

# ❧ Past Times ❧

A Newsletter of the Cashiers Historical Society

July 2004

## Dowden Challenge met!

Once again, Tom and Wendy Dowden have stepped up to the plate, offering to donate additional acreage surrounding the Zachary-Tolbert House if the Cashiers Historical Society could raise \$100,000 to fund the construction of restrooms and expanded parking to handle the increased activity at the home since it opened to the public in June 2001.

Board Members at Cashiers Historical Society's spring board meeting applauded Board Chairman Millie Lathan's announcement that CHS has raised the \$100,000, successfully meeting the Dowdens' challenge.

The Dowdens purchased the historic Zachary-Tolbert House in 1997 and donated it to the Cashiers Historical Society for restoration. Their newest gift will add approximately a third of an acre to the original .80 acre tract donated by the Dowdens.



*Wendy and Tom Dowden, left, and Chairman Millie Lathan were all smiles after Cashiers Historical Society raised \$100,000 to meet the Dowden Challenge.*

The Cashiers Historical Society has also closed on the purchase of the remaining acreage of the original tract the Dowdens bought from Robert Red "Bubba" Tolbert. Tolbert, the grandson of the Robert Red Tolbert who acquired the home in 1905, made restoration and preservation of the home a condition of its sale. This gives CHS a total of 5.2 acres and ensures that this significant historical landscape will be forever protected.

"We are grateful to Tom and Wendy Dowden for making this latest gift to the community," said Lathan. "Their generosity will enable us to preserve a treasured historic landscape. The Cashiers Historical Society is committed to raising awareness for preserving the village character and special mystery that is Cashiers, and the preservation of the Zachary-Tolbert landscape is a vital link in this effort."

## Barrs' honored with first Village Heritage Award

More than 100 guests gathered to honor the memory of Carrington and Peggy Barrs when the Cashiers Historical Society presented the first Village Heritage Award to the Barrs family in recognition of the preservation of Alexander Gardens.

The Village Heritage Award was established to recognize individuals and businesses that have preserved historic sites vital to the village character of Cashiers.

The ceremony took place on Thursday, May 25th, at the Gardens.

CHS historian Jane Nardy recounted how each building had been used when it was first built, along with some of the legends associated with their standing in Cashiers' history.



*Children of Carrington and Peggy Barrs accept the Village Heritage Award in recognition of the preservation of Alexander Gardens.*

A summary of the Barrs' attachment to Cashiers and commitment to historic preservation was given by Bud Darden, a close family friend and a member of the Village Conservancy board.

Eleanor Welling, Vice Chairman

of the Cashiers Historical Society Board, said that preserving Cashiers' past is key to retaining its singular village character. Alexander Gardens, with 12 historic buildings still standing from Cashiers' early days, is a witness to the past and present economic vitality of this little village.

Shopkeepers were happy to host visitors in their historic buildings during this Chamber Business After Hours event.

The award was first announced last fall at the Cashiers Chamber of Commerce recognition dinner. The May 25th ceremony included unveiling Cashiers Historical Society's new logo on the bronze plaque commemorating the award, which has been mounted at Alexander Gardens.

## Cocktails & Characters

"History says, 'This is what happened.' Preservation adds, 'Right here' and that simple addition gives our knowledge of history an immediacy that is absolutely essential if we hope to make an understanding of the past a springboard to a better future."

Dwight Young, senior communications officer for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, summarized in those few lines the importance of preservation when he spoke at the Zachary-Tolbert House during Cocktails and Characters, Friday, June 11<sup>th</sup>.

This second annual event for members of the Cashiers Historical Society was again hosted by Board member Pat Camp and her husband Ehney. Members were invited to wander through the Zachary-Tolbert House before Young's speech, where they encountered giant cut outs of famous people like General Wade Hampton.

"One of the things that's refreshing about the Zachary-Tolbert House is that it doesn't perpetuate

that tired preservation cliché – and I thank you," Young said. He had just outlined the features found in so many antebellum houses: bricks from England, woodwork hand-carved in Europe, a dark stain where someone bled to death after a duel and more.

