

Saxe Gotha Dispatch



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German Group Visits Lexington Museum

Earlier this year in April, a group of twenty-five Germans from the city of Gotha came to visit the Lexington County Museum and learn about the German/Swiss-German heritage of Lexington County.

Gotha, Germany is sister cities with Gastonia, North Carolina. Officials from the City of Gastonia wanted the group from Gotha to tour the Lexington County Museum while they were visiting Gastonia. They thought the group would enjoy the museum because of the Germanic heritage of the Lexington area and because the name of the colonial township that became Lexington County was Saxe-Gotha.



Germans with the J.R. Fennell at Flight Deck

The group, comprised of town officials including the mayor Knut Kreuch, seemed very impressed with the museum and was very interested in the German books and documents in the museum's collection. They were fascinated with a German prayer book and the museum's

1799 fraktur (marriage/baptismal certificate). Members of the group asked many questions about the first German immigrants and about the hardships they faced. The Gothans were also amazed that the English word for sauerkraut is sauerkraut!

Museum Past and Upcoming Outreach Efforts

Museum staff members J.R. Fennell and Patricia Shandor led tours of the Fox House and the Harmon Exhibit Hall for Youth Leadership Lexington on June 20.

Fennell also served as a chaperone for the members of the 2013 Youth Leadership Lexington class.

Museum staff members also gave a tour of the

grounds to the Ashland Methodist Church Shepherds Center on June 25. Guests were shown the Leaphart/Harman House as well as many of the other historic structures.

Meet Historical Interpreter Wendy Frankle



“Surely everyone who comes to visit the museum will find something that interests them, even if they don’t think they like history”

Of all of the enthusiastic guides at the museum Wendy Frankle is probably the most positive and cheerful. A native of Okeechobee, Florida, Wendy and her family have lived in seven different states but have resided in the Lexington area the longest, nearly seven years. She reports that her favorite part of working at the museum is leading school tours and children’s programs. Wendy does a great job relating history to children and you may be surprised to learn that Wendy used to think that she didn’t like history. In fact, she recalls that it was her least favorite subject in school. She jokes with her two teenage children, Jess and Josh that you never know what you’ll end up being when you grow up. Perhaps that’s why Wendy is such a

passionate and dedicated teacher to visitors. “Surely everyone who comes to visit the museum will find something that interests them, even if they don’t think they like history,” remarks Wendy. Wendy herself realized she actually liked history when she became interested in her family story. Through her genealogical research she has discovered a link that may tie one of her Cherokee ancestors to this region. “I like to think about my Cherokee ancestors when I do the Native American children’s program.”

Though Wendy dresses in period costume for her job at the museum and enjoys representing life in the 1800s she claims that she wouldn’t want to live back then. “I’m happy to live in the 1800s...from 9 am-2 pm” she laughs.

Wendy leads a busy life outside of the 1800s. She spends most of her time in the 21st century taking care of her family. Her hobbies include scrapbooking and photography. And when she’s not working at the museum you can probably find Wendy volunteering with the Dutch Fork High School Band where she is a devoted and beloved “Band Mom.”

Museum Acquires Historic Documents

The Lexington County Museum has acquired a collection of historic documents relating to George Washington Reeder (1835-1914) who owned a store in Edmund. Among the collection are deeds, other land records, and letters written to

Reeder. Several of these letters are written by Levi J. Shealy. Shealy was a member of the Greenback Party for a time while Reeder was a Democrat. Shealy wrote several attacks on Reeder’s character as well as the character of other

Democrats. These documents help shine light on late 19th century politics in Lexington County.

The museum has also acquired a Golden Glow milk bottle from the mid twentieth century.

Landscaping at the Museum Taking Place

Thanks to the funds successfully raised by the Friends of the Lexington County Museum at the 2013 fundraiser "Celebrating Lexington High School's Centennial," the museum has been able to have some much needed landscaping completed. This includes trimming of trees, removal of dead limbs, cutting back bushes and limbs that were causing damage to some of the historic structures, and picking up limbs that had fallen. These tasks were made even more necessary by the number of summer storms that have hit Lexington lately.

The museum's grounds are always in need of tender love and care though, so if you have any interest in volunteering, please don't hesitate to call the museum staff and let us know. The museum needs help in keeping the plants pruned and the weeds out.



Danny Gleaton Cutting Down Dead Tree



Wisteria in the Museum's Garden

Museum Visitation in May and June 2013

The Museum had two great months in terms of visitation in May and June.

In May, the museum saw 1,026 total visitors including visitors from thirteen states other than SC as well as visitors from

France.

In June, the museum saw 388 total visitors including 105 children that came with school groups.

Visitors came from sixteen states other than SC as well as Canada, England,

and South Africa.

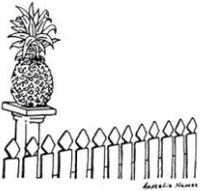
School groups from Florence, Lexington, and Richland Counties took part in our free programs as well.

Lexington County Museum

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Gateway to
Yesterday



We're on the Web!
www.lex-co.sc.gov/museum

The Lexington County Museum was started in 1970 to collect, preserve and present the history of Lexington County. After initially having only one historic house, the museum expanded and now has thirty historic structures over seven acres in downtown Lexington. Through exhibits in historic houses, the museum interprets everyday life in the town of Lexington and throughout Lexington County from the eighteenth century to the start of the Civil War. The museum offers guided tours to visitors for a small fee and has thirteen different hands-on programs for school groups free of charge by appointment. These programs attract schools from around the state and educate students about the history of Lexington County and about the everyday life of Lexington County residents in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The Friends of the Lexington County Museum is a non-profit group founded in 1997 with an advisory board, officers, and a board of trustees representing all municipalities in Lexington County. Its mission is to enhance the Lexington County Museum through its duly appointed commission and to support, aid, and assist in the improvement and expansion of the Museum. The Friends group sponsors fund-raising projects to help further the Museum's valuable contribution to the county, including the project described below. The Friends group has raised over \$270,000 for the museum so far. To learn more about the Friends or to join, visit the museum's webpage (www.lex-co.sc.gov/museum).

Highlighted Artifact From the Museum's Collections

This issue's highlighted artifact is perfect for summer. It's a photograph of swimmers at Gibson's Pond in Lexington. The pond was a recreation area for Lexington residents for many years. The picture, taken by the mother of the donor, shows George's Mill in the background. The mill was the last operating flour mill in the county and the last mill of any kind on Twelve Mile Creek. The donor's great uncle, Dibble George, owned the mill and pond before selling to the Gibson family.

