

The Stonethrow Messenger

• The Quarterly Newsletter of Friends of Gillsville •

Volume 4

Summer 2007

Mission Statement of Friends of Gillsville:

To foster community spirit, aid the city in preserving historical heritage and help improve the community facilities and resources available to all citizens.

Hello, Neighbors.

This issue is dedicated to a continued exploration of life in our community, then and now, and is especially dedicated to Paul Garrison and his family, folks who have been "in these parts" for a long time and represent a way of life that has sustained our area.

GILLSVILLE 1850's to 1900 ~ PART ONE by Ron Whiting

THE CIVIL WAR

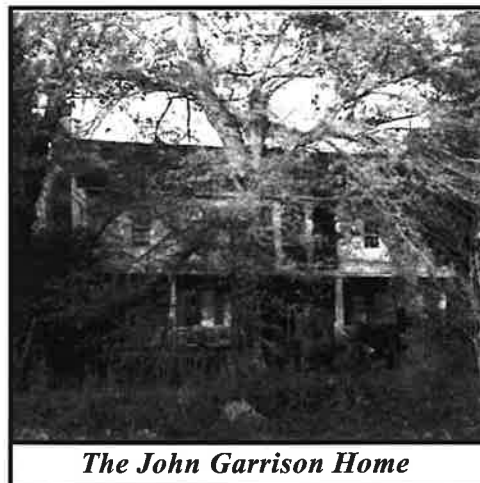
The Gillsville area as well as much of Northeast Georgia was an area of small isolated farms during the mid 1800's. This is what saved the area from the devastation of the Civil War. The only battle fought in the area that I could find reference to was the battle of Currahee Mountain in 1864, a Confederate victory. Life was hard. It was a challenge to just scratch out an existence for your family, so it was extremely hard to go off to war and have your family survive while you were gone.

The people of North Georgia did not feel the effects of the war for almost two years. At that point, the war began to become more of a hardship. With most resources supporting the war effort, supplies became scarce. The price of flour rose to \$40 a barrel by the end of 1862 and was \$125 a barrel by the end of the war. Salt was \$125 per bag. There was no coffee at any price because Union ships had blockaded the coast since the beginning of the war. To add to the problem, Confederate currency was rapidly becoming worthless, making it impossible to purchase necessary staple items for everyday life.

In Northeast Georgia, Pro-Union sentiment was running high even before the war began. Union County was named in honor of the Unionists during the Nullification Crisis thirty years earlier. However, they were hard to find once the war started. Anarchy ran rampant over much of the area and armed men on

horseback controlled large areas. Governor Brown would occasionally send in cavalry troops, but they were very ineffective.

As a side note, the Banks County Courthouse was completed in 1863 and paid for with 6,600 Confederate dollars.



The John Garrison Home

The only pre-Civil War structure located in Gillsville was the John Garrison home, which was located across the railroad tracks from the downtown area. Mr. Garrison operated a hotel in his home to accommodate local travelers. It was described in an 1897 Gainesville Eagle article as "a splendid hotel which is ever open to the weary and hungry." The home was lost to a fire set after a burglary in about 1998.

THE RAILROAD

The Northeastern Railroad was incorporated in Georgia in 1854 and later chartered on October 17, 1870 to build a railroad from Athens to Clayton. In 1872 John Garrison deeded 825 acres to the Northeastern Railroad Company to construct the railroad. He served as the first railroad agent and was a member of the original city council. The 39 mile section from Athens to Lula opened September 1, 1876. The railroad reached Tallulah Falls in 1882. Rolling stock as of August 31, 1882 was listed as: Locomotive Engines - 2, Cars - Passenger - 2, Baggage, etc. - 2, Freight (Box- 8, platform - 8), Total - 20 cars

Earnings reported was \$73, 163.51 and expenses were \$60, 992.51. Net earnings were \$12, 171.00. Interest paid \$18,455.50 leaving a deficit of \$6,284.50. Among the directors elected on October 18, 1882 was a G.E. Deadwyler of Maysville, Ga. The Richmond and Danville Railroad purchased Northeastern Railroad stock owned by the city of Athens in 1881. The Richmond and Danville leased the 61 mile line in 1886. The Blue Ridge and Atlantic Railroad, chartered in 1887, purchased the northern section (Cornelia to Tallulah Falls) in that same year.

Continued inside...