Young further outlined the significance of the Zachary-Tolbert House. Back in the early days, he said, "some people named Zachary and Tolbert decided they deserved a house that would show that Jackson County was an up-to-date sort of place and that they themselves were well-informed, civilized folks who knew what a good house ought to look like."

"Dwight Young visited us many years ago when we were beginning to make decisions about the future of the house. His wise counsel guided many of the choices we made regarding its restoration, so it was a special treat to welcome him back to see the work we've done," said CHS President Ann Austin.

## Interns learn a variety of skills

What if your job description included excavating artifacts, serving refreshments and answering historical questions? From an archeological dig to the first Village Heritage Award to weekly tours of the historic Zachary-Tolbert House, our two interns have already had a varied and interesting summer experience.

Lydia Doyle, returning for her second year with the Cashiers Historical Society, recently completed her degree in history at Notre Dame University in South Bend, Indiana. Her interest in history will take her to Athens, Georgia, this fall to begin a four year program in historic preservation.

Lydia is continuing her work on the graffiti project at the Zachary-Tolbert House. The writings on the wall



*Lydia Doyle, left, and Brenna McCall Holland are summer interns with Cashiers Historical Society.*

have been catalogued and numbered. Picture taking will complete this two year project.

Brenna McCall Holland, a senior at Western Carolina University majoring in history, grew up in Cashiers and attended Blue Ridge School. After marrying Tim Holland and having three children – Toby, Jynnah, and Emma – Brenna returned to WCU to finish her degree. She is a member of Phi Alpha Theta, the International History Honor Society.

While interning at the Albert Carlton Cashiers Community Library a few years ago, Brenna began recording the history of Cashiers. She hopes to complete this project this summer, adding photos and first hand accounts.

## Cashiers Valley Garden Club tours Zachary-Tolbert House

What began as a normal monthly meeting with refreshments, bulbs to exchange and a long agenda became an historic event for the Cashiers Valley Garden Club: they were the first group to hold a meeting under Cashiers Historical Society's new tents when they met on the meadow beside the Zachary-Tolbert House Wednesday, June 2nd.

It was a beautiful mountain day, and the new tents and chairs were put to good use.

"I hope other groups will sign up for this wonder-

ful outdoor experience that includes a house tour of the Zachary-Tolbert House," said Vanna Cameron, a member of both the Garden Club and CHS Board.

The Zachary-Tolbert House is open for private tours by appointment, and to the public on Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. It is located two miles south of the Cashiers Crossroads on Hwy. 107 south. Admission is \$5; members of Cashiers Historical Society are admitted free.

To schedule a private tour, call (828) 743-7710.

# Digging in the Dirt: Archeologists Return

Digging in the dirt is not just for kids, as members of the Cashiers Historical Society found out recently when New South Associates, a well-known regional archeology firm, returned to the Zachary-Tolbert House to continue research on the historic site.

The Zachary-Tolbert House, completed in the 1850s by Mordecai Zachary, son of pioneer Col. John A. Zachary, is one of the oldest structures in Cashiers Valley.

During this visit, New South archeologist Natalie Adams concentrated on the kitchen dependency behind the main house. The original kitchen burned in 1924 and was replaced by a logging cabin brought to the property from Whiteside Cove.

New South is attempting to identify the location and footprint of the original kitchen structure by locating the “burn line” in the soil. During previous visits, Adams conducted a “shovel test survey” of the area around the house to determine if there were any readings which might indicate metal debris, i.e. nails. Such debris would help identify the location of outbuildings which, according to the oldest deeds, indicate Mordecai Zachary built a 12-stall stable for livestock.

The Cashiers Historical Society recently acquired more land around the house bringing the total size of the site to 5.21 acres. The Jaeger Company, a well-



*Cashiers Historical Society Board Members Martha Crouch Black, left, and Robert Red “Bubba” Tolbert, whose family owned the Zachary-Tolbert house for three generations, assist archeologist Natalie Adams’ exploration of the kitchen.*

known historic landscape planning firm, is working with CHS on a Master Plan for the property, which is being funded with a grant from the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina and, when complete, will provide guidance for future interpretation of the historic site. The plan includes space for additional parking and restroom facilities so that the Zachary-Tolbert House can open to the public on a regular basis.

