



# ETOWAH VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



*Promoting and enhancing the awareness and preservation of  
the heritage and traditions of Bartow County*

Volume 75, April 2010

P.O. Box 1886, Cartersville, GA 30120

Phone: 770-606-8862

## METHODISTS AND THE CHEROKEE

**M**ichael Wren, an active independent historic researcher, will speak on the interaction between the Methodist and Cherokees at the Indian Mounds on the 20th of April. Refreshments will be at 6:30, preceding the program.

Mike is active in the Trail of Tears Association, several historical, genealogical and heritage societies. Mike has lived the majority of his life in Georgia and is a graduate of Auburn University. He is employed in the financial services industry. He is married and has three children.

## SPRING EVENT AT HISTORIC VALLEY VIEW

*Contributed by Mina Harper*

**T**he Etowah Valley Historical Society announces the opening of Valley View for a public tour on June 12, 2010, 12:00-5:00 pm. The stately Pre-Civil War mansion and plantation are between Cartersville and Euharlee overlooking the Etowah River. The tour will include the interior of the home, the formal garden, smokehouse, and the original kitchen in its own building. Other historical societies in Bartow County will have a display table to promote their organization and upcoming events open to the public. The cost is \$10.00; light refreshments will be served.

EVHS is grateful for the generosity of the Nortons for making this opportunity available to welcome the public and to benefit our organization. The Norton siblings are direct descendants of Col. James C. Sproull who built the home in the 1840's. The Union Army occupied Valley View during the Civil War leaving visible evidence of a bullet hole in a column and graffiti in an upstairs bedroom. Valley View hosted the founding meeting of EVHS in 1972 as well as many of its events over the past 38 years.

An orientation for volunteers planning to assist with the tour will be held at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Robert Norton on Tuesday, June 8, 2010 at 6:30 pm. After the orientation, a buffet dinner will be served. Set up at Valley View for the tour will be on Friday, June 11, 2010 from 9:00-11:00 am.

Chairpersons for the event are Genie Certain and Mary Norton. Please call Genie Certain if you are interested in participating as a volunteer: 770-383-3853. Volunteers are needed as docents, for ticket sales, directing traffic/parking and for serving refreshments.



Etowah Valley Historical Society  
115 West Cherokee Avenue  
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Website: [www.evhsonline.org](http://www.evhsonline.org)

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## ORAL HISTORY

In a program held February 12 at the Cartersville Library, the Oral History Committee brought the public up to date on the progress of their work. Mary Norton served as moderator for a panel which consisted of Trey Gaines, Genie Certain, Ernestine Young Jones and Cheryl Kennedy. They told a large audience the history of the project and presented a DVD showing excerpts of interviews with a representative group of longtime Bartow County residents

The committee is attempting to record the histories of a wide range of persons involved in the growth of Bartow County.

To date 28 interviews have been made on DVD. These interviews will be available for viewing at the Cartersville Public Library, the Bartow History Museum, and at the office of the Etowah Valley Historical Society in the historical gold-domed courthouse.

Other tapes and/or recordings were made by radio station WBHF at an earlier date. The Rotary Club recently added a DVD on the history of their organization.

Members of the committee are: Genie Certain and Trey Gaines, co-chairmen, and Mina Harper, Sallie Tonsmiere, Betty Jane and Joe Tilley, Trish Simmons and Ed Hill.



Oral History Panel Members: From left to right - Ernestine Young Jones, Cheryl Kennedy, Genie Certain, Trey Gaines.

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# EVHS MAKES DONATION TO EUHARLEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The Board of Directors recently awarded \$500 to assist in the publication of a book on the genealogy of the families of the Euharlee, Stilesboro, and Taylorsville areas. The book will be a source for people who wish to update their family trees and will be available in the EVHS office after publication.

EVHS also pledged to give \$500 to the Bartow History Museum over a period of three years towards the new museum.



*Ed Hill, President of the Etowah Valley Historical Society, presents a check to Betty Jane Tilley and Genie Certain, representatives of the Euharlee Historical Society. (Both are members of EVHS)*

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## CEMETERY CLEAN-UP APRIL 10

Spring cleaning at Friendship Cemetery will be held on Saturday, April 10 beginning at 9 a.m. Volunteers will be cutting fallen branches, trimming shrubs, pulling weeds, and picking up debris.

