in storage. Approximately 17 feet of soil was then placed over the cemetery as part of the grading process. The stones were then returned to the GPS recorded locations. A sturdy white picket fence was erected around the cemetery and a pair of brick columns were constructed to mark two entrances of paved walkways to the cemetery. A nearby pergola was also erected.



The ceremony began with a prayer that was followed by the placement of a beautiful natural wreath by boys and girls descended from the sons and daughters of Kenneth Black. A period musket salute was then fired. After introductions of some guests, local historian Andrew Diemer delivered a brief talk about the importance of this cemetery in local history as well as its broader implications in educational history. There was a closing prayer and retirement to the Show House property where a reception for

attendees was provided by the Association.



A large contingent of the descendants of Kenneth Black attended the event. Our members are encouraged to visit the cemetery which is now visible to all who pass through this large development which reflects positively on how local government, developers and historical group can work together to achieve a beneficial result.

Maintenance of the cemetery is being provided by the Moore County Historical Association since the cemetery is a private cemetery within the boundaries of the development. A fund has been established to receive donations for its upkeep. A pair of commemorative envelopes with a "show cancel" will be available as a token of the Association's appreciation for donations of \$50 or more.

DESECRATION AT THE OSG

Sometime during the week of September 16, vandals desecrated the Old Scotch Graveyard. A small headstone was up-rooted and stolen. Attempts to take a larger headstone were unsuccessful probably because of the weight of the stone. A report was filed with the Moore County Sheriff. This is the first major incident since the restoration of the cemetery. Previously at the request of the MCHA, the Sheriff's department had increased patrols by the cemetery after its restoration. Visits by the public had also increased, but given the relative isolated location of the cemetery, it is unobserved much of the time.

We are asking any members or friends who



MORE NEWS



may know sometime about the theft to call the Moore County Sheriff's office or the Moore County Historical Association. There is a reward for the arrest and conviction of the perpetrators. Desecrating a grave site may be a Class I misdemeanor or a Class I felony depending on the amount of damage under NC law 14-148.



10 PLATES DINNER AT SHAW

What might a dinner for guests have looked like at the Shaw House in the mid-19th Century? The MCHA provided that experience and raised funds for preservation projects at the same time. On October 8, ten guests were served a period dinner with period atmosphere dishware and lighting. This three course meal was prepared by Elliott's on Linden and featured a lamb vegetable soup, quail stuffed with vegetarian haggis, root vegetable and finished with a Scottish shortbread with Muscadine jelly. A hearty bread, assorted cheeses and hard cider preceded the meal.

Carla Butler organized this delicious event. Three more limited dinners will follow, and will be prepared by local chefs. Watch for upcoming announcements and reservations.



SCOTLAND COUNTY HIGHLAND GAMES

The MCHA was again represented at the Highland Games in Laurinburg by members Janette and Joey McNeill. There was food, competitions, games, and bagpipes. The event was well attended and the McNeills reported they were very busy providing information about the Association.



LATE UP-COMING ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Association's 2025 calendar of **Scottish Men in Kilts**, featuring members and community leaders, will be available at the Shaw House, the Country Book Store and The Pilot offices in mid November for \$25.00. This is the perfect stocking stuffer for your Scottish family & friend.

Space is still available for the Association's tour, **Exploring South Africa, Victoria Falls & Botswana**, May 2-16, 2025. Contact: Walker Oldham 910-638-1450 or walkereagle@gmail.com. The MCHA is sponsoring this with Collette Tours. More information may be found at: <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link1271848>



A SLICE OF HISTORY



MCHA AND THE ATOMIC BOMB

Recently, I was reading old newsletters and I came across a Slice of History titled “Mr. Blackwelder’s Strange Black Rock.” Oscar Blackwelder was a professional prospector in Robbins, NC during World War II. He found a vein of black rock that he could not identify and mailed a sample to Vanderbilt University for identification. To his surprise, he received a visit from two government officials instead of the usual postcard identifying the mineral.

Oscar took the men to the site, and he was advised to “mine it, weigh it, and ship it to this address.” He was also advised to carry a pistol, and he was even sent a special carrying permit from the Department of the Interior. Oscar was told the black rock was pitchblende and that it could be used to make a powerful explosive. Later, he learned that the pitchblende was rich in uranium, and that the pitchblende he had mined near Robbins, provided most of the uranium used in the atomic bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Oscar’s story was in a book titled, “World War II—Hometowns and Home Front Heroes, Life-Experience Stories from the Carolina’s Piedmont,” by Margaret Bigger (2003). I wanted to learn more about pitchblende in Moore County. However, the real story is much different than Oscar Blackwelder’s story.

