



*"Our mission is....to collect, preserve, protect and publicly display materials that are historically significant to Mitchell County...and to make its citizens aware of their heritage."*

## MITCHELL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

FIRST QUARTER 2017

### A Great Year Coming Up for MCHS!

Mitchell County Historical Society is off to a "buzzy" start in 2017, with our First Annual History Bee on Thursday, April 6<sup>th</sup>. Our monthly programs will begin on Monday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, and run through September. Check out the preview of all six programs in this newsletter and look for more details on each as presentation date draws near.

October will bring the Apple Butter Festival, and we plan to round out the year with our Second Annual Christmas Tour of Historic Mitchell County Homes. Other events planned for 2017 include more Photo Scanning Days like the two we held in February, when folks were invited to bring their old photos for be preserved for posterity.

Have you been following the "Looking Back" feature each week in the *Mitchell News-Journal*? After these fascinating glimpses of Mitchell County's past appear in the newspaper, we post them to our great new website. If you haven't seen it, go to [mitchellnchistory.org](http://mitchellnchistory.org) for more about our county's heritage.

Finally, MCHS needs your help with all these great activities. First, send your annual membership dues of \$20 (\$25 for the family). Plus, we welcome volunteers, so come by the office or call! We'd love for you to join us

Rhonda Gunter, Chair  
MCHS Board of Directors

## UPCOMING EVENTS FOR 2017

**April 6                    1<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL HISTORY BEE - 7pm - Historic Courthouse in Bakersville.** We are very excited about this event and have had a great response. There will be cash prizes for the students who participate and the questions will be based on the marvelous book, *Voices of the Valley*, by Elizabeth Hunter.

**April 17                    “Mitchell County: Early Crossroads of Cultures” - 7pm - Historic Courthouse in Bakersville.** This program will be presented by Dr. Daniel Barron, who will take us on a fast-paced visual journey into the past and consider a variety of real people and cultures that have visited Mitchell County from 8,000 BC to 1540 to 1780, and one fictional character by the name of Jamie Fraser. Using history and contemporary Google maps of trails and roads, we will see how you can actually walk in the footsteps of the first indigenous people, the first Europeans, and many of our Scottish and Scots-Irish ancestors.

**May 15                    “.....The Rest of the Story” - 7pm - Spruce Pine Library.** David Biddix, and his daughter, Amanda, will share stories about Mitchell County and the surrounding area that you may NOT have heard before. Researching old newspapers, books and journals, they have come up with some very entertaining discoveries!

**June 18 (Sunday)                    “The First Woman Hanged in North Carolina: The Frankie and Charlie Silver Story” – (Time and location to be determined) --** John Silver will present the story of his ancestors, Frankie and Charlie Silver, and how a murder occurred that continues to capture our interest through the years.

**July 17                    Stories of Appalachia - (Time and location to be determined) -** Steve Gilly and Rod Mullen will present the story of George Carter, the developer of the Clinchfield Railroad.

**August 21                    Music of the Toe River Valley - 7pm - Historic Courthouse in Bakersville.** Our wonderful Rhonda Gouge will present a musical program of the music of the Toe River Valley.

**September 18                    History of the Harris School - 7pm - Harris Middle School Auditorium.** Chris Hollifield will present the story of how the Harris School was founded and discuss its rich history through the years.



## ANNOUNCING THE FIRST ANNUAL INEZ MCRAE SCHOLARSHIP

For the second year, the Mitchell County Historical Society will award a college scholarship to a Mitchell County student. In 2017, however, the scholarship will not only award a deserving high school senior, it will also honor MCHS founding Board Member Inez Johnson Blevins McRae.

MCHS was incorporated in 1989 largely through the efforts of Inez and her husband Dr. James T. McRae, who died in 2003. They brought together other Mitchell County residents who also wished to preserve their heritage and strive to make others aware of our county's history. Inez has been, through the years since the Society's founding, its anchor and guiding force.

Born in Mitchell County on 19 Jun 1922 to George and Pearl McKinney Johnson, Inez taught school for many years, so it is quite fitting that our annual scholarship bear her name. Watch our newsletter and local newspapers to see what high school senior is the recipient of our first annual Inez McRae Scholarship.

Inez has recently moved to Winston-Salem to be closer to family, and while she had told us in advance that she would do so, we can't help but miss her. She has promised, however, to come back for frequent visits, so we will look forward to those. If you would like to contact Inez, her new address is 1351 Susana Wesley Drive, Box 195, Winston-Salem, NC 27104.



# **"A SUNDAY AFTERNOON OF OLD-TIME MOUNTAIN STYLE GOSPEL SONGS"**

**Sunday  
April 23 at  
3:00PM**



**Historic  
Courthouse  
Bakersville**



**\$5 DONATION**