

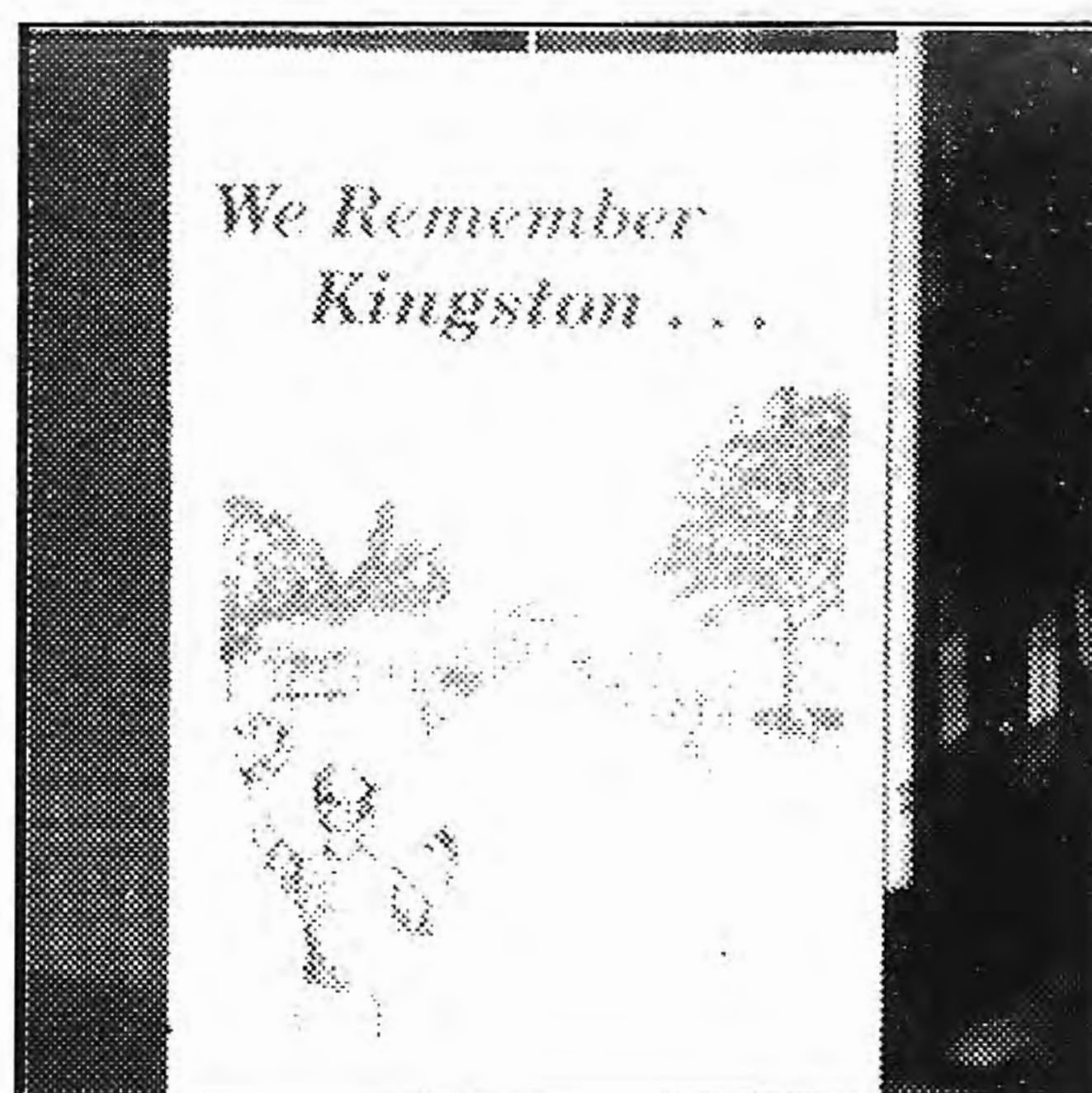
ETOWAH VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 29, 1998

P.O. Box 1886, Cartersville, Georgia 30120, Phone (770) 606-8862

EVHS Library Book Fundraiser To Begin

The EVHS library book fund campaign is soon to be underway with a minimum goal of \$10,000. County histories from Georgia and surrounding states, as well as genealogical research books (will, deed, cemetery, heritage, family histories, etc.) are all needed. Several members have already pledged in excess of \$2000. Our research library is an asset to this community which can only be enhanced through your generous contributions. All donors will have their name prominently displayed in the EVHS office. For each \$50 contribution, your name will also be listed in the front of a newly purchased book. Do not overlook memorial contributions. Giving on behalf of a current or former friend or relative is an excellent way to preserve their memory. Their name will be listed in the book and designated as given by you. Remember, all donations are tax deductible. Through efforts such as this, we are well on our way of reaching our goal to become the finest research facility in North Georgia. Look for your pledge card in the mail soon.



We Remember Kingston

by the Kingston Woman's History Club is now in its Third printing thanks to the EVHS. Details on last page

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Old House Genealogy

By Chantal Parker

If you're fortunate enough to have inherited your old house, then it's likely you've known its history since you were old enough to roll your eyes and mutter, "Not THAT story again." But if you're like me, and you bought your old house without benefit of a documented history, then you're probably curious about its past and its lineage of ownership. So how do you research that past, and where do you begin?

The first and best source for tracing your old house's genealogy is your neighbors. Listen closely and you'll hear things like, "Well when the Whites were here...." and "I remember when the Hills used to live here..." Suddenly that dark past is illuminated with names. Stop to ask, "When was that?" and you place that name within a frame of time.

And don't get so caught up in learning Who and When that you neglect What is being said about that previous owner. My own curiosity about who planted the hundreds of daffodils in the yard was addressed by the fond reminiscing of a neighbor who recalled the day Mrs. White set them out. She then pointed out that the daffodils in her own yard had come from my yard though the generosity of "that good woman". It was a great little story that added to our knowledge of the family we later learned had lived in our house for almost twenty years, and it was consistent with the many kind things we'd heard about the Whites, which further enriched the history of our home.

Yes, "hearsay" is a valuable source of history that you

continued on following page

won't find in any archives, but it's merely the appetizer before the feast, and is meant to sustain you only for as long as it takes for you to settle into your new old house. When you're hungry for more, head for the Deed Room in the courthouse where a banquet of historical documentation awaits you. The only thing you need to know going in is that the term "Grantor" refers to the seller, and "Grantee" refers to the buyer. Oh, and you might want to take a paper and pencil with you so you can make notes, and quarters for the copy machine. (Note: EVHS also has deed records on microfilm.)

Beginning with the name of the person who sold you the house, take up the appropriate Grantee book and locate his name in the left-hand column. In the column next to that is the name of the person who sold him the house. Continue reading to the right and you'll discover the date the property was bought/sold, the date the transaction was recorded, and where to go to view the deed (i.e. Deed Book "FF", Page "210").

