

## The 1888 Museum

The 1888 Museum had a successful 2019 season. Although the museum was open a couple of days in April and May, it did not officially open until June with the staffing by our volunteer docents. The museum was open for 48 days and principally on Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

The museum provides a glimpse of the our community's past. It's focus is primarily on tourism and hospitality. The building itself, once a cottage that served guests of the Watauga Hotel, is indeed historical, and is now in its third century.

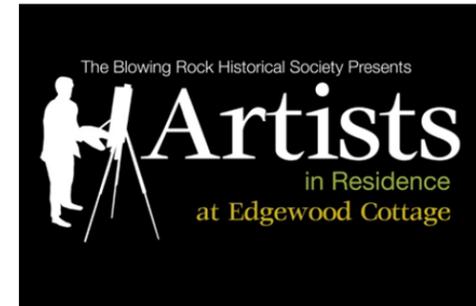
Making allowances for the visitors who didn't sign our guest register, it is estimated that we had 1600 guests tour the museum during the season. Our US guests represented 34 states and the District of Columbia. We also had visitors from the UK, Venezuela, Australia and Mexico.

A special thanks to the nineteen individuals, couples and employees of Wells Fargo who volunteered as docents in 2019! Demonstrating exceptional support to our endeavor was Carol Knapp who provided our tourists and citizens with information about our museum and community for sixteen Sunday afternoons. To all of our docents, without your willingness to serve, the museum would not have been available for our community and visitors to enjoy; so thanks again for your dedication.



Spring 2020

## ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE IS GEARING-UP FOR 2020



Our tenth anniversary year of Artists in Residence at Edgewood Cottage was another success. The program is an excellent use of Elliott Daingerfield's first home and studio, giving opportunities to regional artists to show and sell their work in our wonderful historic setting. 2019 set a record for attendance with over 5,200 visitors viewing works from over 40 high country artists. This Historical Society event was financially

successful again, allowing us to donate over \$3,000 to the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation for restoration projects at the Moses H. Cone Memorial Park. The other half of our net proceeds will be used to support Historical Society projects.

Even before the 2019 program ended in September, work began on the 2020 event. This year, the program will run from Memorial Day through Labor Day. With an outstanding committee of volunteers, we expect to make this year's program even more valuable to our artists, our Historical Society members and our community. In addition to our normal advertising and publicity, we have some creative plans to help get our community more proactively engaged in the program. One goal is to get the word out that...

- Artists in Residence is an important and valuable community event that draws us and our visitors together for several good causes.
- It is a fun and interesting way to meet artists, see their work, and maybe take home some original art.
- We want members and our entire community to visit the Cottage often this summer and always bring out-of-town friends to enjoy a little time in one of Blowing Rock's historic venues.

One of our "tag lines" is, we are on "the cultural corner where art and history meet." (Edgewood Cottage, BRAHM, and two historic churches.) We look forward to seeing each of you and thousands of other visitors at Edgewood Cottage this year.

### Happenings

Town Birthday Party on Wednesday, March 11, 3:30 pm at Town Hall. Charlie Sellers will share comments. One Historical Plaque will be presented.

Jerry Burns Day on Thursday, June 18, 2020 at 3:30 pm at Rumble House. Guest speakers are Anne Bernhardt and Lee Vason. They are the granddaughters of Finley Gwyn Harper, Sr., grew up coming to Blowing Rock from Hickory and have homes here today. Gwyn Harper first purchased land in Blowing Rock in 1905. The Harper Family has a long history of acquiring land in this area with preservation and protection in mind for future generations. Anne and Lee have many interesting and funny stories to share about their years and their families' years in the Blowing Rock community.

Tea and Tour :

Information will be sent out closer to the summer date.

## SHOW AND TELL

To some, it probably seems like nothing's going on in our organization since last December's Holiday Party. I can assure you there's been plenty happening behind the scenes. The projects and planning meetings continue and are an important part of maintaining the ongoing interest in Blowing Rock's history.

We look forward to another Artists in Residence season at Edgewood Cottage and seeing new art from the artists invited to showcase their works. This committee has been hard at work getting ready for the 2020 season. The cottage itself is scheduled to receive a new roof and rain gutters this spring.

- Plans are moving forward for the repair and restoration of the 1888 Museum along with some fresh displays from our collection. Thanks to Dr. Andrea Burns, we've received some very professional and current direction for exhibiting our collection by her class at ASU.
- Progress is being made to properly store and digitize our photographs, through collaborative efforts with Dr. Eric Plagg and Digital Watauga.
- New work to organize and catalog our object and paper collections continues by Zach Dressel. We hope to hear more about his work in upcoming months.
- We are currently reprinting *The Village Tapestry, The History of Blowing Rock* by Barry M. Buxton. This 1989 book, out of print for many years, continues to be sought after by new residents and the owners of vacation lodging. Our thanks to the Broyhill Foundation for funding a substantial part of the cost of reprinting.



On Valentine's Day, I received an email from the National Trust for Historic Preservation that made me pause. *"May you know the sense of belonging that comes from being connected to our heritage, and may you spend the day with those you treasure in a place that you love."*

I couldn't help thinking of Blowing Rock as a place I love and a place to love. And I imagined our historical society sharing the same sentiment with its members. I think the sense of belonging and being connected go hand in hand, even if our heritage place is elsewhere. The local heritage or history of a place is what makes it interesting and what makes it unique. We share the stories, we learn from each other, and we work together to honor this place. And before we know it, we are connected.

It seems to me that our visitors are often looking to experience some small part of that connectedness or community, as we know it to be here in Blowing Rock. Through our show and tell, taking the time and offering hospitality, we are giving them just that.

Happy spring and safe travels as you return for the season,  
Rita White

## Our Mission Statement

The Blowing Rock Historical Society's mission is to identify, protect, and preserve the historical resources important to Blowing Rock's heritage and to promote our history as a means of enhancing our village's historical culture.

The Executive Board worked together over the winter months to identify the immediate goals for the organization; how to sustain our programs and be of greater benefit to the town of Blowing Rock. Board officer succession and the structure of committees were explored and some actions have already begun. A separate newsletter outlining the Strategic Plan will be forthcoming before the Annual Meeting, so that members can review it before the business meeting.

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## HELP HEAT MOUNT BETHEL CHURCH

At our picnic on the church grounds last fall, Andrew Critcher described the work he's doing there and how he was looking for a woodstove like the original one that used to heat the church. But a new chimney is needed stove before a stove can be put into place, and is estimated to cost approximately \$8,000.

The BRHS board has initiated a "Chimney Fund" and will match all contributions up to \$4000 in support of the new chimney. Please help to heat Mt Bethel Church by donating to the preservation efforts of Andrew and Klutz Preservation by sending your check to BRHS, PO Box 804, Blowing Rock, NC 28605 and writing Mt. Bethel on the memo line.

### New Development!

As we go to press with this newsletter, we have just learned that a stove has been found and purchased!

A big thanks to the Wilkinson's for their very generous contribution. Perhaps we can look forward to another event on some wintry day inside the little white church surrounding a cozy fire.



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## 2019-2020 Executive Board

Jim Clabough  
Tom Obrien  
Charlie Sellers  
Ineka Thomas  
Lonnie Webster  
Jean Wilkinson

Jim Crowell  
Ann Rhyne  
Bob Stout  
Richard Trexler  
Rita White