The property was donated for a cemetery and a church in 1842. The original building of the First Presbyterian Church was built there. Over the years the site was neglected. At the time EVHS adopted the site in 2002 it was so badly overgrown that drivers passing by did not know a cemetery was there.

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## MONUMENT DEDICATION SET FOR MAY 22

The monument to those soldiers from Alabama who participated in the Battle at Allatoona Pass on October 5, 1864 will be dedicated on May 22 at 2 p.m.

The Alabama monument will be the sixth monument to be placed at the site. Previously monuments had been placed for Missouri, Texas, Illinois, Iowa and Mississippi.

A monument to those soldiers from Minnesota who fought at the Battle of Allatoona Pass will be dedicated at the annual observation of the battle on the first weekend in October.

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# KING OF THE MOONSHINERS

*Editors Note: The following was printed on Dec. 11, 1941 and is from the collection of J.B. Tate.*

## INTERESTING STORY TOLD THE LIFE OF JOHN HENRY HARDIN

*By: Celestine Sibley  
In the Atlanta Constitution*

High up in the hills of Cherokee County there lives, according to local legends, the most honest man in North Georgia. He is John Henry Hardin, once known as the "King of the Moonshiners."

Indicted 17 times and convicted, as he recalls it about half a dozen times, John Henry Hardin has a reputation for honesty that has spread hundreds of miles from his native hills. Judges, jurors, court clerks and internal revenue agents, they all know him and they all have stories about his unwavering devotion, his complete trustworthiness. And all the stories end, "If John Henry says it, it's so."

### MAY BE LEGENDS

Some of the stories may be legends, Robin Hood-like yarns woven from a figment of truth, but many of them can be substantiated by court records. There's the one about his practice of never taking the witness stand in his own defense because he neither wanted to tell a lie nor testify against himself. There's the story about the time the judge offered to cut his sentence in exchange for a promise to forsake forever the business of making or financing the making of corn liquor.

John Henry Hardin, like Robin Hood is reported to have shook his gray head sadly and said, "I'm sorry judge, I can't promise you." Veteran law enforcement officers recall raiding the Hardin place during Prohibition days, seizing substantial quantities of sugar and other makings and turning them over to John Henry to hold for them until the roads were better and they could get them out. "All you had to do," says Lon Sowell, now a deputy United States Marshall but for many years a prohibition agent, "was to tell John Henry that you seized the stuff for the United States government and ask him to keep it for you. He would never touch it. It would be right there when you went back."

### STUCK TO HIS WORD

Then there was the time Mr. Hardin was sentenced to six months. They handed him the commitment papers and told him to take himself to jail. Wasn't any use, as anybody could see, in sending an officer with John Henry Hardin. If he told them he'd go to jail, he'd be there.

That's John Henry Hardin's reputation, and so far as anybody knows it is blemished by only one untruth, a lie which a strong old man told to protect his weaker son, but a lie which may have indirectly resulted in the blackest tragedy or series of tragedies to befall a family.

John Henry Hardin went into court and pleaded guilty to making liquor. He offered no excuse. He made no statement. "I have nothing to say. I just want to plead guilty," court attaches recall his saying. People suspected John Henry's son of being guilty in the case but the father had pleaded guilty and he was sentenced. The son went free and a little later was arrested on another liquor charge. "I don't know," the father said the other day, looking out across his cotton fields to the hills beyond, "he must have got to brooding over it and got deranged." The result was that John Henry Hardin's son killed his wife and five children and then turned the gun on himself. It's a thing that John Henry Hardin still can't bring himself to talk about.

### FARM SIZED

At the time the government seized his big farm. A farm which he had put around, \$20,000, and sold it for \$6,100, to pay the tax on the liquor which they had seized. The combination of losing his son, daughter-in-law, and five grand-children in the mass execution in the little mountainside house, followed closely by the loss of his home might have left Mr. Hardin an embittered old man. He might wonder if it had been better to let the son take the punishment in the first case. If he had served time for the first case he might not have had the second case to brood over.