By taking that new name--the name of the seller--and looking him up in the Grantee book, you can now find out when he bought the house and from whom he purchased it. In this way, you can trace the ancestry of your home by leap-frogging all the way back to its original owner.

Of course it's not always that simple and straightforward. Sometimes banks, lawyers or courts get involved and you practically need a course in Legalese to decipher what's going on. But don't start pulling your hair out just yet. As long as you've got another name to work with, you can skip ahead and work forward to your own purchase date, or continue going back.

Don't forget to go to the Deed Book and read the deed between every search. The deed includes a description of your property that's likely to change as you go back through time, and you'll want to note those changes as they occur. It will also tell you how much was paid for the house (ours once sold for \$1), if there were any conditions to the sale, and who your neighbors were.

Deeds can also hint at things. When we bought our house it was referred to as "the J. J. Hill Homeplace." Tracing it back, we discovered that when Hill acquired the property in 1917 it was known as "the A. A. Skinner Homeplace." The name didn't draw a complete blank; the street across from us connecting

South Avenue to Erwin is named "Skinner". Nonetheless, it was a surprising discovery that made us suspect our circa 1910 house was much older than we'd been led to believe.

The farthest back we were able to trace our house using deed records was to its sale in 1887 by a relative of Skinner. Unfortunately, Union forces during the war destroyed eleven Bartow County deed books dating from 1850 to 1861, and it appears that Skinner acquired the property during that time. But hey, no research is without a snag, and just because you've exhausted the records in the deed room doesn't mean you've reached a dead end. The Probate Court on the other side of the courthouse keeps records too. Lots of records.

In the Probate Court you can search marriage records, wills, gun permits, administrator bonds, guardian bonds, plat books and more. We learned a lot of neat stuff about Augustus Skinner in this room, but the most helpful information came from the survey taken of his (our) property and recorded in the plat book in 1868. Though the house wasn't mentioned in the survey, it was alluded to by the fact that at the time South Avenue was called "Skinner Street", which suggest that Mr. Skinner had resided there for some time.

Over at the Historical Society office in the old courthouse we looked at the Sanborn Insurance

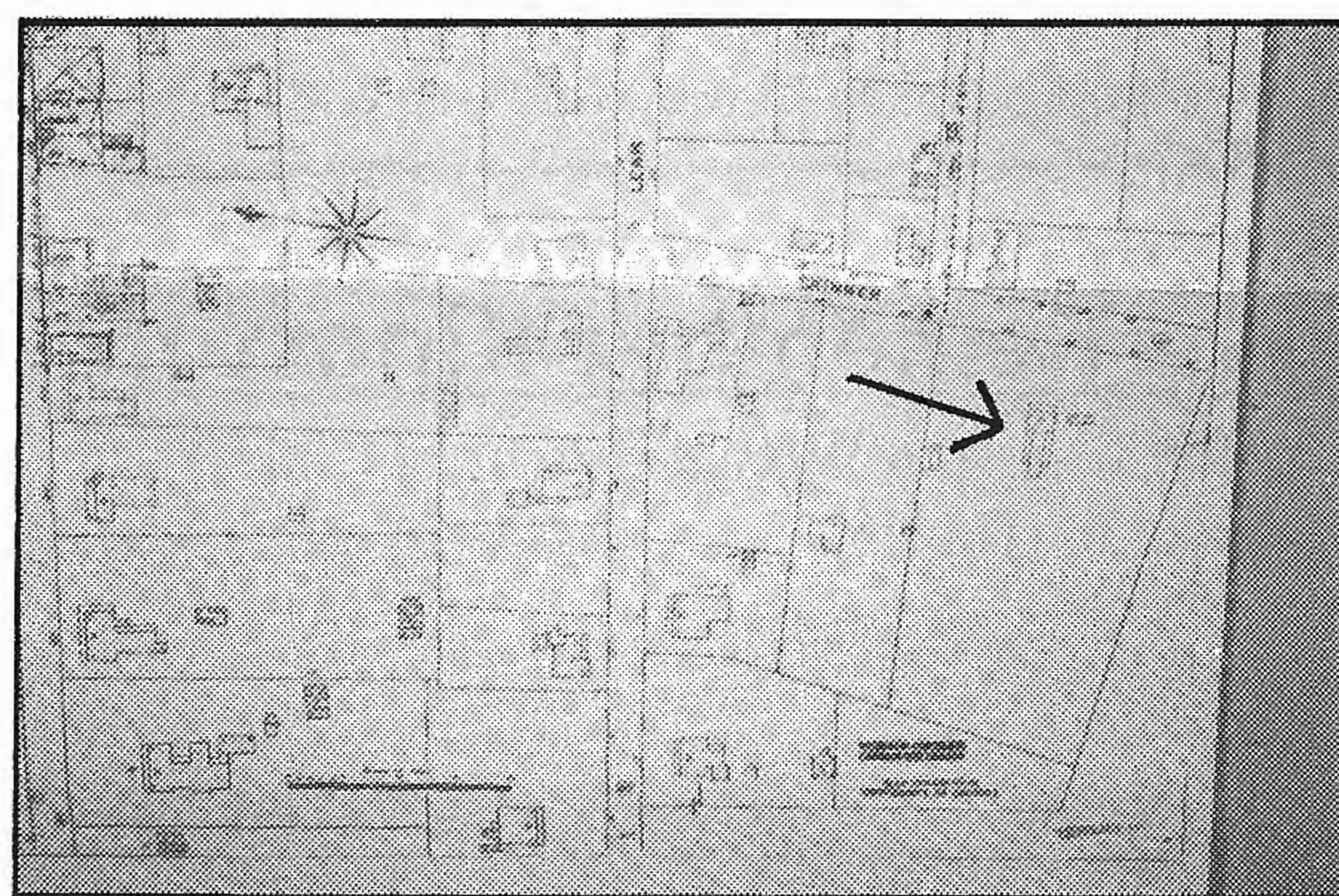
Maps, which date back to 1890. The maps originated as a means of helping local fire departments locate and identify structures within the city, and includes sketches of those structures, whether they were businesses or dwellings, two-story or single, and the building material used for construction.

Studying these maps we discovered that in 1890 our house was but a humble three-room cottage that hinted at having been just two rooms at one time. Not until 1905 does it show up with its present proportions. (The Sanborn maps weren't published annually and are limited to the years 1885, 1890, 1895, 1900, 1905, 1909, 1916 and 1927). We knew from our deed search that John P. Lewis bought the house in 1900, so we were able to credit him with the final remodeling of our home.

