

# ETOWAH VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

Volume 101, March 2018

P.O. Box 1886, Cartersville, GA 30120

Phone: 770-606-8862

## EVHS Nominates “Alphabet” Collins UGA 2018 Agricultural Hall of Fame

In 1932 M.W.H. “Alphabet” Collins became the Farm Extension Agent in Bartow County where he had an opportunity to build on his 17 years of experience as one of the foremost cotton plant breeders in the country. In his first year of employment, Collins began a system of cotton breeding which over the next nine years made a remarkable impact on cotton yields in the County. He was determined to develop a method for supplying local farmers with new and improved seed stock. Although the Bartow County acreage devoted to cotton production declined by 50% in 1943, the total number of bales actually produced was more than one-third as much as the six surrounding counties combined.

In 1943, spurred by this huge increase in cotton production, Collins and a group of visionary Bartow County leaders galvanized the entire community to establish The Georgia Institute of Genetics (GIG). The mission of the Institute was to provide one place where seed stocks of various kinds could be bred, multiplied and distributed under absolute control. GIG provided the required facilities to do the necessary processing, storing and handling of these seed stocks as well as providing affordable high-quality seed to local farmers.

The source of funds to establish and operate the GIG was solely from private donations including foundations, civic clubs, the Chamber of Commerce and more than 60 of Bartow County’s leading farmers. The donations made possible the purchase of 400 acres of land on Highway 20 upon which the gin and other outbuildings still stand today. The Georgia Institute of Genetics remained viable until 1967 when the Board of Trustees decided to conclude its works and transferred all remaining assets of the former GIG to the Boards of Regents.



Given Collins outstanding agricultural leadership role in Georgia, the Etowah Valley Historical Society, the Euharlee Farmers Club and Bartow County Extension decided to nominate “Alphabet” Collins to the UGA 2018 Agriculture Hall of Fame. Commissioner Steve Taylor and Bob Neel wrote one of the letters of recommendation on behalf of the Euharlee Farmers Club. The following is an excerpt from their letter that describes farming when the GIG was established. (continued on page 3)



*GIG located on highway 20 across from Walmart next to Georgia Highlands College*



Etowah Valley Historical Society  
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Email: [evhs@evhsonline.org](mailto:evhs@evhsonline.org)  
Website: [www.evhsonline.org](http://www.evhsonline.org)

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Joanne Smith Pugh

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# SAVE THE DATE

## Upcoming Events for EVHS

**March 17, 2018** – Ladd's Mountain Hike

**April 21, 2018** – Cassville Cemetery clean-up day at 10am.  
Call 678-800-3214 for details

**May 6, 2018** – BHS Quiz Bowl at 2:00 PM at Sam Jones Church

**October 6 - 7, 2018** – Allatoona Pass

**October 12, 2018** – EVHS Annual Dinner at Grand Oaks (Members only)

**November 3 - 4, 2018** – EVHS Tour of Homes in Adairsville's Society Hill

**December 7, 2018** – Annual Christmas Dinner at 6:00 PM at Roselawn (Members only)

**TBD, 2018** – Salt Peter Cave

**TBD, 2018** – Spring Bank and Cement

Note: Some dates are subject to change.

Keep an eye out here in our next newsletter or visit the website at [www.evhsonline.org](http://www.evhsonline.org) for event updates.



## Rolling dues are due

EVHS reminds members that dues are now due according to the anniversary month that you joined. Notices are being mailed out or emailed to individuals. If you have received a notice and not yet renewed, please do so now by mailing your check or going online.

PO Box 1886 Cartersville GA 30120

[www.evhsonline.org/membership](http://www.evhsonline.org/membership)

## Give a book for a special occasion

Members are encouraged to consider the collection of books we have at the EVHS office for special gifts. J. B. Tate's recent *Sketches of Bartow County* has been a popular item this past year. Also others such as *In and Out of the Lines*, *The General – The Great Locomotive Dispute*, *Allatoona Pass: A Needless Effusion of Blood*, *Mattie Lee Price – The Georgia Wonder*, and many more. You may purchase online or go by the office.