## Showhouse patron party is “Picnic at The Point”

Khakis and capris – perfect for dinner al fresco – will also be perfect for “Picnic at The Point,” Cashiers Designer Showhouse’s patron party set for 6:00 p.m., Friday, Aug. 20<sup>th</sup>.

Much of the preparation for Picnic at The Point has been coordinated by Laura Howell and Susie Clark, this year’s patron party chairman and co-chair, who are working closely with co-chairs of the Cashiers Designer Showhouse, Alice Stanly and Darla McBurney.

Tickets include admission to

Picnic at The Point for two, as well as two Showhouse tickets per day during the Showhouse’s run, Saturday, Aug. 21<sup>st</sup>, through Sunday, Sept. 5<sup>th</sup>, for \$350. Invitations have been mailed. Please return your reservations quickly, as space is limited.

Catering for Picnic at The Point will be by Lee Epting, and the setting – The Point at Lake Glenville – will be a feast for the eyes as well.

Beneficiaries for this year’s event will be Cashiers Historical Society and Cashiers Valley Com-

munity Center. Members of both groups are active in planning and volunteering for the event. Parking for Picnic at The Point and the daily Showhouse is at the Cashiers Valley Community Center, 3/10 mile from the Cashiers Crossroads across from Hardee’s on Highway 64 west.

Regular Showhouse hours are 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and noon to 4:00 p.m. on Sundays, Aug. 21<sup>st</sup> through Sept. 5<sup>th</sup>.

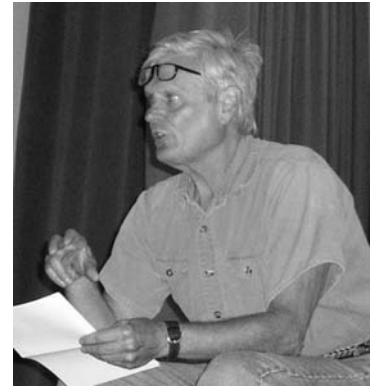
## Summer and Fall Schedule

Plan to attend one or more of these events this summer and autumn. Watch the mail for more information.

Saturday, July 17	Farm Ramble to Big Ridge
Wednesday, July 28	Chamber Music on the grounds at Zachary-Tolbert House
Friday, Aug. 20	Designer Showhouse Patron Party "Picnic at The Point," Lake Glenville
Daily, Aug. 21 through Sept. 5	Cashiers Designer Showhouse
Sunday, Aug. 29	Zachary Family Reunion
Tuesday, Sept. 14	Annual CHS Members' Meeting
Wednesday, Sept. 29	Founders' Day at the Zachary-Tolbert House for local students
Friday & Saturday Oct. 22 and 23	Fall Board Meeting
Sunday, Oct. 31	Cycling Through History
Saturday, Nov. 20	Deck the Halls
Saturday, Dec. 11	Christmas Parade

## June Ramble

*Noted historian and naturalist George Ellison spoke to participants of the June Ramble through Jackson County about the life of Horace Kephart. Kephart's work led to the preservation of the Great Smoky Mountains.*



## Tour the Zachary-Tolbert House

Remember — the Zachary-Tolbert House is open every Saturday, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., for tours, and at other times by appointment.

Admission for non-members is \$5 per person, while members of the Cashiers Historical Society are admitted free.

For more information about the Zachary-Tolbert House, membership in the Cashiers Historical Society or upcoming events, please call the CHS office at (828) 743-7710.

Members: Martha Crouch Black, Pat Camp, Linda Cravey, Tom & Wendy Dowden, Mitchell Dunn, Dancan Griffin, Beth Jones, Carol Kennedy, Eddie Madden, Darla McBurney, Vanna Cameron, Jane Nardy, Sarah Nelson, Joan Newton, Kathleen Rivers, Alice Stanly, Robert Red Tolbert, Jan Wyatt

CHS Board of Trustees  
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CASHIERS HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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