Uranium was discovered in 1789 by German scientist Martin Heinrich Klaproth in the mineral pitchblende, from a German phrase describing it as a worthless rock. It was isolated shortly thereafter, but its radioactive properties were not discovered until 1896 by Henri Becquerel. Radium, a valuable element, was isolated by Marie and Pierre Curie in 1903.

Radium is a nuclear decay product of uranium and it had a much broader demand in industry and medicine.

The story of Shinkolobwe began when a rich seam of uranium was discovered there in 1915, while the Congo was under colonial rule by Belgium. The Shinkolobwe mine was named after a kind of boiled apple that would leave a hot water burn if squeezed. The name of the mine is also slang for “a man who is easy-going on the surface, but who becomes angry when provoked.” There was little demand for uranium back then. Instead, the land was mined by the Belgian company Union Minière for its traces of radium. By 1940, mining activity in northern Canada and the Congo had ceased, having unearthed enough radium to supply the world for several decades at pre-war levels of demand.

It was only when nuclear fission was discovered in 1938 that the potential of uranium became apparent. After hearing about the discovery, Albert Einstein immediately wrote to U.S. president, Franklin D. Roosevelt, advising him that the element could be used to generate a colossal amount of energy – even to construct powerful bombs. Several countries, including Great Britain and Germany had begun research into developing this possibility. In 1942, U.S. military strategists decided to buy as much uranium as they could to pursue what became known as the Manhattan Project.

While mines existed in Colorado and Canada, nowhere in the world had as much uranium as in the Congo. Few people knew what, or even where, Shinkolobwe was, but this small mine in the southern province of Katanga, in the now Democratic Republic of the Congo, was kept secret for decades.

Mines in the U.S. and Canada were considered a “good” prospect if they averaged yields between 0.5 and 1% uranium content. At Shinkolobwe, the ore typically was especially pure at

2%. The pitchblende contained sixty times more usable uranium than the average mine.

Pitchblende from the Eldorado Mine in Northern Canada supplied about 1/6th of the uranium used by the Manhattan Project. The mine was 320 feet deep, under the permafrost. Water seepage, the need for heaters, and the need for ventilation to also remove radon gas were problematic. Almost 300 tons of ore had to be transported by military aircraft to Alberta and then transported by rail to a refinery on Lake Ontario.

The Colorado mines provided about 1/7th of the Manhattan Project's uranium. The low content of uranium (0.25%) was in the tailing or remnants of mines producing vanadium which was used in steel manufacturing. Refining of the tailings occurred in Colorado.

The Shinkolobwe mine was an open pit mine and provided 2/3rds of the Manhattan Project's uranium. The pitchblende tailings from the earlier years of radium mining had been piled above ground. In a deal with Union Minière, negotiated by the British, who owned a 30% interest in the company, the U.S. purchased 1,200 tons of concentrated Congolese pitchblende, which had been stock-piled on Staten Island by a company as part of an independent speculative business venture.

An additional 3,000 tons of tailings that was stored above ground at the mine in Shinkolobwe, was also purchased and shipped from West Africa ports. However, the transportation of uranium ore across the Atlantic Ocean was an arduous task. The journey needed to be quick and secretive. German U-boats harassed Allied shipping constantly, making the route dangerous as well. Indeed, two of the forty uranium shipments from Congo to the United States were torpedoed and lost. Costs also skyrocketed into the hundreds of millions of dollars as the Shinkolobwe site and the roads connecting it to port cities needed to be drastically modernized. Portions of the 3,000 tons were stored in New Jersey until processed. U.S. Army engineers were dispatched to reopen the mine, which had fallen into disuse, and bring it back into production. New ore deliveries did not begin until late 1945 after the end of the war.

All of this was carried out under a blanket of secrecy, so as not to alert Axis powers about the existence of the Manhattan Project. Shinkolobwe was erased from maps, and spies were sent to the region to sow deliberate disinformation about what was occurring there. Uranium in communications was referred to as "gems", or simply "raw material." Shinkolobwe was never to be uttered.