## EVHS COMMITTEES

### Allatoona Pass Battlefield

Chaired by  
Guy Parmenter

### Bartow History Scholars

Chaired by  
Joe Head

### Courthouse Office and Research

Chaired by  
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### Facebook

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### Genealogy Research

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### Historic Awareness Signs

Chaired by  
Dianne Tate

### Historical Inventory

Co-Chaired by  
Mary Norton  
Michael Garland

### Newsletter

Co-Chaired by  
Joe Head  
Jeffrey Williams

### Oral History

Co-Chaired by  
Susan Tumlin  
Judy Kilgore

### Photography

Co-Chaired by  
Victor Mulinix  
Margaret Mathison  
Tony Ross

### Preservation

Chaired by  
John Lewis

### Geospatial (digital maps)

Co-Chaired by  
Tim Poe  
Robby Bagby

### Tour of Homes

Chaired by  
The Preservation  
Committee

### Website

Co-Chaired by  
Joanne Smith Pugh  
Joe Head  
Larry Posey

(continued from page 1)



(L to R) Joe Meyers, Clyde Medlock, M. W. H. (Alphabet) Collins, unidentified, Charles Cowin, unidentified.

*“Farming in the '40s - '60s was a hard life: hot, cold, dirty, dusty, and at times literally quite painful. Mechanization was in its infancy - a John Deere A was a most magnificent machine! Into these times Collins' GIG Farm was born. Its work improved the life of every farmer in this county and more; his seed breeding was a godsend to struggling cotton farmers.”*

*“In Alphabet's day there were no big seed companies like Pioneer, Monsanto, Dekalb or Deltapine to supply an endless parade of new, improved varieties. There were Alphabet and a few others. Yields in the late '60s might break 100 bu/ac for corn, 20 bu/ac for soybean, 1½ bales for cotton. Today we routinely produce 100 bu corn, 100 bu beans, and 3+ bales of cotton per acre. This illustrates how far agriculture has come in the last 50-60 years, and much of this came on the backs of dedicated, passionate plant geneticists and breeding researchers like Alphabet Collins.*

*Collins - Extension Agent extraordinaire, seed innovator, and champion of collaboration - was ultimately a farmer of ideas. Alphabet's true legacy: he planted the seeds of knowledge that changed the seed industry forever. Others talked; Alphabet ACTED. Success breeds success and others followed. GIG's success was the inspiration for the GA Crop Improvement Association Seed Certification and perhaps many of today's mega seed companies. We all build upon the foundations left by those who have gone before and Alphabet provided an incredible foundation for improved seed. We are proud to have had Alphabet as a friend, collaborator, and role model.*

*EVHS invites you to watch for further updates as the nomination process unfolds.”*



## EVHS 2017 Annual Christmas Dinner at Roselawn



EVHS members gathered for the annual Christmas dinner on Friday December first. Attendees enjoyed the beautifully decorated home of Sam Jones, a festive reception followed by a delicious meal prepared by Ray Thacker of Grand Oaks. Entertainment was provided by the Stephen Lee Band with a surprise visit made by Santa.



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## EVHS Digital Maps Move to a New Home

Since 2010, history buffs, schools, authors and EVHS members have come to enjoy a state-of-the-art technology that has made our local history come alive with interactive digital maps. These maps are themed according to topics and available 24/7 on the EVHS website.

Recently, the EVHS Geospatial History Committee with assistance from Kennesaw State University's Geographic Information Systems program undertook moving the EVHS map gallery to a new cloud based national home.

