



The Granite Tablet



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June 2024

GRANITE FALLS TOWN COUNCIL *Commemorated the First Meeting - June 3, 1899*

The regular town council meeting scheduled for Monday, June 3, 2024 coincided with the 125th anniversary of the very first meeting of the board (Saturday, June 3, 1899), so the Town of Granite Falls took time to commemorate this special anniversary. The first meeting took place about a month after voters decided to incorporate. One the same day, voters elected the town's first mayor, Rufus Hefner, and the first three commissioners, Dr. A. D. Jones, Henry C. Mackie, and James A. Houck. Mayor Caryl B. Burns, Ed.D. recognized three descendants of the founding fathers who were in attendance. Jeanne Whisnant, co-chair of the Granite Falls History Committee, is the great granddaughter of Dr. Atlas D. Jones, and Council Members Jim Mackie and Mike Mackie are great grandsons of Henry C. Mackie. In

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Above: Mayor Caryl B. Burns



PARKS AND RECREATION NEWS *Recognizing 42 Years of Service*

Parks and Recreation Director Chad Raby (right) presented Sandra Reece with a plaque during the June 3rd meeting of the Granite Falls Town Council in appreciation for her teaching baton at the recreation center for 42 years.

OPEN HOUSE *Granite Falls History and Transportation Museum*

The next commemoration of the Town's 125th Anniversary will be an Open House at the Granite Falls History and Transportation on Saturday, July 6, 2024 from 4 until 6 p.m. Members of the History Committee will serve cookies and lemonade and give guided tours. The public is welcome. There is no charge.

The museum is located at 107 Falls Avenue in the town's oldest residence. Built by Andrew Baird shortly after he moved to the area to establish an iron

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Faces encircled left to right: Mayor Barry Hayes; Council Member Mike Bowman; Town Manager Linda Story; Council Member Max McRary; Mayor Bert Huffman's daughter, Adele Huffman Mangan; Dr. A. D. Jones' great granddaughter Jeanne Whisnant; and Council Member Sam Erby.

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addition, Dr. Burns introduced Adele Huffman Mangan, daughter of the late A. W. (Bert) Huffman, Jr., the town's longest serving mayor (1971-1997). Mayor Burns also recognized former Town Manager Linda K. Story, former Mayor Barry Hayes, and former Council Members Mike Bowman, Max McRary, and Sam Erby.

After thanking everyone for their service to the town, Mayor Burns read the first Code of Ordinances, which the first board passed on July 29, 1899. The Code included fines for cursing/swearing, selling intoxicating drinks, hitching animals to shade trees, and keeping barber shops open on "the Sabbath." She also read an account of the town's first and only bank robbery, which took place on Saturday, February 8, 1908. After locking the cashier in the vault, the robbers took \$27.00 and fled. There is no record of the culprits being apprehended despite a \$100 reward offered by the Town Commissioners.

Following the commemoration of the first meeting, the Granite Falls Town Council continued with its meeting. The agenda



Above: Council Member Mike Mackie, Council Member Martin D. Townsend, Council Member Jim Mackie, and Town Attorney Bruce Cannon. Mike and Jim are both descended from Henry C. Mackie, who was one of the first Town Commissioners.

included approving Stewart-Cooper-Newell Architects to provide architectural services for building the new fire station on Falls Avenue; approving CHA Consulting, Inc. to provide engineering services for the Community Development Block Grant Neighborhood Revitalization (CDBG-NR) Project; approving a project scope, cost estimate, and budget for the Drinking Water State Reserve Fund (DWSRF) Lead and Copper Rule Revision (LCRR) Project; approving a resolution to oppose the City of Charlotte Interbasin Transfer Request; approving a resolution to award Atlantic Cost Contractors, Inc. a contract for Hillside Avenue Sewer Rehabilitation; accepting the proposed ABC Budget for 2024-2025; approving a budget amendment; and approving an agreement with Caldwell County Schools to provide resource officers for Granite Falls Elementary School and Granite Falls Middle School for the 2024-2025 school year. Council members also heard reports from the Town Manager, WPCOG Policy Board, Caldwell County Railroad Policy Board, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Technical Coordinating Committee, Caldwell County Economic Development Advisory Commission (EDAC), NC Municipal Power Agency #1 Board of Commissioners, and the Caldwell County Managers' bi-monthly meeting.

Historical Note: According to *Etched in Granite, the History of Granite Falls, North Carolina* by Maxine McCall, the first meeting of the Board of Commissioners (as it was known then) began with the newly elected officials taking their oaths of office. The officials then appointed C. F. Cline to serve as Secretary and Treasurer to keep official town records. Mr. Cline is considered to be the first Town Clerk. The commissioners must have expected him to serve without pay as there was no mention of a salary until the minutes of a meeting held on May 15, 1900. On that date, commissioners approved a salary of \$3.00 per year. The Town Clerk is still the custodian of official records, but the town has hired additional administrative help over the years to handle the growth of the town, additional town services, and various state and federal regulations which require special record keeping.

