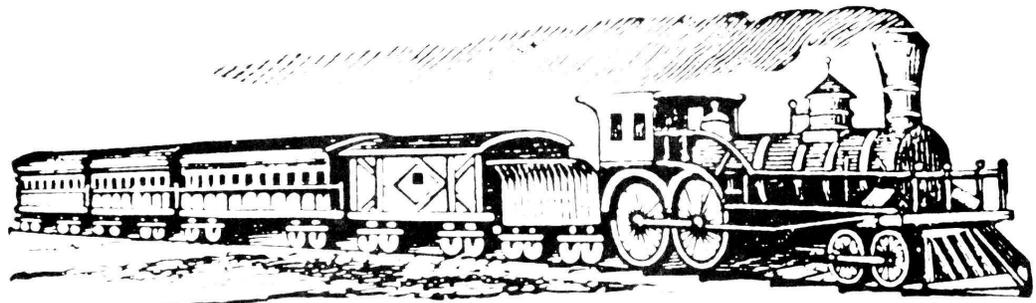


The Dispatch

Apex Historical Society



The Newsletter of the Apex Historical Society

Apex, North Carolina

July/August/September 2019

President's Message

So, it has been a busy Spring for us at the Apex Historical Society. Some of us were able to attend the Wake County Historical



Preservation Celebration in late April hosted by The Wake County Historic Preservation Commission and Capital Area Preservation Inc., held this year at the Leslie Alford Mims House in

Holly Springs.. This event is held to celebrate the accomplishments of the commission and to award Wake County historical landmarks



achieved over the previous year or so. This year we had two houses in Apex receive their plaques. The **Upchurch-Williams house** on Robertson Road and the **Baucom-Olive house** on Salem Street were the recipients.



AHS Booth at PeakFest



May 4th we had a booth at Peakfest very near the Halle Center and the town caboose. We had lots of interest in the history of Apex and had great representation from the members.

Speaking of the caboose, the Town of Apex is close to having the parking on Seaboard Street finished. Plans are in the works to provide better lighting and accessibility for the caboose in the near future.



Apex Garden Club Volunteers to Help with Landscaping at MPH

Then we were fortunate enough to get the help of the Apex Garden Club, with the help of Claire Rousseau, to start the weeding and bed

cleaning process around the Maynard Pearson house. (Who remembers there were columns at the driveway?).



Their club members have been out on two separate Saturdays to work, and we have only found one yellow jacket nest. We can't thank them enough. We are planning on updating the parking and access to the Maynard Pearson House. A landscape plan was done several years ago, and we are in the process of updating it. We are fortunate to have received a grant from the Town of Apex to help facilitate this process.

Tunstall House Restoration High on our Agenda

We hope to help the push to get the Tunstall house restoration going. That way people can see what a period correct house looks like. With this done, the Tunstall house can be a gathering spot, event site, or Town offices in the future, and let the Historical Society handle the museum aspect. We will keep you posted!

We hope to see everyone at the upcoming Summer Sizzler Ice Cream Social in August. It is always a great turnout and the home made ice cream is delicious. Until then, hope to see you around Apex.

Jeff Hastings
Apex Historical Society President

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Summer Sizzler Ice Cream Social

Once a year we have an old fashioned ice cream social. The event this year, at the Maynard Pearson House, is scheduled for Sunday August 18, 2019 from 3PM to 5PM. Members contribute a freezer of their favorite ice cream. So far we have four flavors promised. If you would like to share your home made ice cream please let Diane Long know by August 3rd. Her phone number is 919-362-8097.



Part of the fun is having a variety of ice cream flavors to try. Members are encouraged to bring old time photos to share of family and Apex events. Invite a friend to join us. We will eat and share plans too for our fall events of the Society. We hold the meeting indoors so the house is available to tour. RSVP with how many will attend to Diane Long at 919-362-8097 or Erin Thompson at cell # 919-219-3610 with your text message.



Maynard Pearson House at 1101 Olive Chapel Road, Apex, Ice Cream Social, 8/18/19, 3 PM.

Recap of Annual Plant Sale

By Diane Long

On May 11, 2019 The Apex Historical Society conducted the annual Plant Sale. We are thankful for good attendance with lots of sales. The weather cooperated and we had a successful sale. This year we added more annuals and bags of cow manure so customers were ready to go home and plant their purchases.

Thanks to the Apex Garden Club for donating their overflow plants from Peak Fest for our sale. The income report will be given in the treasurer's report at the August meeting. Thank you to people donating plants, buying plants, working that day and the many talents that made this event a success.



The AHS thanks Diane Long for her efforts on behalf of this fund raising project.

Preservationist of the Year Award

The Billie Duncan Historical Preservationist Award was established in 1999. Many of you remember Billie Duncan as a charter member. She also maintained her home on Salem Street which was on land that was part of the Shepherd's Vineyard plantation. See more on related topic under "Who was Laura Duncan?"

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Over the years more than twenty members have received this award with their names being added to the plaques hanging in the dining room of the Maynard Pearson House. This represents many years of donated service to promoting, preserving and protecting the history of Apex. This award is made annually and need not be an AHS member. This year it will be awarded at the August Ice Cream Social. Come and join us in recognizing outstanding service to our Society.