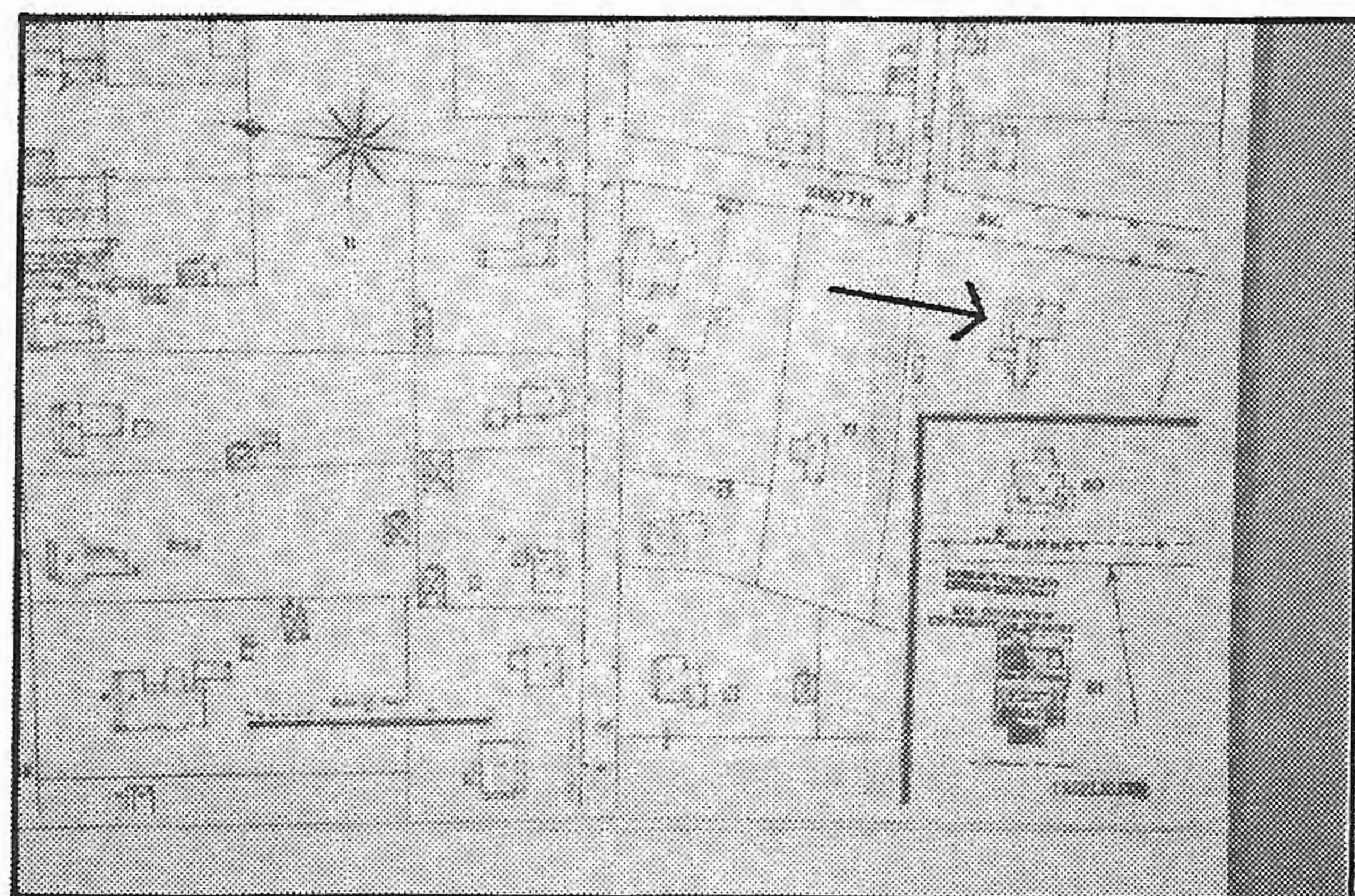
Regardless of what kind of history you're after, the Historical Society is an excellent research facility that can and should be taken advantage of. Their library consists of over 450 volumes, and includes, among other vital information, fam-



*The Parker home at 15 South Avenue,
Cartersville*



1890 Sanborn Map



1905 Sanborn Map

ily, church and county histories that can lead you in surprising directions. Here too you'll find Lucy Cunyus', History of Bartow County, a prime source of local history. Miss Lucy's book revealed much information about many of the people who once lived in our house, and tied up a lot of loose ends by linking one owner to the next. (Jack Hill, for instance, was willed the house by his Father-in-law, John Price Lewis.)

Many of the records kept by the Historical Society are stored on microfilm. These include most of the public records you'll find in the deed room and probate court and many you won't find elsewhere (unless you fancy a trip down to the State Archives in Atlanta). Among these are the Homestead Records dating from 1868 to 1951, which contain lists of everyone in a family, everything they owned and the value of those possessions.

Also on microfilm at EVHS are sixty-six reels containing every newspaper (with little exception) printed in Bartow from 1840 to 1980. Old newspapers are rich in sources of history, valued by researchers because they document history at it's happening. Here you might encounter a reference to your house being built or remodeled, or when and if it was ever damaged by storms or fire. In the News columns, you might catch a glimpse of what the inside of your home once looked like on the occasion of a wedding or other social event. And with a little more searching, you might even gather enough information to sketch intimate portraits of the people who lived in your house fifty to a hundred years ago. Much of what we know now about Gus Skinner we learned from these newspapers.

After a fire ordinance was passed in the city in December, 1874, permission to build or remodel with wooden materials required the city council's consent. This information is included in records now kept by the City Clerk at City Hall, and consists of two books of Minutes and City Council Proceedings dating from 1874 to 1893. It's not always necessary to view them since results of council meetings were published regularly in the newspaper at the time.

Eventually your research will come to an end. Then what? Well, you may have to do some ciphering to come up with an approximate date for your home's construction--unless you

were lucky enough to have found the exact date during your research. We never found an exact date, but here's how we reckoned it.

The earliest--although indirect--reference to our house is the survey taken in January, 1868. We know Skinner married in this county in 1858, that family members are buried in the old Ebenezer Church Cemetery in Oak Hill as early as 1857, and that his obituary says he came to Cartersville in 1854. Now at this point the burning question becomes: Is our old house antebellum? And the answer is: We don't know.

We're more than willing to split the difference between Skinner's arrival in Cartersville in '54 and the survey taken in '68 to arrive at a date of 1860-1861, but that's making a rather presumptuous (though tempting) leap. Besides, evidence suggests that Skinner left the county at about this time, beginning with his enlistment in the Confederate Army in Rome in March 1862, followed by a reunion with his family in Atlanta after the war. (Skinner's mother died in Cartersville during the war, and the family moved to Atlanta at that time).

The survey is important, and probably reflects the county's attempt to reconstruct real estate records following the war. Deed records were destroyed, remember, and legal ownership of property had to be reestablished. But we can reasonably assume a date prior to this because of the first newspaper ad for Skinner's downtown grocery, which (as far back as we could search) appeared thirteen months earlier, in November 1866. We suspect that sometime between the close of the war and late 1866, Gus and Mollie Skinner returned to Cartersville either to a new home or the home they had occupied before the war, which suggests a date of circa 1866.

So after weeks of research, we now have a date for our old house and the name of the original owner/builder. And what are we going to do with that information? We're going to purchase a Heritage Sign from the Society, of course. Not only is it the reward for all our hard work, but it also recognizes another jewel in the crown of Cartersville's history.