Since its inception, the map gallery had been hosted within the GIS infrastructure at the KSU campus. This move makes the site more secure, enables a greater number of simultaneous users and viewers. The new platform will allow more interaction with EVHS history content and gives unprecedented expansion capabilities for EVHS. These collaborations will benefit city and county school systems, local governments and society members who are engaged in field data collection or research. Users accessing mobile devices and apps will find richer experiences when

researching Bartow County History or tours, to name a few.

Tim Poe, the EVHS Geospatial History Committee chair, and Uli Ingram, KSU's GIS degree program director, have completed the necessary work to move the site, maps, apps, and data to ESRI's ArcGIS online cloud platform. A number of updates and upgrades were made to the map gallery and individual maps in the process. We look forward to the new opportunities that the move to the cloud provides us.



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## Newsletter Back Issues Now On line

Thanks to Jeff Williams, we now can enjoy previous issues of the EVHS newsletter 24/7. EVHS has begun to archive back issues of newsletters on the web. Unfortunately, not all newsletters are available. We invite you to contribute any rare back issues to complete our files. Contact Melissa Gay in the office at 770 606 8862. If you would like a look back to see former issues you can find our first wave of uploads at the "Get Involved" link under "Membership" on the EVHS website.





Ladd's Mountain Hike



Ladd's Mountain Hike



Georgia Farm Bureau



Book Signing



EVHS Intern



EVHS Intern



TLC Book Restoration



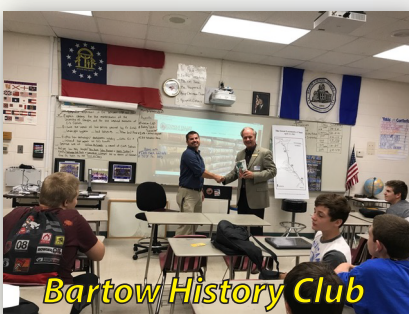
TLC Book Restoration



Volunteers



LakePoint Station



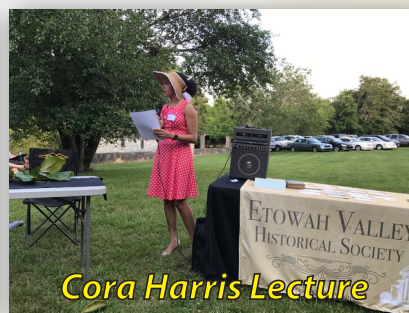
Bartow History Club



Bartow History Club



Cora Harris Lecture



Cora Harris Lecture



African American

EVHS 2017

# REVIEW

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*EVHS Sugar Hill Hike*



*EVHS Sugar Hill Hike*



*EVHS Annual Meeting*



*Allatoona Pass*



*Allatoona Pass*



*Allatoona Pass*



*Jim Langford Reception*



*Jim Langford Lecture*



*Jim Langford Lecture*



*EVHS Christmas Dinner*



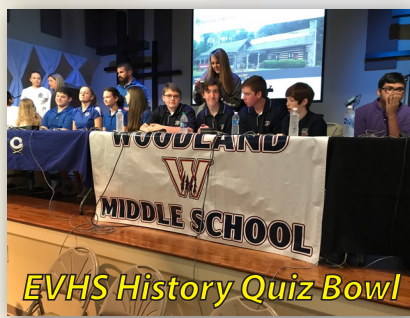
*EVHS Christmas Dinner*



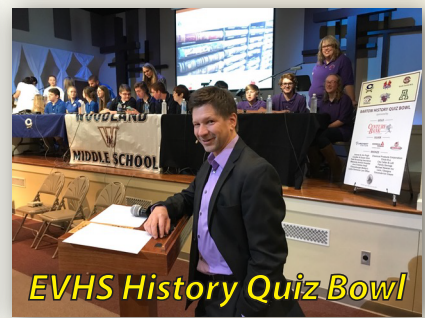
*EVHS Christmas Dinner*



*an Quilt Project*



*EVHS History Quiz Bowl*



*EVHS History Quiz Bowl*

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## Four New Articles Posted to Bartow Author's Corner Web Page