But if he grieves over it in private, John Henry Hardin doesn't say so. That sentence is behind and another one since then and now at

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the age of 76, he is stronger, more courageous than ever before. He admits that he served the sentence for his boy, but he doesn't talk about it, and if he connects the tragedy in any way with his one departure from the truth, he keeps that to himself too. "I did the time for him," he said the other day with a gentle kind of dignity that discouraged prying. "But he's gone now and I don't want to talk about it."

### **BACK AT HOME**

John Henry Hardin has been back in the hills of Cherokee County about a year and a half. He completed an 18 month sentence in a federal hospital where he came close to dying of influenza. And now he is back on the farm which he owned 20 years ago. He doesn't own it anymore. He rents it from the Georgia Power Company, but he farms it with the aid of a dozen or so field hands. He has 147 acres in cultivation and with his battered old hat pulled down over piercing deepset blue eyes, he walks his fields again and glories in the sharp east wind, the soft blue haze over the hills brilliant with color, the rich earth and the snowy cotton being hauled into his storehouse.

His wife, now partially paralyzed, and his married daughter and grandsons keep the neat white frame house for him, but Mr. Hardin spends much of his time in a little tenant house near the musty office and commissary in the center of his fields. There he has a bed and comfortable chair by the fire and a sizable library at hand. John Henry Hardin is essentially a scholar. When he was born in the northern part of Cherokee County in October, 1865, he had no opportunity to go to school, but he hungered for knowledge and he fed on every book he could get.

"I was boss at Franklin gold mines for 10 years," he explained, "and when they went out of business they left a lot of books behind them. I got them and studied them all. They were principally books on mining and geology, but they have been considerable help to me. I wanted to make a doctor but couldn't afford the schooling. I had an uncle who was a doctor and when he went west to practice on the Indian reservation he left me his books. I studied them all."

### **MISSED SCHOOLING**

The formal schooling he has missed evidently left no gap in Mr. Hardin's education that he was not able to fill independently with reading. He uses English that he credits to his Anglo-Saxon ancestors, and he has the quiet cultured voice of a country squire.

"The penitentiary libraries have been of great assistance to me," he remarked seriously. "Of course, I don't want to put in any more time in the penitentiary but I figure the time I have put in there has been to my advantage. I had a well-balanced diet, the benefit of the best medical care and the opportunity to do all the reading I wanted to. It may sound funny but I honestly believe that the time I spent in the penitentiary has added years to my life." The stigma of being under sentence in a penal institution doesn't worry Mr. Hardin in the slightest. According to his code, engaging in the liquor business in violation of the law was not wrong "I never did feel like I was doing wrong," he said. "I wouldn't have done it if I'd felt that way. I never did actually make the whiskey myself but I reckon you could say that I aided and abetted others. I supplied the materials and the money that amounted to conspiracy."

The story of John Henry Hardin, a prosperous farmer and country merchant, turned to illicit liquor as a business goes back to 1916. He had invested \$18,000 in his crops that year and the floods came and destroyed not only his crops but those of his customers.

"The prettiest corn you ever saw," he recounted, "was completely destroyed. The only way I could get even with the world was to get in the whiskey business. I never did drink it as a beverage and I don't know anything about making it, but I helped others and now, you might say, I'm even with the world."

But today John Henry Hardin gives every indication of being through with moonshining, either directly or indirectly. For one thing, he has promised Judge E. Marvin Underwood that he would not manufacture or sell whiskey and he has every intention of keeping that promise to "one of the best friends I have in the world."

And another thing that worries Mr. Hardin a little is that the class of the people engaged in moonshining isn't as good as it used to be. Good, honest citizens used to look on it as a legitimate business, although Mr. Hardin doesn't want to hurt anybody's feelings. The business has gone down so a respectable man hardly feels like fooling with it.

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# CASS OR BARTOW SUPERIOR COURT SEPT. TERM 1865

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Owing to the loss and absence of a portion of the County Records it was not practicable for our body to give them the usual examination.