Opportunities to learn more about your house and its past inhabitants will constantly present itself as you share your research with others. Our most delightful research experience, by far, was when we ventured down that well-trodden path of "a friend of a friend". Our friend is J. B. Tate, and his friend is John Lewis--the great grandson of John Prince Lewis. John's mother is the niece of Frances Lewis Hill, and years ago she used to visit her "Aunt Fannie and Uncle Jack" when they lived on South Avenue.

Mrs. Lewis shared many memories of the Hills with us as we looked over a scrapbook of Lewis family photos, and I was especially tickled to see (and actually touch) pieces of furniture that had decorated our house eighty years ago. But the best part of our visit came the next week when Mrs. Lewis sent us a handsome copy of a picture of John Prince Lewis, the man we distinguish as making the Skinner's house into our home.

Membership Meeting

April 22, 1998

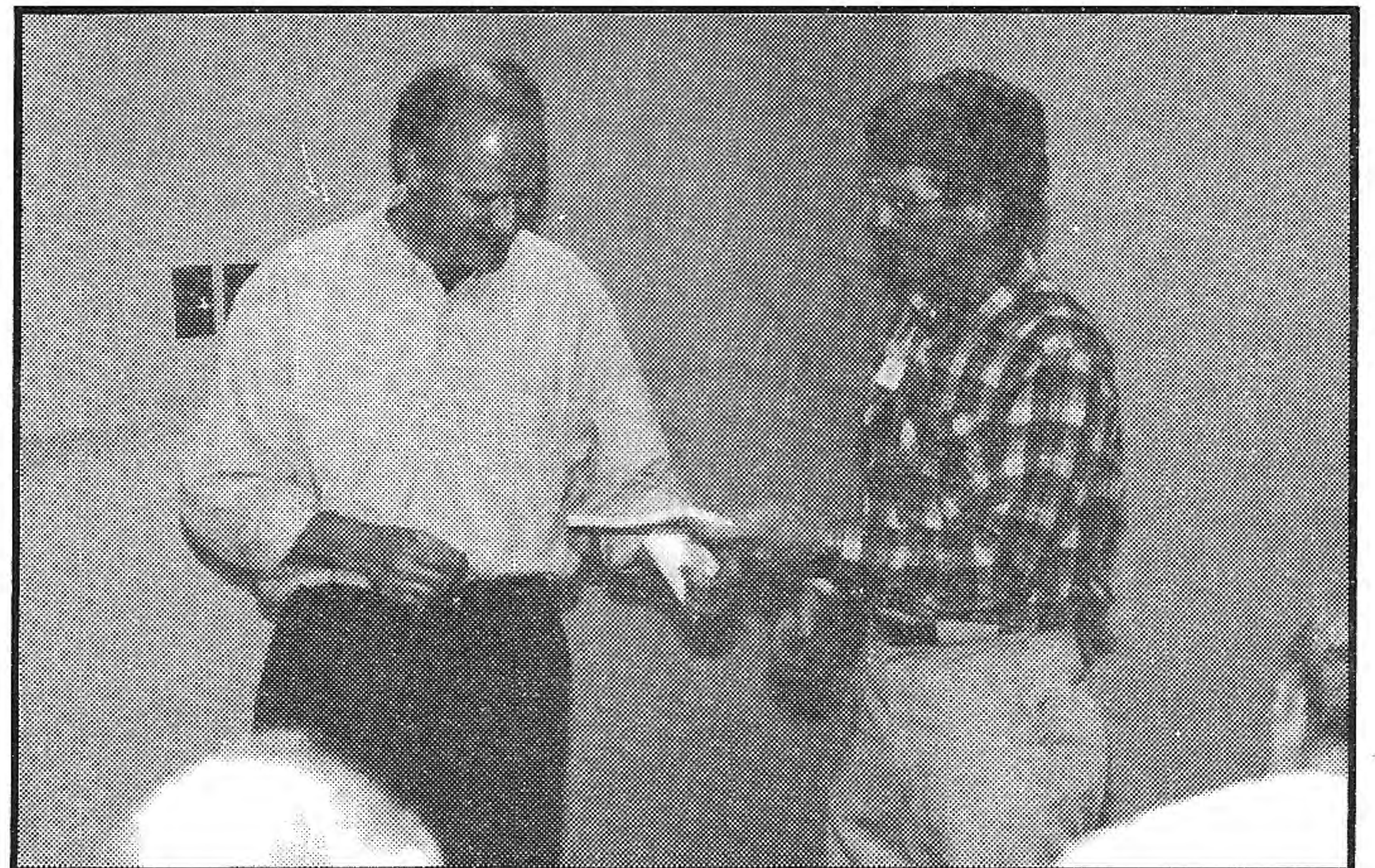
Did you know that the famed sixteenth century Spanish explorer DeSoto blazed a trail of infamy through our very own Cartersville? Did you know that there is evidence of life having existed in this area that dates back nearly fourteen thousand years? If you had attended the April 22 membership meeting of the Etowah Valley Historical Society, you would have learned this and many other astounding facts about Cartersville and North Georgia.

The Society held this informative meeting at the Bartow County Library. The speaker was Jim Langford, a distinguished graduate of both the University of Georgia and Harvard. The subject was Spanish Exploration in North Georgia.

Much archaeological evidence was presented to prove that DeSoto and his band of rogue explorers visited this area. For instance, a Native American village has recently been unearthed that matches exactly the description of a village in the historical accounts of DeSoto's expeditions. Also, Spanish crossbow arrows and Native

American arrow points have been discovered by archaeologists lying side by side in many burials.