### Rudy York



"Everybody called him, "Big Rudy", but I didn't. I called him Mr. York... (he) was my hero. He was back home during the off season, and I think he had a Cadillac automobile. When he came through Atco, it was like the President, you know. Us kids would follow that car as he drove through the village. It was something else." (Grady Bryson, Jr)

Perhaps the most definitive article ever written about Bartow County's major league slugger of the 1930's and 1940's is that of Mr. Terry Sloop's recent work on Rudy York. Few people of today are aware of Atco's Preston Rudolph "Rudy" York and his amazing baseball career. Rudy rose from a modest Goodyear "mill village" background playing for the Acto Super Twisters to eventually reaching the big time playing for the Detroit Tigers, Boston Red Sox and three World Series. In 1937, he broke Babe Ruth's home run record for that year, he was named MVP and his career included coaching and managing before retiring back home to Bartow County. *(Read full article online at Bartow Authors Corner)*

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### Historic Railroads of Bartow County

Not realized nor appreciated by most local citizens is the role our historic railroads played in the development of Bartow County. This recent work is the product of Mr. Gio Martino, KSU intern. Clearly one of the most informative and contributive additions to our county history. To this date no work has been researched so well and organized to offer a concise picture and narrative of the railroads in Bartow. This work spanning nine months of research reveals maps, photos and how the railroads evolved and for what purposes. Additionally, the research identifies the 6 primary roads that once operated in Bartow and discovers over fourteen other chartered, but unknown railroads that had been proposed including a town street car system. As a supplement to this paper a companion interactive digital map has been added to the EVHS map gallery to further illustrate the footprint of historic Bartow railroads. *(Read full article online at Bartow Authors Corner)*



**Sam Jones Tabernacle**



**Sam Jones Female College**

As featured in the June 2017 newsletter the story of both Sam Jones Tabernacle and Female College have been researched and documented to preserve the history of these two legacies of the legendary evangelist. These two articles are the work of Joe Head and now available for the public. Both Rose Lawn Museum and the Sam Jones United Methodist Church have posted the articles to their web content. *(Read full article online at Bartow Authors Corner)*





**African American**  
Quilt Documentation Project  
*of Bartow County*

## “Pathways to Freedom: A Story in Every Stitch”



The African American Quilt Documentation Project of Bartow County launched its mission on August 24, 2017 with a small exploratory committee who articulated ten purposes focusing on African American historical preservation and education. The perceived need arose out of Memories Day at George Washington Carver Park. Recognizing that those quilts used at Carver in its heyday of camping would be historic cultural icons, they were in need of rescue. Thus began the search for and documentation of local African American quilts to record the historical information like the maker, related stories, age and photo. Hopefully, this will stimulate an interest in family history, genealogy studies and make possible a public program on the past generations of two or three African American Bartow County families. The documentation will be filed with the Bartow History

Museum, the AAQDP and other county archives. All quilts, whether made by African Americans or other, are welcome. One purpose of locating quilts is to ask for them later to exhibit at African American events.

The AAQDP has commissioned sculptor, Przemyslaw Kordys, to craft a freedom monument memorializing humanity under slavery, represented by quilt squares, which according to legend, aided in the daring effort of escape. Stories of flight were passed down by oral tradition, in which the quilt patterns were given code meanings and a quilt, unnoticed when hung out to air, communicated the appropriate direction, caution, help, transportation and the like. The proposed public sculpture is entitled, “Pathways to Freedom: A Story in Every Stitch”. The quilt motifs of the monument symbolize the hopes and dreams of the pioneers of freedom, of their desire to own oneself. The work is a public reminder to children that a slave’s only freedom was escape. It is an affirmation that those who had the courage and cunning to liberate themselves began the pathways to freedom.

The public is invited to the Unveiling on May 10th, 2018, 2:00 pm. under the bridge in Cartersville, Georgia.