Membership

Our treasurer John Messler and secretary Erin Thompson welcome new members to our Society. Welcome aboard and enjoy the ride.

David & Jenine Atoji
Mark & Mary Lee Blatchford
Tom Coleman
Matthew Petee
Kaitlyn Turner

Celebration of Life



Member Laraine Behnke invites the Society to the Celebration of Life for her departed husband Richard Behnke to be held on Saturday July 27 from 1:30 to 4:30PM at the Apex Community Center. Richard was born January 24, 1942 in New York City and passed away April 22, 2019. Richard was a people person active in Apex pickle ball,

Apex Garden Club and the Couples Club. He also enjoyed his family three sons Steven, Lance and Jeffrey and their wives Lauren and Hope and his five grandchildren who held a special place in his heart. You are missed Richard.

RSVP to Laraine if you plan to attend the celebration and may want to give a short remembrance talk at the service at 919-386-0439.

Someone Asked “Who was Laura Duncan?”

By Claire Rousseau

When I arrived in Apex in 1985 I wondered the same thing. Who is this person that a street was named after her? I found the answer after meeting with a small group as we formed the new Apex Historical Society.

This was in the fall of 1987. Carl Holleman the town of Apex attorney, was one of our founding members. He knew a lot about Apex. His sons Warren and Toby, in their book “**Pluck, Perseverance and Paint,**” continue Carl’s love of educating us on the history of Apex. A must-have volume to purchase if you want more Apex history. I can’t thank them enough for going the extra mile to get this once small black covered book back into circulation in its new expanded format.

Now back to my story.

In the eighties, while driving on Old Raleigh Road, I could see an old wooden run down house on the left side in a field. I wondered about this old abandoned house. In those days it was surrounded by empty overgrown fields on both sides of the street.

Soon, through our newly formed group wanting to preserve Apex history, I found out that this was the home of Reverend Patrick W

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Dowd, born in 1799, and owner of the Shepherd's Vineyard Plantation.

All too soon we heard the town of Cary was to use this home in their ETJ as a controlled burn demonstration. Our small group gathered after work one night and went to the site to take pictures and look around the grounds. Little did we know that the burn was scheduled for the very next day.

The next time we saw the house, only the chimneys stood. That was a sad day. What was our new historical society to do? We were mostly transplants, and we had no money in our treasury. We were all so very sad to see this part of history gone.

See the article in the archives of The Western Wake Herald, September 21, 1988 "Group Laments Loss of Dowd House." The archives



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of this last Apex newspaper are on file at Apex Town Hall. This incident made us more convinced that our group was needed in Apex.

So, over the years, we have acquired more information about Rev. Dowd. See the Holleman's book, chapter eleven, to learn more about this preacher who influenced North Carolina and the direction of the Baptist Church.

Now, back to Laura Duncan's identity.

The loss of Shepherd's Vineyard propelled us to move ahead with our mission. Our newly formed society reached out to the Apex citizens to join us in our mission to "Preserve, Protect and Promote" the history of Apex. We set a goal of 100 charter members.

One sweet southern lady who joined was **Billie Duncan**. She owned a big house at **316 North Salem Street** with a big front porch that curiously faced downtown. She was the wife of John Duncan.

Billie Duncan had her home on our home tour in December, 1988. Touring her lovely period furnished home, I had the feeling of going back in time to that old abandoned house.

A white bedspread in one bedroom was made with cotton from the Dowd plantation, I was told. Then I spotted a watercolor rendition of that house hanging above her writing desk. In this picture, the soft afternoon light dappled the trellis covered back porch of the plantation house.

She told me about Patrick Dowd's daughter, **Martha Ann Dowd White**. Known as Don, she built this house in the 1890's on Shepherd's Vineyard property. Her daughter **Laura Duncan** inherited all of the extensive Vineyard property.

Back then Laura Duncan Road was a dirt pathway. At that time it was customary to name streets with the adjacent landowner's name. Thus, Laura Duncan Road, named after Rev. Patrick Dowd's granddaughter, came into existence.

AHS member John Pearson's uncle, **Dr Paul Lamar Pearson**, was the last Pearson to live in the Maynard Pearson House. Laura Duncan was married to the good doctor for seventeen years.

Maynard Pearson Trust

By John Pearson

The Apex Historical Society maintains a web site. You can find more timely information and Apex history at apexhistoricalsociety.com and we are also on Facebook under Apex Historical Society.

Tours of the Maynard Pearson House Museum on Olive Chapel Road are available for school groups, community organizations, visitors and anyone interested in seeing a home representing life in the late 1800's. Tours take about an hour. Donations welcomed. We are a 501-c-3 foundation.

Contact us at our website.

AHS 2019-20 Board Members:

Jeff Hastings AHS Board President
Jeremy Bradham AHS Board Vice President
Erin Thompson AHS Board Co-Secretary
Diane Long AHS Board Co-Secretary
John Messler AHS Board Treasurer
Heather Werking AHS Board Member
Jan Brooks ... AHS Board Member Emeritus
John Pearson AHS Board member