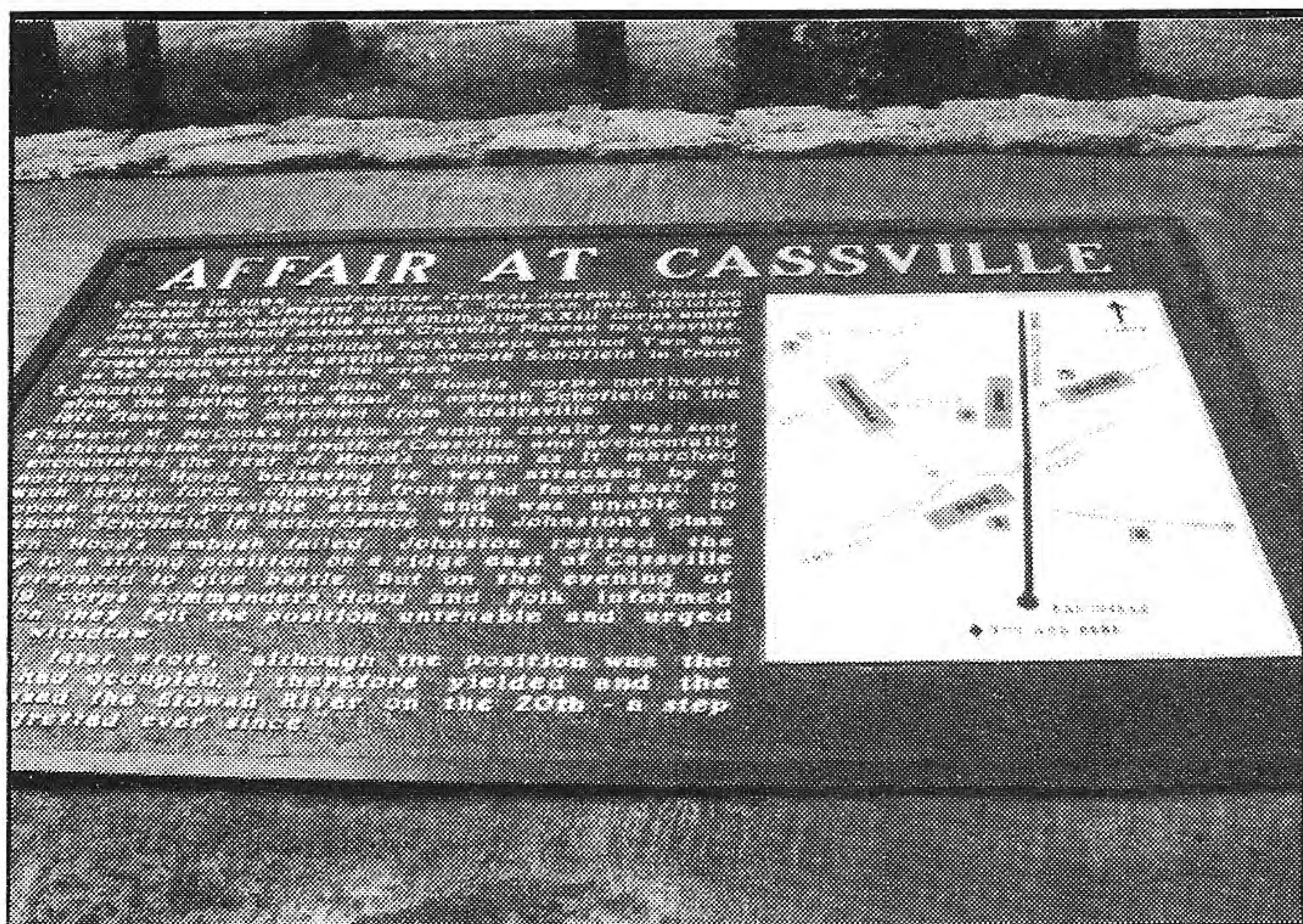
This program was well received with about forty members in attendance.



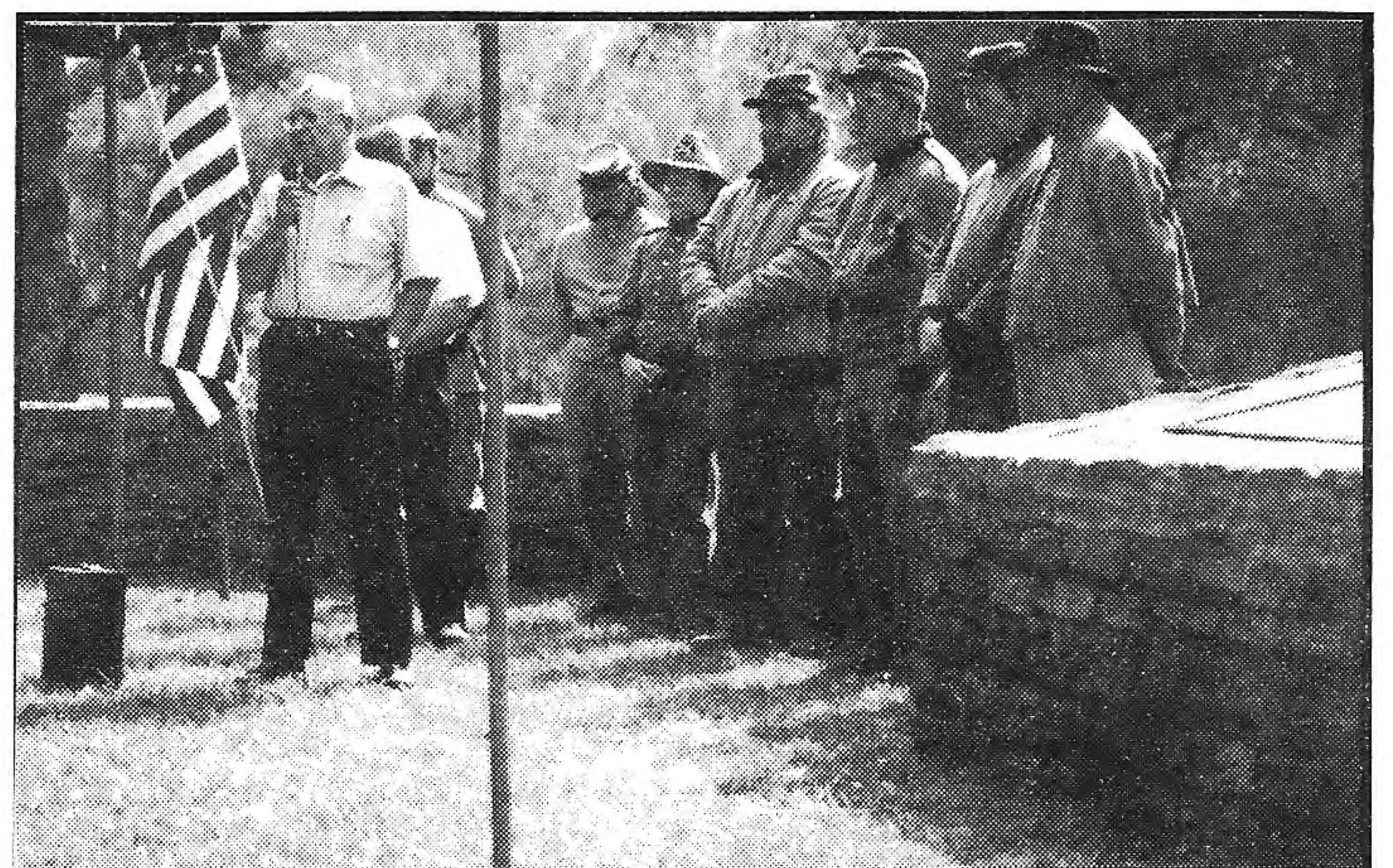
(L-R) Speaker, Jim Langford & EVHS President Carl Etheridge.

Cassville Dedication

Our congratulations to the Stiles/Akin Camp #670 of the Sons of Confederate Veterans for taking the initiative to replace a historical marker once located in the roadside park at Highway 41 and Cassville Road. The original marker depicting the "Affair at Cassville" was embedded in a portion of the rock wall surrounding the park, however, it was stolen during the 1970's. Led by our local SCV chapter, many individuals and groups, including the EVHS, donated their expertise and/or money to this cause. Our Cassville Park is one of five such parks honoring the Atlanta Campaign. All are located along old Highway 41 between Atlanta and Chattanooga. Built during the 1940's, the others are located at Dalton, Ringgold, Resaca and New Hope Church.



