



Highlands Historical Society



Summer 2021

To preserve and promote the rich heritage of Highlands

Highlands, N.C.

Updated Museum Considered Gift to the Town

At the ribbon cutting for the Grand Opening of the Museum introducing new and refurbished exhibits, it was billed as our “Gift to the Town of Highlands.”

Thanks to the combined efforts of the Mountain Heritage Center, Western Carolina’s Museum Studies students (see President’s Letter for details) and HHS board members, the museum took on a whole new look. A visitor can now follow, pretty much, panels depicting chronologically our unique history from the Cherokees right up to Bobby Jones.



Photo courtesy of The Highlander



Cherokee artifacts on display



Large descriptive wall panels highlight Highlands history

Photo courtesy of The Highlander



Photo courtesy of The Highlander

Mayor Pat Taylor (right) joins members of the Historical Society’s board for The Grand Opening Ribbon Cutting

President's Letter August 2021



A famous line from the movie Casablanca states, "It was the beginning of a beautiful friendship."!

During the height of the Covid-19 Shutdown, Highlands Historical Society was faced with an almost empty museum. Having outlived their relevancy, many of the older exhibits had been moved downstairs to the archives or taken down completely. Visitors were not allowed, travel curtailed and our meetings were all virtual.

It was on a virtual zoom meeting of area historical museums that a board member noticed an especially attractive exhibit on display at a participant's museum which opened up a dialog and ultimately to a relationship.

Through that one contact, HHS joined in partnership with the Mountain Heritage Center and the Museum Studies Program, both of whom are affiliated with Western Carolina University. During some of the discussions that ensued, we arrived at a concept that would radically change the Highlands Historic Village.

First of all, many of our exhibits needed to be refurbished or totally re-worked. HHS would identify the historical topics which needed to be created to tell our story. Divided into teams, Dr. Jesssie Swigger's Museum Studies students could benefit greatly from a hands-on academic experience to actually create meaningful exhibits for display. Under the watchful eye of Pam Meister, Director of the Mountain Heritage Center and quality control coordinator, the concept would benefit through her years of museum experience. A winning trifecta for sure!

Beginning the start of the January semester, things began to happen. Students were given materials and ideas to start preparing drafts for HHS approval. The deadline for having the panels ready was May 27th, the season opening of the museum.

Three days prior to that date, a team of five of from WCU arrived on site with the exhibits ready to be installed. Thanks to everyone's hard work, the museum was transformed into, what I modestly consider one of the finest small museums in Western North Carolina.

COME BY AND SEE FOR YOURSELF!



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- Bob Trevathan, Vice President
- Sherry Holt, Treasurer
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- Hillary Cone, Kim Daugherty, Dennis DeWolf,
- Fran Leftwich, Phil Potts, Tammy Lowe,
- Harry McDonald, Dollie Swanson,
- Kevin FitzPatrick, and Anna Wilson
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 And we hope you will add a donation,
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 the past. To join or renew membership by check
 or credit card, visit <https://highlandshistory.com>.
 Highlands Historical Society
 P.O. Box 670, Highlands, NC 28741

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

Our New Docent- Meet Mary Jane



Joining the Historical Society this year as docent is Mary Jane McCall, a Highlands native whose deep love for Highlands and passion for preserving our rich history and natural beauty makes her a natural for the role. Mary Jane has deep roots in

Highlands and has lived here her entire life. She considers it a privilege to live in such a wonderful place. When not at the Historical Society she enjoys writing for The Laurel Magazine, walking her dogs, gathering with friends, or enjoying a quiet sunset.

J.B. Escapes... Again



One thing you can count on, J.B. (short for Jail Bird), will go to any length to elude his captors. He was last seen disguised as Uncle Sam and before that in Easter attire, and yet, he always seems to end up hanging around the Old Jail. As in the Andy Griffith Show's Otis, J.B. is not dangerous.

Thanks to the ladies of the Mountain Garden Club for providing this bit of whimsey to the Town.

WCU Exhibit Install Team



Two days before the scheduled opening, five Western Carolina University staff members who had been a part of the project to refurbish or create seven exhibits arrived at the Historic Village with two vans full of

new material which would transform the Museum! Special thanks to Pam Meister, Jessie Swigger, Peter Koch, Bailey Lawrence and Lauren Berg. HHS board members Harry McDonald and Obie Oakley also pitched in.