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forge on Gunpowder Creek using the falls that gave our town its name. He soon built a village for his family and employees. At one time, Mr. Baird owned all of Granite Falls, much of Grace Chapel, and part of Rhodhiss. He sold some of the property before his death, and his family sold the rest and moved to Mississippi.

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Update on the Intersection of Highway 321 and Pinewood Road



Left: Facing east toward the Speedway on June 8, 2023

Right: From the northbound left turn lane on August 15, 2023 showing Mr. Tire in the background



Left: Construction on the northbound side near the Speedway on August 15, 2023

Right: From the Speedway facing McDonald's and O'Reilly's on August 15, 2023



Left: Facing Speedway on April 8, 2024. Compare to the first photo on this page.

Right: Facing north on the northbound side. Photo taken close to the Speedway/Pizza Hut property line on April 27, 2024



The above photos, made on June 25, 2024, show the pedestrian crosswalk signals installed at the intersection of Highway 321 and Pinewood Road. The road project appears to be completed.



STARBUCKS *Has Come to Town*

In June 2023, developers announced plans to build a Starbucks and Sheetz at the intersection of Hwy 321A and Hwy 321 across from Shoppes on RiverCrest. The goal was to open by early 2024. Sheetz held a grand opening on Thursday, March 28, 2024. Starbucks had a soft opening around the first of June 2024.

GARDEN CLUB *Yard of the Month*

The Yard of the Month for June 2024 is the home of Les and Paula Crawford at 11 Valley Street, Granite Falls, NC. Mr. Crawford plants colorful annuals such as begonias, marigolds, geraniums, and SunPatiens among the shrubs and perennials with nandina, Loropetalum, Rose of Sharon and calla lilies. An island bed across the front yard has coleus planted on each side of a hanging basket tree. There are numerous azaleas along one side of the house and tomato plants on the other side. A corner bed has hostas, hydrangeas, and a Japanese maple. The retainer wall along the driveway is adorned with a variety of potted plants. The front porch has an array of



succulents and peace lilies to welcome their guests. Sandra Harmon and Juanita Hayes presented the Yard of the Month sign to the Crawfords on behalf of the Garden Club. (The article and photo were courtesy of the Granite Falls Garden Club.)

WEATHER CONDITIONS *Hot and Dry*

Speaking of flowers, the light rainfall on Thursday, June 27, 2024 was a welcome relief to gardeners and farmers, who have had to water their plants over the last couple of weeks due to hot weather and the lack of rain. Despite the hot and dry conditions, the Catawba-Wateree Drought Management Advisory Group website was still showing normal conditions as of June 28. The status on the website was last updated on February 16, 2024. Prior to that the status had been Stage 0 on January 15, 2024, which was an improvement from Stage 1, which was declared on November 2, 2023. Abundant rainfall in the late winter and spring helped keep the status normal. The website, drought.gov, offered more information. On June 28, it was showing that 42.3% of the state, including our area, was "abnormally dry" and that 56.5% of the state was labeled "moderate drought."

HELP KEEP OUR MUSEUM OPEN *Wanted, Needed, and Appreciated*

The Granite Falls History and Transportation Museum has openings for volunteers to open/close the museum and assist visitors as needed. Volunteers serve one two-hour shift per quarter. The museum is currently open on Sundays (except holiday weekends) from 2 until 4 p.m., but Saturday hours could be added if enough people volunteer.

A member of the Granite Falls History Committee will train volunteers, and each volunteer will receive a guidebook with instructions as well as a historical narrative that provides background information about the town and the museum. To volunteer, call the town office at (828) 396-3131.



The Granite Tablet is a publication of the Granite Falls History Committee, which manages the Granite Falls History and Transportation Museum. The museum is located in the historic home of Andrew Baird, an early settler. The building is the second oldest residence in Caldwell County. The Baird House was built around 1795 with additions made over the next hundred years. The house remained a residence until 2001 when the owner sought permission to have it burned down due to the high cost of maintenance. Recognizing the historical significance of the building, the Town of Granite Falls purchased the home with the intentions of turning it into a museum. With the help of a grant from the North Carolina Department of Transportation and hours of hard work by dedicated people, the vision became a reality. The Granite Falls History and Transportation Museum held its grand opening and ribbon cutting on February 18, 2007. Visit us on Facebook under "Granite Falls History and Transportation Museum." Our website is www.granitefallshistorymuseum.org.

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