New Marker



Bill Scaife addresses a crowd of about forty people. Confederate reenactors who are members of the Stiles/Akin Camp #670 stand watch.

Membership Meeting June 20, 1998

It has been six years since the EVHS last visited the Ortney-Henderson home. But the wait was well worth it, as about sixty members and guests converged on this magnificent pre-Civil War home now owned and occupied by Jere and Denise Conner. It was a beautiful evening with a slight breeze as everyone enjoyed a deliciously catered dinner.

Following dinner, EVHS President, Carl Etheridge thanked our hosts for their hospitality, then introduced the evenings speaker, Mary Ellen Higgenbotham, Director of the Root House Museum in Marietta. She spoke on the architecture of some of the older homes in Bartow County as well as some in north Cobb County and south Gordon County. Mrs. Higgenbotham is recognized as an expert on building restoration and colors. The program was very well received.

Board Member Dianne Tate presented our speaker with a matted copy of an invoice from the P.M.B. Young collection with the heading of the Root Pharmacy. It is the only piece of Root family memorabilia known. This donation is part of an ongoing effort by the EVHS to increase the com-

munication and sharing between neighboring historical societies and museums.



Ortney Henderson home

Membership Meeting August 29, 1998

The Etowah Valley Historical Society hosted a dinner meeting Saturday, August 29, 1998. Over one hundred members enjoyed dinner on the lawn at "Valley View", the antebellum home of Dr. & Mrs. Robert Norton, Jr.

Valley View was built in the 1840's. During the Civil War, Confederate sharpshooters rode all around the house. Their bulletholes can still be seen today. Yankees who temporarily took over the house also used the piano in the front parlor as a trough for their horses.

Bob and Mary Norton are the fifth generation to live in the house and are working to preserve this important landmark in Bartow County which is currently threatened by neighboring development plans.

Mr. Pratt Cassidy spoke to the Society on "A Practical Concentration for Preservation of Historic Bartow County".

He addressed the problem of unrestricted growth and its impact on the community. Mr. Cassidy stressed the role of the people and the government to protect their communities through strong zoning laws and good forward planning.

He highlighted the 1980 Georgia Preservation Act which allows local governments to protect property. The

message must be sent to government that "we value our county" and that we want laws and techniques set in place to protect our historical resources whether it is a building or open space.

Mr. Cassidy also suggested that our local government appoint a task force to study ordinances, design review, and the Natural Lands Trust, etc. to see what would be right for our county to facilitate "smart growth".



Valley View

continued on following page

"April 29 Membership Meeting" continued

He noted that over 80 communities in Georgia now have preservation committees in place. It will be a combination of public support and vigilant efforts by elected officials to make sure that the administrative plan of ordinances fits into the current plan for growth.

Information was also distributed to the members concerning "Nontraditional Landowner Development Options." These included the Chattowah Open Land Trust, the Trust for Public Land, River Care 2000, and the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Area Initiative. Also detailed was the Conservation Development concept for subdivision design.

The al fresco dinner was catered by Charlotte Monroe of "Unique Caterers".



A large crowd was on hand to enjoy the evening's festivities.

Under the Gold Dome

By: Chantal Parker

Well, I've been at the new job for about ten weeks now, and love it! There's always something going on in the office, and just enough excitement.

Chris King, publisher of "Cartersville Magazine" stopped by recently for a tour of our research facilities, as did Brandi Barnes, with the "Daily Tribune." Brandi was researching the old Rowland Springs for an article she's preparing.

Richard Davis, a member from Rockmart, has been a daily visitor for the last few weeks. Mr. Davis will sit at the microfilm machine for hours, reading the old newspapers, trying to track down the elusive Claude Trippe.

Kathryn Dean from Leesburg, Florida was on her way to Hayesville, N. C. with her friend, Louraine Heiskell, earlier this month, when they decided to pay us a visit. Her Clark family kin had fought on the blue side at the Battle of Allatoona Pass, and she wanted to contribute material from a different perspective of that local Civil War engagement. Included among the material is an account of the 39th Iowa, Company K's involvement.

In the last couple of months, folks from North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, Alabama, Indiana, and even as far away as California, have visited our facilities in search of local history and ancestral ties. Of course, it's our pleasure to assist each and every one

of them with their queries, knowing we've helped make a difference.

You can make a difference too, by joining our office staff of volunteers and helping to keep the office open. Mind you, it's not always an exciting adventure; some days you may want to bring a good book to read. Give it some thought, then give us a call at 770-606-8862. We could really use your help. And drop by any time for a visit. You know where to find us...under the gold dome.



Chantal Parker, Administrative Secretary and Volunteer for the EVHS.

**This Newsletter is Dedicated to the Memory of
Mr. Sam Siniard and Mr. Scott Messenger**

Annual Membership Meeting

October 3, 1998

On Saturday evening, October 3, the Etowah Valley Historical Society held its annual business meeting and dinner at Malbone, a majestic nineteenth century home. Malbone, located on Stiles Road, just southwest of Cartersville, was built in 1870 by Robert Mackay Stiles. The current owner, Frederick Knight, is a Stiles descendant and resides in the house with his wife, Julia, and their three children.

