

Dear Valued Members and Friends,

The Matthews Historical Foundation celebrated 33 years as a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization this year, having been gifted the Reid House in 1987. In 1988 volunteers pitched in to renovate and redecorate the newly acquired Reid House. Many of Matthews leading citizens were part of this effort. Open Houses and Fundraisers became the focus of the Foundation board and volunteers. How to sustain a house built in 1890 was the question. The answer was a home for special event rentals.

In 1999, to help with Reid House upkeep, the Autumn Fundraiser Dinner was born. The first few years was a buffet at the Hidden Garden with the Holiday Haus open for shopping. Later a silent auction was added which evolved into a live auction. Chef Adam and Veronica Reed purchased the Hidden Garden from Connie and Al Kleinberg in 2001 and renamed the restaurant Santé. They have been the gracious hosts of the Autumn Dinner. Unfortunately, along with many of the things we have enjoyed over the years, the dinner has been cancelled this year due to Covid-19. We are all sad about not getting to see friends and acquaintances in this social setting. We're confident this too shall pass and we will be back next year.

Through the years, the Foundation has taken on many projects. Among them the Fullwood Restoration Award, Matthews Home & Garden Tour, Roseland Cemetery, *Matthews Memories* Cookbook, acquired and renovated the Massey-Clark House, *Matthews Remembered* DVD and Cork and Keg. They also played a part in the Preserve America Award designation, and the listing of the Outen Pottery on the National Register.

In 2013, one of the most exciting conclusions for a project was the Massey-Clark House opening as the Matthews Heritage Museum. Finally, we had a location where we could display Matthews artifacts that had been donated to the Foundation and tell the story of Matthews. Since opening, the Museum has welcomed thousands of visitors, church, and school groups. Open Thursday through Saturday, it is staffed with volunteers/docents and a paid director. Due to Covid-19, it has been closed for months and recently reopened.

Over 33 years our members and friends have been the backbone of our organization. We value and appreciate your support. We are proud of what we have accomplished together. With your support, we can continue to do great things for Matthews.

Sincerely,  
Becky Willard, President                      Paula Lester, Past President

Due to Covid-19, the Reid House has been closed to rentals for 6 months. Between the February tornado that damaged the house, requiring a new roof among other repairs, and the Reid House closure from the pandemic, our revenue stream has been negatively impacted. We rely on the Autumn Fundraiser Dinner, which has been cancelled this year, to help us maintain the Reid House, the Museum and our mission of preservation.

(Continued on page 3)

## Board of Directors Foundation

Becky Willard, President

Bill Helms, VP

Bob Aycock, 2nd VP

Brian Antal, Treasurer

Carol Cullis, Secretary

Paula Lester, Historian

Diane Adams

Anne Bennett

Chuck Bennett

Penny Higdon

Jim Taylor

John Urban

Ex Officio

Tom Cannon

Sandy Duncan

Marilyn Sczech

## Docents

Ellie Axford

Joe Brandenburg

Michael Browne

Pat Browning

John Camenga

Gregg Coleman

Sarah DelPrete

Wilson Goodson, Jr.

Michael S. Griggs

Kathy Hurst

Clyde Kiser

Mary Norton Kratt

Elinor Minshew

Lanell Owenby

Meghan Sharpe

Kathy Shonts

Barbara Stegall

Barry Street

Kerry Surface

Barbara Wrobel

## The Museum During Covid - 19

Let's face it, 2020 has been a tough year. On March 19, 2020 the Museum and the Reid House closed their doors in keeping with Governor Cooper's orders to limit the spread of the virus in the early days of the pandemic. Little did we know it would be months before we could reopen.

One of the first things I had to decide was if we should move forward with the Lawn Party slated for April 18. I felt I was jumping the gun deciding to cancel it but it was the right call. The Board agreed to keep me working, and it has been a perfect opportunity to catch up on things, as well as advance new projects.

I needed to change out the exhibit, so within the first week I installed *My Favorite Things: Ladies Accessories*. Needless to say, no one has seen it for months! I also began working on the collection database. I had known that many of the items entered into the database were not photographed, so I set out to do the objects, photos and archival materials. I am almost finished with the archival materials and have done the other two categories. Along the way, I catalogued collections from two meetings that hadn't been dealt with during research of Tank Town. I also was able to get a number of outstanding contracts signed by resending them. In general I cleaned up the database, and added information or descriptions to some items that were lacking.