### The Steering Committee:

**Adairsville DDA:** Molly Smith

**Bartow County Government:** Steve Taylor

**Bartow History Museum:** Trey Gaines

**Cartersville Bartow CVB:** Ellen Archer

**City of Cartersville:** Matt Santini

**Etowah Valley Historical Society:** Mina Harper, Dianne Tate

**Keep Bartow Beautiful:** Sheri Henshaw

**Euharlee Historical Society:** Barbara Ford

**Kingston Woman’s History Club:** Ann Bridges

**Noble Hill Memorial Center:** Valerie Coleman, Marian Coleman, Rev. Louise Young Harris, Willie Wofford

**Summer Hill Heritage Museum:** Elmer Felton Henderson, Calvin Cooley, Charles Foster



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## KSU Intern Giovani Martino Researches Historic Bartow Railroads

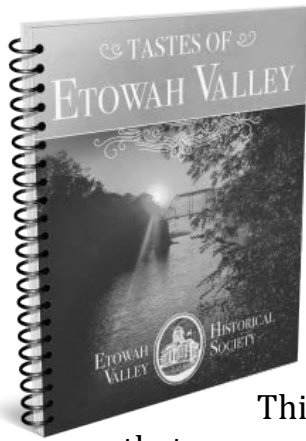


Gio is from Cartersville and a Junior at Kennesaw State majoring in political science and history. Here he is accessing newspaper microfilm in the EVHS office as he writes an article that focuses on the history of railroads in Bartow County and the economic role they played in the county's development.

## EVHS Oral History Gallery



The Oral History Committee continues to add videos to the EVHS Oral History Gallery. Additionally, the recent lecture by Jim Langford about the Post DeSoto expedition has been added. Above Joe Head interviews Dr. Bob Poston who served two tours in Vietnam and suffered three bullet wounds from a sniper during the war. This video is dedicated to the Bartow men and women who served in the Vietnam War. Over forty videos are now contained in the gallery and we encourage you to visit the site to see our collection. Thanks for your service Bob!



## EVHS making history again...

After the 2016 successful Valley View fundraiser for Oral History and Bartow Scholars, the event team presents the first-ever EVHS Cookbook – **Come Back to the Table – Tastes of Etowah Valley.**

Think back to your family gatherings and the delicious food that was spread on an outdoor table or on a blanket for a picnic or in a holiday dining room. You probably had some favorite foods along with some favorite stories.

Let's share those for our Etowah Valley community. Perhaps, a cookbook seems old fashioned, but what better way to document and share our culinary heritage.

### Choose from among these 4 ways you can make this project successful

- ✓ **Become a sponsor** to help offset the printing costs. Friends, Partners and Premier Partners will be crucial to allowing the cookbook to be printed as a beautiful hardbound edition that you can share with your kids.
- ✓ **Send Recipes.** All recipes welcome, although duplicates will be culled as needed. If you have a story related to Bartow County and your recipe, please share that as well. (Forms available on line)
- ✓ **Pre-purchase** your cookbooks for your Christmas 2018 gift-giving. At \$25/copy pre-sell price, you can get some of your shopping done.
- ✓ **Send photos** (we'll return originals) of family gatherings around food events. Think of all the places your family has gathered and find those old photos to be preserved in the cookbook.

To donate or purchase a book, visit the homepage website: [evhsonline.org](http://evhsonline.org)

Or call 770.606.8862 and ask for a form to be sent to you.



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## EVHS Board Calls for Office Volunteers

If you have one afternoon a month between 1:00 and 4:00 and would like to help preserve Bartow county history this opportunity may be for you. We have an immediate need for "primary and secondary" volunteers to cover the office as either a fixed date volunteer or a back up volunteer. Duties include phone and walk-in reception, visitor referrals and assisting with in-office projects. Call the office at 770 606 8862 and let us know of your interest.



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