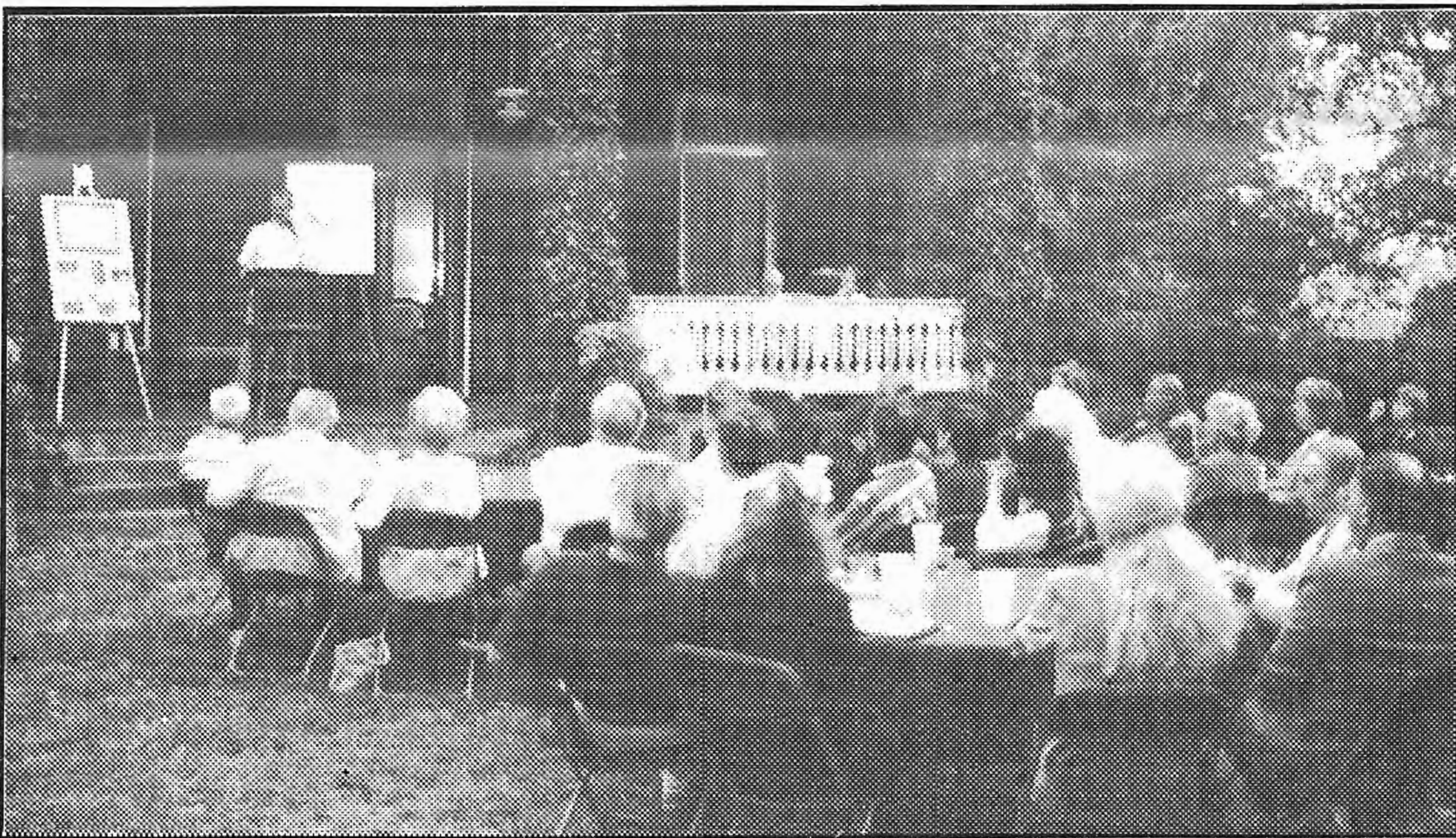
About 70 members and guests enjoyed a barbecue dinner in the shade of a towering magnolia on the east lawn of Malbone. People just seemed to enjoy the relaxed atmosphere while gazing out over the rolling fields surrounding this magnificent home. Members were saddened to discover that neighboring historic lands had recently been purchased by a developer with plans to build a subdivision.

The speaker for the evening was Dr. Chip Reed,

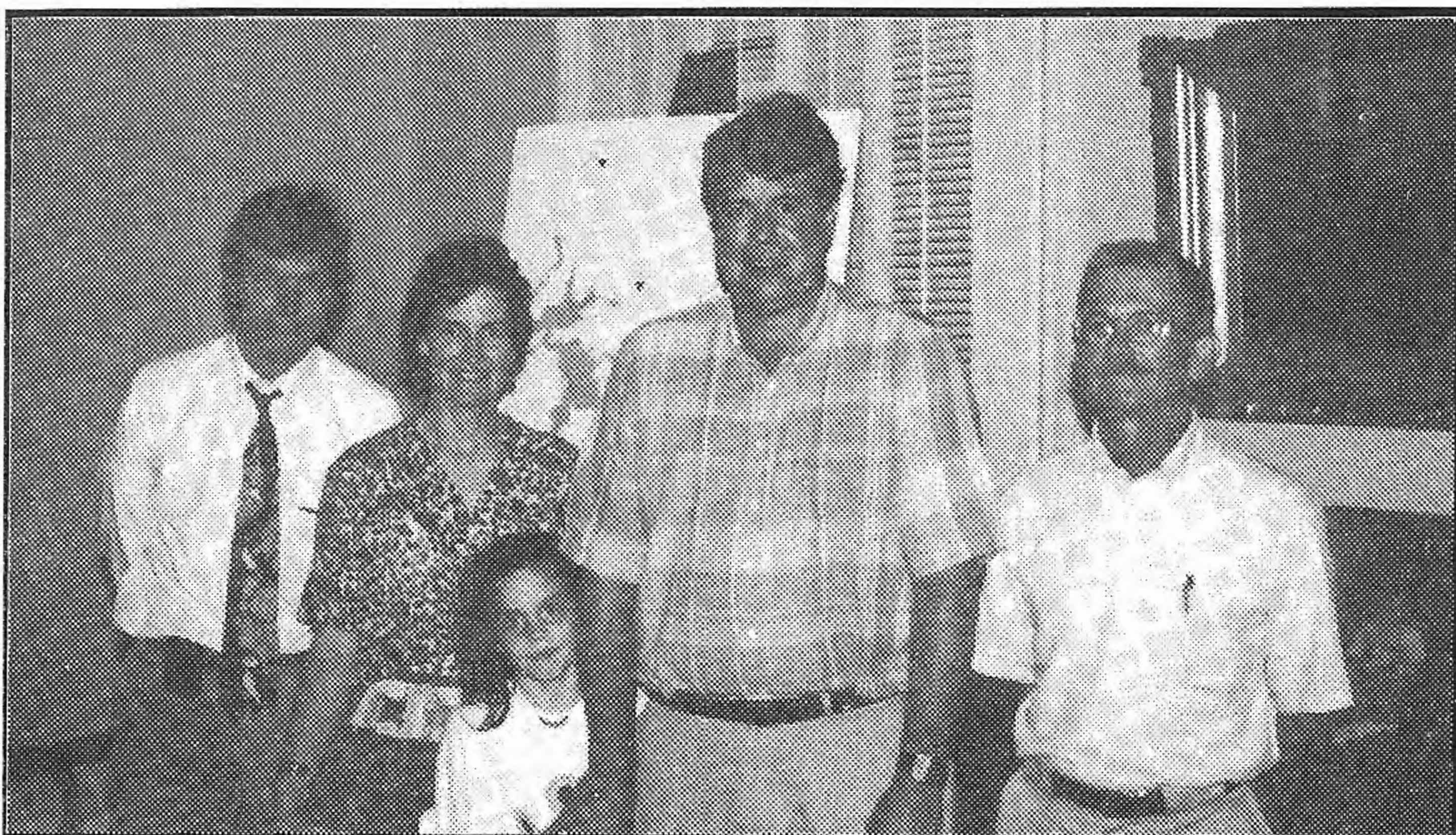
M.D., founder of the Chattowah Open Land Trust. Dr. Reed knows well the threats to the remaining open spaces in our region. The trust formed is a nonprofit, volunteer organization, dedicated to preserving the natural, historic and archaeological open spaces in Northwest Georgia. They can help individuals understand how to place a conservation easement on land with historical or scenic value and receive a tax write off on income taxes and estate taxes while maintaining private ownership. When one's land is placed in a trust, it is preserved from development for countless future generations. Dr. Reed urged us all to act now before Bartow County becomes the incredible shrinking county that so many others in North Georgia have become.