The next undertaking was working on a new town project creating a Heritage Trail for Crestdale. Having recently researched the history of the area I was asked to write the text and suggest images for approximately 12 signs for a walking trail. The Board purchased a new laptop for me with Publisher and One Drive on it, so I could communicate with the design team. The computer seemed to have all sorts of issues, so it took several weeks of effort to get everything squared away. I have written and edited (several

times) the signs. I am sure when they begin designing, I will be called in to make other changes.

The next project will be the installation of the second part of the Tank Town exhibit, in the lobby at Town Hall. That part of the exhibit will be seen by many more people but will provide a reminder to visit the rest of the exhibit at the Museum. I have already re-written the script and ordered the necessary photos. Now all must be mounted.

In May, I worked with Jeff Hauser of Olde Mecklenburg Genealogical Society on documenting forty one "found" cemetery stones in Tank Town. We were able to determine that they originally came from Sardis Presbyterian Church, and will be returned as soon as possible, possibly at their Homecoming Celebration in February.

With the Board, we planned how to reopen the museum. We are asking people to make reservations and will limit the number in the museum to 5 visitors. I have written directions for the docents where they can safely socially distance in each gallery. We were excited to reopen on September 10!

Barbara E. Taylor, Director



After a brief pause of the newsletter during the last year, we are planning on issuing 4 newsletters annually as part of membership. We hope you enjoy reading about our activities.

(Continued from the front)

We know these are challenging times. We are asking our supporters to donate the cost of one dinner ticket, \$55, to the Matthews Historical Foundation. If this is not possible, we welcome any monetary donation. To donate online, please go to [www.matthewshistoricalfoundation.org](http://www.matthewshistoricalfoundation.org) and click on Membership at the top of the page, scroll down and click on the yellow Donate button. That will direct you to online donations. However, paper checks mailed to P. O. Box 1117, Matthews, NC 28106 are always welcome. Thank you in advance for your generosity and continued support of the Matthews Historical Foundation.

MHF Board of Directors

### “Ground Zero” February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020

For most Matthews residents February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020 was a day to remember. High winds buffeted most of the town, but more deadly were the tornadoes spawned by the storm. The tornadoes took a route that closely followed Highway 51 (Matthews-Pineville Road) and unfortunately the historic Reid House was directly in the path, “Ground Zero”. Trees were shredded and many roads closed. The Reid House suffered severe damages to the roof of the house, the carriage house and the gazebo, the large pecan tree in the yard, the fence, the carriage house doors, the brick wall along the east side of the property, and many broken windows in the house. Suffice it to say that it was a disaster zone when the members of the Matthews Historical Foundation (MHF) arrived to check on our fabulous historic house.



Fortunately, with the help of our volunteer Board the debris was picked up and removed quickly after the storm passed. One of the Board members advised a roofing contractor who could help, and he immediately sent crews with large tarps to cover the severely damaged roofs to avoid further water leakage to damage the interiors of the buildings. Joe Robinson, a contractor who assists the MHF to maintain the property, arrived quickly to shore up the barn door to the Carriage House that the storm had ripped from its hinges. He boarded up the windows to keep the weather out until repairs could be made. We were lucky that our insurance company provided quick service to adjust the damages to facilitate repairs, but the coverage was much less than was needed for the large repair costs. Nonetheless, repairs were started with Joe Robinson fixing the torn down fence and the Carriage House door. Renfrow's Hardware fixed the antique glass windows that had been broken, and Earl Bowman began replacing the roof. It turned out that the roof required not only new shingles, but a new underlayment for the

roof. That was implemented, and the house, Gazebo, and Carriage House are once again protected from the elements.

While most of the damages have been repaired, some work still remains to fully restore the Carriage House door, the trim around it, and portions of the brick wall that were destroyed. We are quite lucky that the damages were not worse and that the Reid House is once again ready to welcome Matthews residents and other visitors within the guidelines of the Covid Virus. Hopefully you will take the time to visit the Reid House and enjoy the wonderful history that the Town of Matthews, various local businesses, and the MHF have saved and continue to preserve for the current and future residents of Matthews.

Chuck Bennett, Board Member

## Diane Funderburk Adams—Board Member

Diane Funderburk Adams, one of the newest members of the Matthews Historical Foundation Board (MHF), has been a member and fan of this organization for years. Here is a bit about her.