A Special Thank You

Due to Covid-19, like many things on the Plateau, Big Hats, Bow Ties and Brunch 2020 was canceled. There was however, a broad appeal for support and a special thanks to those listed below for stepping up to help out.

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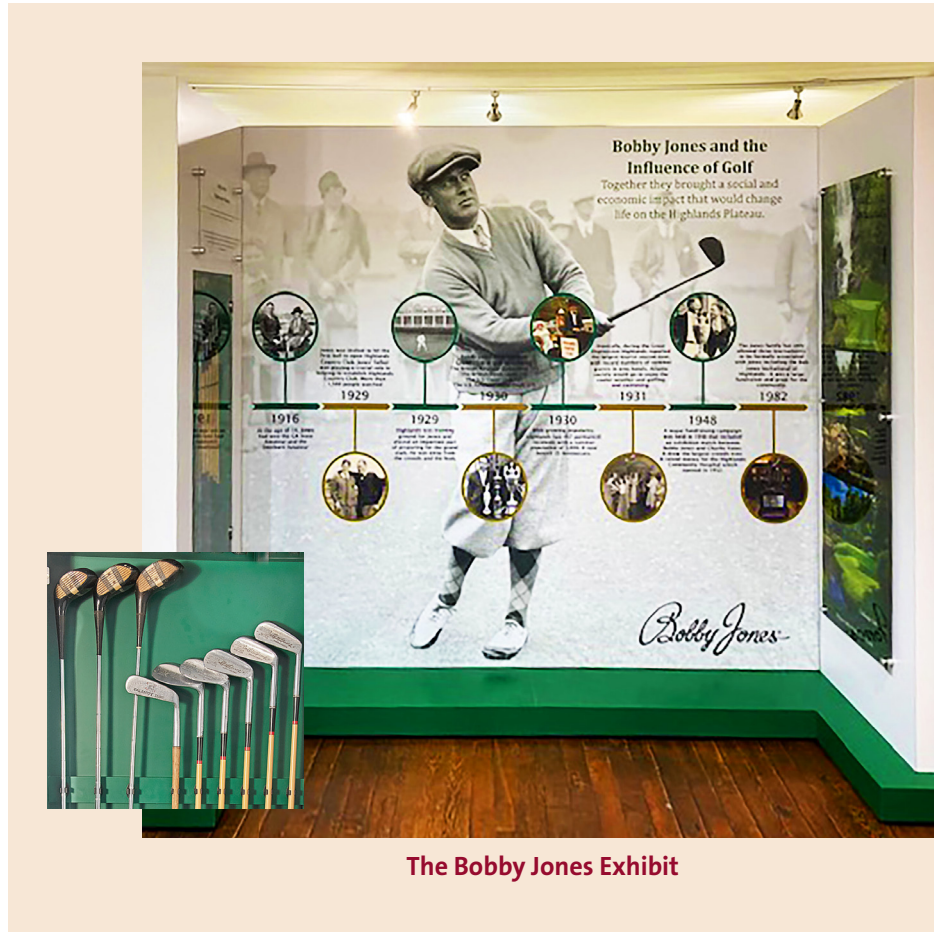
2021 Season Opener



Our very first visitor for the 2021 Grand Opening was Katherine Reid from Chapel Hill, NC.

She also had the distinction of being our new docent, Mary Jane McCall's first client.

What a great way to open the season!



The Bobby Jones Exhibit

Bobby Jones' Impact

Among the Museum's new displays, one of the most viewed and enjoyed is the Bobby Jones exhibit. This eye-catching display showcases the impact that this golfing legend had and continues to have on the Highlands area.

Prominently displayed in the exhibit are a set of clubs originally owned by Jones which he gifted his caddy, Coleman Reese. Upon Reese's death, his widow donated them to the Museum.

Nineteenth Amendment Centennial

Among the many new displays in our museum is a colorful and informative tribute to Women's Suffrage in Western North Carolina.

Last year marked the centennial celebration of the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment granting women the right to vote, and this display highlights the contributions of the barrier breaking women in WNC who fought so hard for this right.



The Nineteenth Amendment Exhibit