We have, through a committee, examined the walls of the jail building who report that the walls are apparently sound. We therefore recommend the Inferior Court to have such building so repaired that it may be made available for the safe keeping of prisoners, providing they find it practicable after they shall have it examined by competent workmen. We deem it highly important that our County have some safe place for the keeping of prisoners, as it will be a great inconvenience to the Sheriff to carry prisoners to other Counties for safe keeping, and a heavy burden to the County. Owing to the condition of our County for the past few years, the working of the roads has been neglected but we are informed that District Commissioners have been appointed. We recommend that the roads be put in passable order before winter sets in.

The past year has been one of unusual drought, consequently the grain crops are remarkably light. There being but a small portion of the open land in the county cultivated. We fear that unless the grains produced in the County is used exclusively for the ordinary subsistence of man and beast, that there will be great scarcity, and want in our county during the insuing year.

We would there appeal to the citizens of this county to distain from the distillation of grain of any kind that can be converted into breadstuffs and would urge all good citizens to use their influence against the conversion of the grain of the County in spirits. We hope every citizen of the County will let his benevolence predominate over his self interest in this when they consider the destitute condition of our county. We would suggest that the next legislature of our state would adopt such legislation as will effectively prevent the evil for the next year. Our observation and experience and propriety of a change in our judiciary system so far as to separate the trial of criminal cases from common law and equity of cases by establishing courts of exclusively criminal jurisdiction and holding the sessions quarterly.

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## OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

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Volunteers are needed in the Etowah Valley Historical Society office in the gold-domed courthouse for the hours of 1:30 - 4:30 on the forth and fifth Friday of each month.

Current volunteers are: Genie Certain, Lila Champion, Bill Devine, Mina Harper, Lois & Ed Hill, Ann Jones, Eleanor Linn, Emily McClurg, Dianne Monroe, Bob & Trudy Redwine, Wayne Rice, Leroy & Jan Shepherd, Laurette Smith, Norma Tidwell, Carole Umberger, and Carolyn Ward.

The office volunteers play a very important part in the work of our organization. Often they are our only direct contact with the public. They provide a great service by helping visitors with assistance in historical and genealogical research.

If you would like to assist in this important work of our organization, please call Ed Hill at 770-386-3110.

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# JODIE HILL RECEIVES HONORARY DOCTORATE

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**E**VHS member and the 2009 recipient of EVHS's Lifetime Achievement Award, Jodie Hill, was honored on January 20th when Kennesaw awarded him with an honorary Doctorate degree. This was only the 13th time in the history of Kennesaw State University that an honorary doctorate has been awarded. KSU presently has more than 23,000 students and offers more than 70 graduate and undergraduate degrees.

Hill recently donated the property of Cora Harris, well known author of her day to the University. The Bartow County site had been restored to its' former glory by Hill..

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## HILLS OF IRON

**E**VHS President, Ed Hill, spoke at Cooper's furnace on March 20th as part of Red Top State Park's annual Hills of Iron program.

EVHS and Red Top held the first Hills of Iron program in 2001 and the program has attracted more visitors each year since.

The program honors the iron industry which played such an important part in the growth of Bartow County. The event is high-lighted by the operation of a miniature copy of Cooper's Furnace behind the lodge at Red Top State Park.

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## WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

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Charles & Lota Bryans  
Hunter Carter  
Virginia Kay  
Martha Macon  
Jerry Schar  
Mike Smith  
Jonathan & Elizabeth Yates

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# UPCOMING EVENTS

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Friendship Cemetery  
CEMETERY CLEAN-UP  
April 10, 9:00 a.m.

Indian Mounds  
METHODISTS AND CHEROKEE  
April 20, 6:30 p.m.

Allatoona Pass  
ALABAMA MONUMENT DEDICATION  
May 22, 2:00 p.m.

Valley View  
EVHS FUND-RAISER  
June 12, 1:00 -5:00 p.m.

Joe Dabney, Speech and Book Signing  
LIBRARY  
July 22, 2010

OBSERVATION OF THE  
BATTLE OF ALLATOONA PASS  
October 2-3, 2010

Grand Oaks  
EVHS ANNUAL DINNER MEETING  
October 8, 2010

Rose Lawn  
EVHS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY  
Friday, December 3, 2010

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[evhs@evhsonline.org](mailto:evhs@evhsonline.org)

*Use the above e-mail website to keep up  
with the activities of EVHS*



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