Though I have done a bit of traveling, with both children living abroad, Matthews has been the center of my universe since my parents brought me home from the hospital to one of the apartments over the Matthews Bank and Funderburk's Store. At age 2, we moved to our new home, about 2 blocks away on Matthews-Mint Hill Road, across the street from what is now known as the Funderburk-Plaxco House, where my father Charles, my grandfather Thomas and my great-grandfather E. J. Funderburk lived. E. J. settled in Matthews after the Civil War and was one of the founding fathers of Matthews.

It was in downtown Matthews that I experienced the most incredible, storybook childhood. I met my husband, Don Adams at UNC Chapel Hill. When he finished dental school, we moved to Matthews where he set up his practice "right across the driveway" from my childhood home. He just retired after 38 years of practicing dentistry. I retired a bit before, after 35 years of serving as an elementary principal with the Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools. Our grown children live in Sydney, Australia and Vienna, Austria. They always looked forward to coming back to Matthews for visits to see how things have grown and flourished, still retaining the small-town charm they fondly remember.

The preservation of our past while continuing to nurture this culture where residents thrive, children flourish, and where visitors come to relish "real" small town charm, is the reason I wanted to be a part of this energetic, and talented group on the MHF Board. Being a part of this organization, whether a Board member, a participant in Foundation's events or a financial contributor, helps to insure that our town will continue to keep its special ambiance for generations to come. In my mind, it's a way to "pay it forward" and I am honored to have this opportunity to serve.

## Joe Brandenburg — Docent

Joe Brandenburg, a native of Heidelberg, Kentucky, grew up on a subsistence farm where the family grew nearly everything they ate. In addition to food the family grew tobacco and corn as cash crops. After graduating from



Joe Brandenburg as Dr. T. N. Reid

high school, he attended Berea College, KY where he majored in Business Administration with emphasis on Hotel and Restaurant Management. In 1971, he completed the requirements for Nutrition and Dietetics at Berea and was commissioned a 2LT in the United States Army. Completing a dietetic internship and becoming a Registered Dietitian, he spent 30 years directing Nutrition and Food Service in Army hospitals from a one dietitian hospital in Belgium to the Army's largest medical center, Walter Reed, rising to the rank of Colonel. Military awards include the Army Commendation Medal, Meritorious Service Medal and the Legion of Merit. While stationed at Fort Belvoir, VA he met his wife Susan, an Army Nurse. After retiring from the Army, he served as Coordinator of School Nutrition with the Richmond County GA Board of Education for 11 years. Joe and Susan have three daughters, two of whom live near them in Stallings. The third daughter is an attorney in Decatur, GA. When they retired

for a second time, they moved to Matthews to be near their six grandchildren. Joe's love of history began early and he remembers as a lad reading an entire set of encyclopedias from A to Z. Living in Europe twice has given him a love of travel and history. When the Heritage Museum opened Joe jumped at the chance to help share the Matthews story. He portrays Dr Reid at the Victorian Lawn Party and the MWC Christmas teas at the Reid House. Thank you Joe for all you do!!

## ROSELAND CEMETERY UPDATE

The property where apartments are being developed by Taft Development on Monroe Road, across from Family Dollar, was originally Renfrow property. The Renfrow's allocated a portion of this property to be used as a cemetery for local African Americans. The cemetery contains the remains of slaves and freed blacks from Matthews and areas beyond. Initially, it is believed that the cemetery was primarily used to inter members of the Roseville AME Zion Church that was located on Ames St. in Matthews. It is believed that there are approximately 70-75 graves in the cemetery.

The coffins were brought 3 miles to the cemetery by horse and buggy from the Crestdale community. Crestdale, formerly known as Tank Town, was settled in the 1870s by freemen and freed slaves. Many of these early residents were sharecroppers and day laborers. Some worked on the railroad whose tracks ran through the neighborhood. Cemetery care was provided by relatives and friends of people buried there. By the mid-1950s, the cemetery stopped accepting burials. Without a church for continuing maintenance, Roseland fell into disrepair. It was listed as a local historic landmark in 2012. As part of the rezoning approval for the apartments, the cemetery clean-up/restoration will be provided by the developer. This has been a personal project, as well as Matthews Historical Foundation project for many years. We're pleased to know that Taft Development along with the Matthews Historical Foundation, the Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission, and interested volunteers will finally provide the much needed clean-up/restoration of the cemetery. Those buried at Roseland have been waiting a long time.