EVHS President Carl Etheridge thanked Dr. Reed for attending and presented him with a book as our token of appreciation. Carl's next duty was to thank everyone for making this past year so successful. He also recognized the directors whose three year terms were expiring. They were Diane Mooney, Larry Gregory and Ellen Thomasson. Nominations for new directors were presented by President Etheridge on behalf of the nominating committee, chaired by DiAnne Monroe. Candidates presented were Wayne Rice, Kathy Schubert and Robert Wilson. All three were unanimously accepted by the members present. The next order of business was to present certificates of appreciation to the 25 volunteers who make up our office staff. According to Carl, "the EVHS office is the heart and home of our society. It is where we meet the community and where the community meets us. It is a place where we share common ground and where we come together in work and fellowship to aid in the preservation of our history. Without the untiring assistance of our office volunteers, the doors would remain closed to members and the public. It is with much appreciation that the board of directors, the officers, and the society as a whole thank you for your active participation in our organization." Last, but not least, our new administrative secretary, Chantal Parker, was introduced.

The meeting closed with a big thanks to Frederick and Julia Knight for hosting our meeting and arranging for such an excellent program.



The audience listens as President Carl Etheridge sums up a successful 97/98 EVHS year.



(L-R) Dr. Chip Reed, Julia Knight, Caroline Knight, Frederick Knight, Carl Etheridge

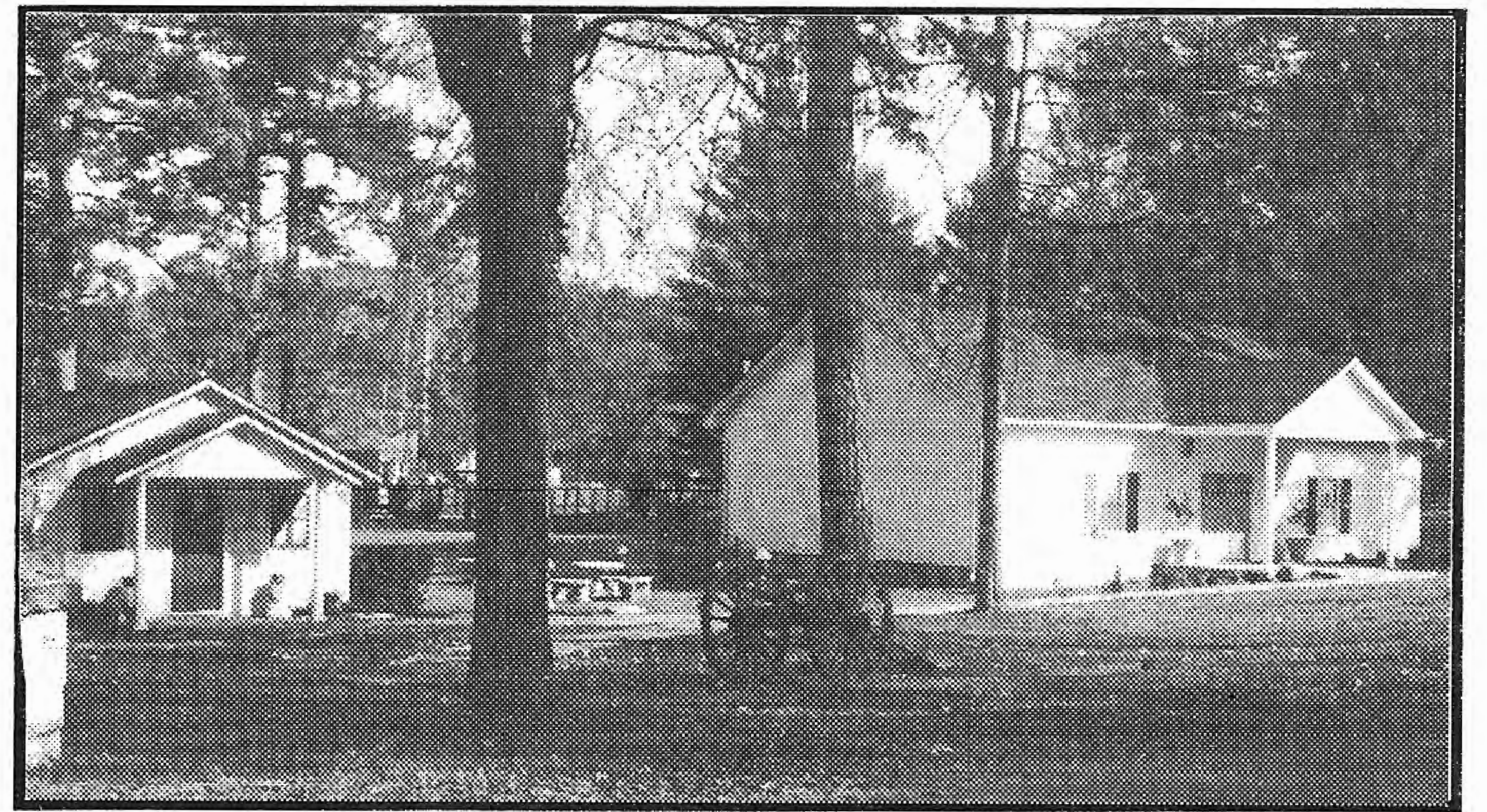
Remember Kingston

The third printing of We Remember Kingston was an exciting endeavor by your Society to assist the Kingston Woman's History Club (KWHC) in raising funds for their new museum annex. Five hundred books were printed by the EVHS with 250 given to the KWHC. Book sales by the KWHC should generate as much as \$2500. The Kingston Women's History Club, organized in 1900, has worked diligently to preserve the history, lore and legends of the area and to share this information with local residents as well as visitors. The existing 20 X 30 museum building is filled largely with Confederate artifacts and memorabilia.

Even when the Federals occupied the town in 1865, a memorial service was held in the local cemetery. Under the leadership of KWHC, the 134th consecutive memorial service was observed in 1998. It is the intention of this group to continue this practice and to maintain the Confederate emphasis in the original building. However, it was the desire of the club to build and equip a 30 X 50 structure to emphasize a broader more complete account of the heritage of the area. Today a revival of sorts is taking place. New businesses have opened and work is

progressing on the refurbishing of streets and sidewalks.

An expansion of the museum facility is KWHC's part in their renewed interest in the growth and development of the downtown area. The Etowah Valley Historical Society is proud to have donated to this worthy endeavor. Copies of We Remember Kingston can be purchased at a cost of \$10 from either the KWHC or the EVHS.



Original Museum on the left and the new facility on the right.

Etowah Valley

Historical Society

P.O. Box 1886

Cartersville, Georgia 30120

**INSIDE:
EVHS Library Book
Fundraiser**

Old House Genealogy

**We Remember Kingston
and much more. . .**