Friends of Gillsville

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Gillsville, GA 30543

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770-869-3358

Vice-President: TBA

Secretary: Assumpta Norrell

Treasurer: Gordon Jones
770-869-3679

A depot was built in Gillsville in 1879 to accommodate travelers and freight. The community of Wayside was situated one-half mile south. It was eventually absorbed into the town of Gillsville. From November 20, 1883 until 1889, R.K. Reaves, Agent of the State of Georgia, operated the railroad. The Northeastern Railroad was consolidated into the Southern Railroad Company in 1889.



The Gillsville Depot and North Eastern Railroad Engine

An interesting note: In 1902, a Sunday School Convention met in Maysville. A committee from Harmony Grove Church (now First Baptist Church of Commerce) requested that the Northeastern Railroad (now the Southern Railroad) give reduced rates and daily service from Athens to Maysville, which they did!

Stay tuned.....to be continued in our next newsletter.

GILLSVILLE
1850's to 1900 ~
PART ONE

Continued...

BEING NEIGHBORLY:

A Column Appearing in Each Issue About The Special People Who Are Our Neighbors

by Jane Jones

When I interviewed Mr. Garrison about his life and his family for this article, I experienced what he told me in two ways.....I was humbled by the amount of labor necessary for a family to live and, at the same time, inspired by the strength that can come from a family all working together.

Paul Garrison was born on the Jackson County line on September 30, 1927 to Bascomb and Dona Garrison. He was the youngest of 12 children, six boys and six girls. All were birthed at home. Of this group of siblings, one brother and three sisters are still living, all close by.

Mr. Garrison's family, like so many rural families, were sharecroppers, living near land where cotton, corn and other crops would grow. The cotton they picked then had to be taken to the gins in Gillsville. All the kids worked in the fields at one time or another, from sun up to sundown. They were in the field by first light and worked six days a week. He told me that all along Hwy. 52 cotton fields stretched to the horizon and that he walked to Gillsville elementary

PAUL GARRISON - Part One

school following the railroad tracks. He said the family lived for a while in the little house that used to be on Old Gillsville Road, now property owed by Helen Thompson. And, for a while, in the Gordon Casey house. Most of his memories, though, are from the white house on the hill on Hwy.52 at Diamond Hill Road, which, unfortunately, burned in the 1960's. This house had a fireplace and a wood stove in the kitchen and they had to constantly cut wood from farms around and haul it home in a mule drawn wagon. Mr. Garrison's mother did all the cooking with the girl's help. From what he said, it was basic but always tasted good, especially after working in the fields all day. There was a table long enough for a dozen children and his parents. There was no electricity, only kerosene lamps and the light from fireplaces. The home was wired for electricity in 1937 with a single light hanging from the ceiling in each room. Try to use a computer in that light!! Mr. Garrison said they slept under piles of quilts made by his mother on mattresses filled with straw. And, the bathroom was an outhouse, rain or shine, in the heat or the cold.

The family had animals and raised their own food. There were chickens in the yard and a chicken house for roosting, two cows for milk, buttermilk and butter (yum!) and hogs for winter meat that was salted and smoked. Dairy products were kept cold in the well. Mr. Garrison talked about seeing his mother churning milk in a churn that sat by the fireplace, the same fireplace where she baked potatoes for the family. A pie safe stood in the corner and much of the cooking was done in a cast iron skillet. They kept a garden with tomatoes, pole beans, potatoes, cabbage, onions, okra, radishes, yams, corn, peas and more. He remembers his mother boiling hominy corn. There were homemade jams and jellies throughout the year. In the summer there were lots of cantelopes and watermelons. His mother canned what they grew at home at first and later at a cannery in town used by the whole community. They lay peanuts on the tin roofed barn to dry, picked apples on the Casey farm and had berries and figs aplenty. The only need the family had for a store was to buy flour, sugar, bread sometimes and commel. They went to a store owed by Herbert Segars. They chopped cane from the land next to Chandler Creek and took it to a mill for syrup

Another New Neighbor is Welcomed to Our Town!

by JACKIE FRANKUM

Again, we are happy to say "welcome to our piece of country" to a new neighbor, Mr. James Newton. He lives at 373 Old Gillsville Road and is a Deputy with the Hall County Sheriff's Department.