**NOTE:** We are trying to gather a list of those buried there. Currently we have approximately 30 names. Please contact Barbara Taylor, Museum Director, if you know someone buried there, with their name, and birth and death dates, if known. Please contact her at [info@matthewsheritagemuseum.org](mailto:info@matthewsheritagemuseum.org) or 704-708-4996.

Paula Lester, Historian

## My Favorite Things: Ladies Accessories

Three beaded purses on display, c. 1930



The Museum's newest exhibit *My Favorite Things: Ladies Accessories* will feature favorite items that women from the early twentieth century to the fifties treasured. From baubles, bangles and beaded purses to collars, gloves and muffs, each of these treasured items made the lady feel special, feminine or beautiful.

What items do you have that make you feel special? The exhibit includes hats, purses, hankies, gloves, shoes, and jewelry from the turn of the century to the fifties.

The Museum is open Thursday to Saturday from 10 to 4:30. Currently, only 5 people are allowed in the museum at a time. Please call 704-708-4996 to make a reservation.

*Foundations* is a publication of  
Matthews Historical Foundation and the  
Matthews Heritage Museum  
Edited by Barbara Taylor, Director

**Available at the Museum**

Matthews Remembered DVD.....\$15  
Matthews Memories Cookbook...  
\$21.95

**If you have a local artifact to  
donate, please call the Museum  
office 704-708-4996.**

**Visit our  
websites**

[www.matthewshistoricalfoundation.org](http://www.matthewshistoricalfoundation.org)  
[www.matthewsreidhouse.org](http://www.matthewsreidhouse.org)  
[www.matthewsheritagemuseum.org](http://www.matthewsheritagemuseum.org)

Brian was born in Youngstown, Ohio and spent most of his adult life in a small community, Canfield, Ohio, similar to Matthews. His lifelong career in Pharmacy began when he graduated from Ohio Northern University in 1973. Brian owned his own pharmacy in Canfield, moving to Charlotte in 1996. Since 2001 he and wife Peggy have been residents of Matthews. Currently he works part time at Remedi-Rx Senior Care. They have 3 adult children and 5 grandchildren. Their love of the outdoors is expressed in their hiking and kayaking.

Brian is the current treasurer of the MHF and has held this position since 2019. His love of history and his appreciation of Matthews' town history is what brought him to this position. He is also an active member of the Matthews Historical Foundation, and a member of the Matthews Historic Preservation Advisory Committee.

***A Sunny Saturday, A Blue Bike, and a Quarter in My Pocket***

Lots of us have vivid memories of our formative years. Childhood

friends, well-traveled paths, and the faces and voices of the grown-ups etched in our minds. Wherever “growing up” happened in the late 1950’s, the places probably resemble each other in several ways. And, children were expected to become independent sooner and to amuse themselves.

My “growing up” place in the late 1950’s was in downtown Matthews. I was a city girl with everything anyone could ever want located within 3 city blocks. Just as important, I had the “wheels” to get there. My new blue bike, which my cousin told me matched my eyes perfectly, was my ticket to freedom and all sorts of adventures.

Monday-Friday belonged to school (Matthews Elementary) and homework assignments. Sunday was for church and visiting with family. But Saturday, particularly in good weather, was all yours and by far the best day of the week. After breakfast, you brushed your teeth, made your bed, and headed out. You had to keep your shoestrings tied so they wouldn’t get caught in the spokes of your wheels. You were not to go anywhere with a stranger. You were to be polite to grown-ups and take care of your bike because you weren’t going to get another one. If it looked like rain, you should come home. If you were caught in a heavy rain, you were to wait it out in the post office or the library. You were to be back at lunch time and not make yourself sick by eating too much candy. I could live with these conditions. Every Saturday morning the trip included some of the really cool stops.

Stop 1, Jane Clark’s House (now Matthews Heritage Museum). Jane was a little older than I was and a great deal smarter. She knew the answers to any question put to her...but not in a know-it-all way. She was a talented artist, pianist, and real funny. Lucy, her mother, (I was allowed to call her that because that’s what Jane called her, too) was the best baker and made melt-in-your-mouth cookies which were always ready on Saturday morning. Paul, her father, could do magic tricks I never figured out. He told the funniest jokes that made us laugh until we cried. Jane was a fan of the space traveler, Flash Gordon, and she was the one who let me in on the secret that there really are aliens out there in space somewhere.

Memories of Matthews shared by Diane Adams, Board Member. Read about more “stops” in our next newsletter.