



M C H S

"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 2018

THE MCHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS WELCOMES THE NEW YEAR

The Mitchell County Historical Society (MCHS) looks forward to a great year in 2018! Our programs will begin in April with a presentation on the 13th TN Cavalry by ETSU's Dr. Melanie Storie; see elsewhere in this issue for a fascinating account of a member of the 13th, Simon Harrell. Topics for other programs in 2018 include the geology of the Toe River, a Native American archaeological dig, and traditional Appalachian music. In addition, we're planning programs at 2 sites in the county, at the English Inn in Spruce Pine and the Old Kona Church.

The 2nd Annual History Bee is coming up in March, and we'll have the Apple Butter Festival in October and the Tour of Historic Sites at Christmas. More details on all these events will be coming soon.

We welcome you to join MCHS in its mission to promote the heritage of Mitchell County. Let us know if you'd like to serve on the Board of Directors, volunteer in the Office or Museum, or just help out with one of the events above. Email or call today!

*Happy
New Year*

COME OUT FOR MCHS SCAN DAYS!

The Mitchell County Historical Society (MCHS) is dedicated to collecting, preserving, protecting and publicly displaying materials that are historically significant for the county. To do this, we need your help, and we have scheduled 3 days in February and March when you can share your photos, videos, items, and stories, plus get questions about local genealogy answered.

Scan Days have been scheduled for Saturday, February 3 at the MCHS offices in the Historic Mitchell County Courthouse in Bakersville and Saturday, February 17 at the Spruce Pine Main Street office located on Lower Street in the new Central Park, and Saturday, March 3 at Peterson Store in Hunt Dale. Times are from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day. We ask you to bring your items and stories to any (or all) sessions. We will scan your photos, record your stories, and discuss local history. You DON'T have to leave your photos and items with us...we will scan the items while you wait. All we ask is that you agree to allow us to share them with others through our programs, displays, our Facebook and Twitter groups, and at the Mitchell County Historical website at mitchellnchistory.org.

In case of snow on one of the dates, our make-up day will be March 10th. If you have questions or would like more info about Scan Days or the MCHS, please visit mitchellnchistory.org/scan, call (828) 688-4371, or post to our Facebook group (facebook.com/historicmitchellcounty.org) or Twitter account ([@mitnchist](https://twitter.com/mitnchist)).

SECOND ANNUAL HISTORY BEE

The 2nd Annual MCHS History Bee is scheduled for Thursday, March 22, 2018, 7:00 pm at the Historic Courthouse in Bakersville. The goal of the History Bee is to help Mitchell County young people become more aware of our rich heritage.

There will be two divisions of competition, Mitchell County Middle School students and Mitchell County High School students. First prize in each division is \$500, second prize \$300, and third prize \$200. Generous local businesses and organizations are providing the prizes.

All History Bee questions will come from Elizabeth Hunter's *Voices of the Valley*, which was published in 2011, the 150th anniversary of the formation of Mitchell County. This publication is already in public and school libraries, and MCHS has made copies available to history teachers. It is also available for purchase from the

Historical Society office in Bakersville or from other sources.

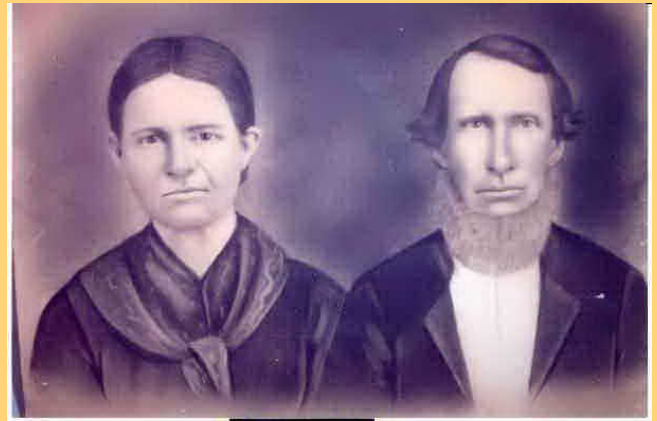
Students are asked to sign up to participate in the MCHS History Bee by Friday, 3/16/2018, but registration is free. Ask your history teacher for a registration form or find it online at mitchellnchistory.org.

If you have questions, go to the MCHS website or call 828-385-0564 or 828-688-4371.



SERGEANT SIMON HARRELL AND GENERAL JOHN HUNT MORGAN

In the Tipton Hill Community Cemetery rests a Union soldier whose company helped kill “the best man in the Southern Confederacy,” General John Hunt Morgan. The phrase comes from one of Morgan’s Captains, Henry B. Clay, who was present at the killing and is quoted in Melanie Storie’s readable and informative book, *The Dreaded Thirteenth Tennessee Union Cavalry: Marauding Mountain Men* (The History Press, Charleston SC 2013).



Elizabeth Miller Harrell and Simon Harrell

Ancestry.com

We know that Sgt. Simon Harrell, Company M of the 13th TN Cavalry, was present on that fateful day because we have a copy of a letter written to his wife Elizabeth in which he confirms his involvement. The 3 ½ page letter includes words of endearment to Elizabeth; assurance that he has looked for a dress pattern for her (probably at Knoxville); that he sent needles, five dollars in “green Back,” and a “tye” for their son Enoch; encouragement for her to plant as much wheat as she can, but he’ll do it if she can’t and he can come home on “fur low;” a surprise visit from Sara and the Boys; and that he has around \$140 “cuming” to him. He also says that “we hav not had mutch time fur writing letters Since we come to East Tenn fur we hav wore out nearly all our horses and killd a rite (?) good horses.” Almost giving it a feeling of “oh by the way,” Simon tells her that the company never knows when and where they will be moving out. “The dark est and wetest nite ever saw we traveled all nite and killd old John Morgan at Greenville and severl other rer rebels and took several prisners...”

Courtesy of R.H. and Richard Harrell

I am edom you want his work know
 and let her fix up the same pieces of
 the fence and and try to pay me off
 and have my farm a skin in against the risk
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 My self and better it sure thing I shur
 ly can get a fur low again then

Simon
 Harrell
 to
 Elisabeth
 Harrell

Controversy continues among historians
 as to the circumstances and ethics of
 Morgan's death; however, we know of at
 least one local soldier who was directly
 involved. The story will continue in April
 when Melanie Storie (Lecturer,
 Department of History, ETSU) will
 present the first Mitchell County
 Historical Society program of 2018 at the
 Mitchell County Historic Courthouse.
 Details to follow.

By **Dr. Daniel Barron**
 MCHS Board Member

A special thanks to R.H. and Richard
 Harrell who came over the mountain
 from Tennessee and shared this letter
 with us at Griffith's Store in Tipton Hill
 and gave us permission to make
 photocopies.



General John H. Morgan and wife Mattie
 Tennessee State Library and Archives