As always, it's our hope that our neighbors will become active members of the community, helping to make Gillsville a wonderful place to live. If you know of anyone new to our area, please call Jackie Frankum at 770-869-0938 and leave a message. We would love to meet newcomers, present them with a basket and say "welcome home."

which was then stored in household pottery. Mr. Garrison's eyes lit up when he talked about the syrup for pancakes, fritters and cane candy that was boiled syrup that was then stretched and cooled (Is your mouth watering?). They kept bees and the honey was always a treat. In the yard was a wash pot where Mrs. Garrison washed all their clothes and used a "battle" stick to batter the clothes laid out on a board. Bigger pots were used for scalding hogs before skinning.

Stay tuned.....to be continued in the next issue out in October.

NEWS FROM FRIENDS OF GILLSVILLE by Gordon Jones

Golf Tournament

Saturday, April 14, 32 golfers teed off under a bright blue sky at Hammer's Glen golf course in Homer in the 2nd Annual *Friends of Gillsville* Golf Tournament. With more teams and more hole sponsors than the previous year, the tournament was a fun event for all players and raised over \$ 2,000 for the organization's scholarship program. The winning team was Russ Harrell, Chuck Lockert, Gerald Cagle and Warren Stanley. Longest drive was won by Eddie Rains, and closest to the pin was won by Don Barrett. *Friends of Gillsville* thanks all players, all sponsors, the staff of Hammer's Glen for a wonderful event and Jackie Frankum, tournament director for a successful tournament.

College Scholarship Program

Now in its second year, *Friends of Gillsville's* financial assistance program for graduating high school seniors recognized two local area students with awards of \$500 each. With seniors from East Hall High School, Banks County High School and Jackson County High School eligible this year, we received more entries than last year. One of the winners, Erin Stewart will attend UGA, while the other, Chris Daniel will attend Lagrange College. Both students graduated from Jackson County High School. *Friends of Gillsville* wants to congratulate all students who participated and especially thank the members of *Friends of Gillsville* who made up the scholarship committee, Mary McIntosh, Gus Melton, Wick St. John and Gordon Jones.

GRAB A BOOK, A GLASS OF LEMONADE AND FIND SOME SHADE FOR READING by Paula Whiting

As your library director, I am proud to say we began our third summer reading program on June 2nd. The reading program theme this year is "Our Neighborhood." We have planned nine fun Saturdays in our library this summer. These Saturdays can be a great time to meet other children in our neighborhood and become friends. This summer can be a time to brush-up on reading skills, a time to read with a parent or on your own and a time to check out any of our 25 new books for a special summer adventure. Our Awards Day will be July 28 th for the most books read. A goal of 15 participants in the reading program may lead to a fun pool party on August 25th.

Below are some examples of books you'll find in our library:

Miss Spider's Sunny Patch Friends by David Kirk
The Little Critter by Merce Mayer
Mud Pie Annie - God's Recipe for Doing Your Best by Sue Buchanan
The Bobbsey Twins by Laura Lee Hope
Little House by Laura Ingalls Wilder
Trixie Belden by Julie Campbell, *Nancy Drew* by Carolyn Keene or *The Hardy Boys* by Franklin Dixon (for those who love a mystery series)
The Phantom Stallion Series by Terri Farley (for horse lovers)

And, for our teens:

The Christy Miller Series by Robin Jones Gunn
 And, many, many more!

A reminder: to keep books circulating over the summer, they are checked out for two weeks and then

are due. A fee will be charged for overdue books.

Books have been given in loving memory of Mrs. Nellie Jarrett, Mrs. Estell Martin and Mrs. Nora Bennett. If anyone would like to give a book or donation to purchase books in memory or in honor of someone, please send to The Gillsville Library, P.O. Box 25, Gillsville, GA 30543, Attn. Paula Whiting. Phone me (or a staff member) for information at 770-869-3827 or at the library at 770-869-9000.

Thanks to everyone in our community for donating books. Our library looks great and continues to grow!

The library staff and I look forward to seeing you on Saturday at 10AM. Don't have a boring summer..... read!



Ariel Daniel and Tori Smith enjoy a craft during our first year summer reading program in July, 2005.

