

Historical Muse

Summer 2016

Chester County Historical Society



CCHS

Post Office Box 811

Chester, SC 29706

Email:

ccmuseum@truvista.net

Visit our Website:

Chestershistory.org

The Nichols collection may be viewed at:

scmemory.org

Prints are available by contacting the society at

803-385-2332



Duke Energy Educational Initiative a Great Success!

Many thanks to Duke Energy for funding our educational initiative. We toured over 900 children this year. All Chester County 3rd and 8th grade students were treated to a guided tour of our two museums featuring displays created just for this program.

We "walked" the students through time, from our Gaston Collection of ancient Native American artifacts right up to the 20th century. The 8th graders were treated to a tour of the historic Chester County Courthouse! Many thanks to Sue Carpenter,

Clerk of Court, for conducting these tours through the records vaults and the actual courtroom!

The Catawba Dancers came and danced and drummed for the 3rd grade students. After our tours we all enjoyed lunch at local church social halls. Chester A.R.P, Chester 1st Baptist, and Calvary Baptist all hosted students! Many thanks to them.

These tours would not be possible without the contributions and cooperation of the County of Chester and the Chester County School District.



Update on the Nichols Collection

This past year has been a busy one for processing the Nichols Collection. When you have an estimated half-million images, it takes a lot of hard work and dedication to keep going. This past year over 10,000 images

have been cleaned, scanned, sleeved, inventoried, and had meta-data created. We have an amazing intern working 10 hours a week on the collection. We would like to bring her in for more hours and are actively seek-

ing funding for this position. Henry O. Nichols' images can be seen all around Chester County and is part of the SC Digital Library and the National Digital Public Library.



Promoting Historic Tourism in Chester County

We have had a busy year working to promote historic tourism in Chester County.

We brought the world's only firing Confederate-made 10-pounder back to Chester! She will fire exclusively in Chester County and in static displays around the State. We do this to bring tourists into the County. We keep them here by sharing this significant history of Chester County with them. They are always impressed by the

depth of history in the County!

We have participated in many of Chester County's festivals and events including, but not limited to the Ag & Arts Tour, Old Fashioned 4th at the Fort Lawn Community Center, and the Flopeye Fish Festival. A firing schedule can be found on our website.

Our next big project is to gather all our history and

artifacts surrounding the Great Falls area and most specifically Mount Dearborn Island. With the upcoming development of historical sites and tourism, we want to be ready!

We operate two of the three existing museums in the County. Our Transportation Museum is an official Tourism Information Center.



Blue Star Museums—Honoring our Military

Starting to see some of our brave men and women in uniform! We are proud to be Blue Star Museums! All Active Duty Military and their families are admitted free to our museums from Memorial Day to Labor Day

under this program. We have an excellent military collection, with uniforms from the Civil War right up to Operation Iraqi Freedom! Our gun room has examples of many of the military weapons used, from the Revolu-

tion on up! If you know a military family who would enjoy a free tour, tell them to come visit and bring the family.

The CCHS Museums & Archives are proud to be Blue Star Museums



A Dialog with the Past—Focus on Finley

We have completed what we could on the first part of this grant, which was mainly a fact finding mission. We defined some of the old neighborhoods and the significant African American sites and groups pertinent to Chester County. We are

now moving on to our Focus on Finley. The CCHS and the Finley Restoration Committee have teamed up to produce a souvenir book of Finley High Graduating Classes which will be sold by the Restoration Committee to help fund the restora-

tion of the building as a community center. We are working on identifying the graduates. If you think you can help please contact us here at the CCHS or the Finley Restoration Committee.

CCHS—Annual Meeting—October 20th

This year the War Memorial Building in Great Falls will be the venue of the Chester County Historical Society’s 2016 Annual Meeting. Our Annual Meetings are always a “hot” ticket in Chester but this year we will most definitely sell out. Why? Our speaker, Dr. Jonathan Leader, is the State Archeologist and he has done ex-

tensive research on Mount Dearborn and the Military Academy that was supposed to open up there.

In addition to our informative speaker, there will be dinner and dessert by Sarge and Company, Door Prizes, and our ever popular raffle. Don’t miss out! Tickets will be available on Eventbrite and from Board Members.



Mills sketch of Mount Dearborn

New Acquisitions

People ask all the time where the Society “got its collection.” Most of this collection started back in the 1950’s with Ms. Louise Knox collecting and presenting from her room under the stairs at the courthouse. Since

1981 we have had use of the 1914 Chester County Jail. We accept donations of artifacts and genealogical information. Recently silver spoons made by Chester Native John McKee were donated, an original print of General

George Paton right here in Chester County purchased and donated, rare photographs of old houses no longer standing,, and our personal favorite; an original print of the earliest known photo of the 1914 Chester County Jail was given to us!



City Hall on Fire!

City hall was built in 1890-91 in the Romanesque Revival style on the top of the hill for a total cost of \$15,902. It contained a high clock tower with a bell in it. The bell sounded the alarms for fires. The 1st floor housed the city offices and

the city jail. Upstairs was the Opera House. The Opera house had a gallery which had a “pit” for seating and two galleries with box seats and two closed box seating sections in the pit. The first company to play in the Opera House

was Barlow’s Minstrels in September of 1891. A fire on July 25, 1929 (pictured left) badly damaged City Hall, which also housed the Library at the time. Many treasures were lost. The bell and the clock tower were not replaced.



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We are on the web:

chestershistory.org

Preserving Chester County History!



Wellridge School Bus

We are almost there and we need your help! All we are lacking is a little funding. Would you or the employees of your company want to sponsor the creation of the finished display? We are very close! This is the type of interactive display that will be marketable to the surrounding counties and yet another way the Historical Society works to bring tourism into Chester County. Would you like to donate? Please call Randy at the Transportation Museum! All donations are tax deductible! Just think of virtually riding along in the bus on your way to school in 1925!

Membership & Volunteer Opportunities

Membership is what keeps us going! If you have not joined for 2016 there is still time.

Our needs are many and we are dedicated to protecting and preserving the significant history of Chester County! Please visit our website for membership information –you can even join online! Membership forms are also available at our two museums. Come by and visit!

Volunteer!

We have many needs. Are you able to give us a few hours a week? We can put you to work! Please call 803-385-2332 or 803-385-2330.

Our members are our best volunteers so we wanted everyone to know that there are many ways to contribute!

We operate two museums and have a large archive.