This secrecy was maintained long after the end of the war. "Efforts were made to give the message that the uranium came from Canada, as a way of deflecting attention away from the Congo," says Susan Williams, a historian at the U.K. Institute of Commonwealth Studies. The effort was so thorough that the belief the atomic bombs were built with Canadian uranium persists to this day. After the war, improved enrichment techniques made Western powers less dependent on the uranium at Shinkolobwe. When The Congo gained independence from Belgium in 1960, the mine was closed and the entrance filled with concrete.

The ongoing secrecy around Shinkolobwe in still classified official US, British and Belgian records, has stymied efforts to recognize the Congolese contribution to the Allied victory, as well as hampering investigation into the environmental and health impacts of the mine.

In the United States, several mines opened or reopened during the war and provided additional ore, but by the end of 1946 only 15 mines were still operating. Discoveries of additional uranium sources in the American West after the war led to a uranium mining boom through the 1950s, and the United States would become a world leader in uranium production through the 1980s.

So, perhaps Oscar Blackwelder's find was part of an elaborate story to deflect attention from Shinkolobwe to Robbins, NC.





THANK YOU



The Moore County Historical Association sponsored another successful Annual Shaw Heritage Fair and Moore Treasures Tag Sale on October 11th and 12th. A great deal of planning and participation for such an event is necessary. On this sheet we would like to recognize the many volunteers, sponsors, and vendors who contributed to its success.

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Demonstrations

Basket Making, Gail Frazier
Bee Hive, Dees Bees Apiary
Blacksmith, Chip Shankle
Cat Facing Tree, Hugh Shepard
Chair Caning, Martha Cline
Hearth Cooking, Deborah Williams
Kennedy Rifle, Matthew Mutarelli
Loom Weaving, Sandhills Weavers
Quilting, Debbie Wick
Stocks, Pillars, Jim Jones
Wood Working, Archie McGee

Vendors

Antique Furniture & Rugs, Tom Dyne
Antiques & Collectibles, Denise Ferrari
Antiques & Collectibles, Arnold Seawell
Antiques & Collectibles, Paul Brill
Book Seller, Nancy Holt
Crochet Items, Morgan Snider
Knitted & Crocheted Items, Christine Abbott
Outdoor Furniture, Charles Yoder
Pecans, Quilts, Purses, Pam Cameron
Vintage Accessories, Carla Lawson
Wreath Décor, Dawn Sanches

Kids Programs

Childrens Games, Matthew Mutarelli
Corn Husk Dolls, Teresa
Eicheelberger
Face Painting, Kim Kirkpatrick
Horse & Lasso, Shaw Smith

Musicians

Encore Dance Group
Hammer N'Song
Scott Grote, Sound
Southridge Bluegrass
Tom Inmarsm Town Crier



MORE UP-COMING NEWS



Many hands are necessary to sponsor the Heritage Fair. Donated items need to be collected, sorted, priced, stored, removed from storage sites, brought to the Shaw grounds, tables set up, volunteers to sleep on the grounds the night before the fair, help vendors set up their tents, collect admissions, check out purchases, wrap purchases, act as docents for house tours, box up unsold items to be donated, take down table, help vendors take down tents, clean up the grounds, etc., etc., etc., and do all this with a friendly face. At the next MCHA event you attend, please thank a volunteer.

The Moore County Historical Association is partnering with Collette Tours to announce this seven day, popular fall tour of the Pacific Northwest and Northern California for October 2025. If you are interested in more information, contact the MCHA office at 910-692-2051, or contact Walker Oldham at 910-638-1450 or walkereagle@gmail.com.

The Moore County Historical Association presents
Pacific Northwest & California
with Optional 1-Night Seattle Pre Tour Extension
October 12 - 19, 2025

Volunteers for the Heritage Fair

Vic Anderson	Dorothy Kicklighter
Nathan Anderson	Sandra Lee
Deb Backus	Pam Martin
Jim & Liz Branch	Sarah Matthews
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Kaye Brown	Steady Mears
Carolyn Burns	Sierra Miles
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Paula Caddell	Beverly Offutt
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Terry Carpenter	Janet Peele
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For more information contact
The Moore County Historical Association

Walker Oldham - 910-638-1450
MCHA Office - 910-692-2051
walkereagle@gmail.com

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For more information on extensions and options for this tour visit
<https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1298612>