Gillsville's Churches Welcome You

MIDWAY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Pastor
Howard Bledsoe
 770-718-5779

Sunday School at 10:00 am
 Sunday Worship at 11:00 am

Wednesday Night Live
 Meal at 6:00 pm
 MYF at 7:00 pm

Men's Breakfast,
 Third Sunday at 8:00 am

GILLSVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor
Bill Calhoun
 770-869-3976

Sunday
 Early Worship: 9:00 am
 Sunday School: 10:00 am
 Worship: 11:00 am
 Adult & Children's Classes: 6:00 pm
 Evening Worship: 7:00 pm

Wednesday
 Fellowship Meal: 6:00 pm
 Worship, Mission Friends, RA/GA's
 and Youth Activities: 7:00 pm

PINE GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor
Rev. Mike Franklin
 Home 770-869-0264

Assoc. Pastor
Rev. Scott Waters
 Home 706-677-5020

Mission Statement
 "A Hometown Compassion...
 with a worldwide vision!"

Sunday
 Sunday School: 10:00 am
 Morning Worship Service: 11:00 am

Disciple Training: 6:00 pm
 Evening Worship Service: 7:00 pm

Wednesday
 Adult Bible Study: 6:30 - 8:00 pm
 Word of Life Clubs: 6:30 - 8:00 pm
 for ages 3 through high school
 Adult Choir after Bible Study

Brotherhood Breakfast - Pine Grove,
 1st Sunday each month at 8:00 am

Third Sunday Fellowship each month
 at 7 pm for dinner, special singing
 and testimony

Calendar of Meetings and Events

July-September, 2007

CHURCH SPECIAL EVENTS

A special thanks goes out to Jackie Frankum for collecting these dates from our local churches.

Gillsville Baptist Church:

July 15 - Chuck Wagon Gang Singing at 6:30 PM

TBA Sports Camp

July 20-30 Family Florida Trip

August 5 Homecoming

September 9 Grandparents Day

Please call **Midway Methodist Church** and **Pine Grove Baptist Church** for special July, August and September events.

UPCOMING THIS FALL!

As a reminder, look for flowering crape myrtles donated by Friends of Gillsville to our local churches. One day: Gillsville, The Crape Myrtle City??!!

Remember to tell friends and family alike that the annual "Turning and Burning" Folk Pottery Festival (and much more) will be held on Saturday, October 6, 2007 here in Gillsville. Come and enjoy a slice of local history special to Gillsville.

Three posts for city council will be vacated at the end of this year. Anyone interested in running for office can pay the qualifying fee of \$9 at the Town Hall on August 27-29, 2007. For further information, call the city clerk, Paula Whiting, at 770-869-9000.

WHERE IN GILLSVILLE?

From our last issue, Susan Marinos of Atlanta won a cap when she was the first to correctly identify the old Banks County Voting Building on Henderson Road. Susan was visiting her uncle, Jack Riley, and during an Easter egg hunt, went around to the back of the building and saw the view featured in our mystery photo.

Look for another photo in our fall issue coming out in October. We're sneaky, so look for a "not so obvious" view of the locale. The first to guess will receive a Gillsville, GA golf (or, work) hand towel with metal grommet.

THOUGHTS

FROM OUR PRESIDENT, WICK ST. JOHN

Friends of Gillsville, a community based involvement group, wants to hear your thoughts relating to our community. Please send the two top considerations you may have about Gillsville, whether it be a wish, a gripe, a concern or a plan. Reflect a bit on the area you live in and make your thoughts heard. Send an anonymous letter if you prefer or E-mail:

Wick St. John or wastjohn@aol.com
5359 Channel Drive
Gillsville, GA 30543

Also, what would you like to see in our newsletter? We welcome your ideas about what would make The Stonethrow Messenger even more informative, educational and interesting. Thanks in advance!

~ Wick

SUMMER MEETINGS

The Friends of Gillsville meets the first Thursday of each month at 7 PM at the Gillsville Community Center. Our summer meetings will be August 2nd and September 6th.

The Gillsville City Council meetings are at 7 PM on the first Tuesday of each month at the Gillsville Community Center. The summer schedule of meetings are August 7th and September 4th.



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Would you like to Advertise in The Stonethrow Messenger?

If you are in the Gillsville area and would like to take advantage of the homes covered by our newsletter, please call Jane Jones at 770-869-3679. (Please note that the placement of an ad in the newsletter is not an endorsement of a product or service by The Friends of Gillsville.)

STONETHROW MESSENGER STAFF

Editor and Committee Chair: Jane Jones

Committee Members: Jackie Frankum
Assumpta Norrell
Mary Alice Segars
Paula Whiting

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Friends of Gillsville

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