



SANDHILLS SANKOFA NEWS

The Official Newsletter of Sandhills Family Heritage Association

Spring Lake Civic Center

Preserving a Community Asset



ALMOST THERE!

By Janet Brower Penn

One cannot help but admire the wisdom of our ancestors when we look at the Spring Lake Civic Center building at 230 Chapel Hill Road. They were visionaries who dared not only to dream but worked together to make their dream become a reality. When one considers the sacrifices made by churches and community supporters in the late 1940's through 1950's, it could not have been easy for them to make the sacrifices that were made for the construction of this building. After all, these were not people with abundant resources, but they had a clear understanding of what it means to live in "community".

Gift of the building to Sandhills Family Heritage Association was made by the last surviving trustee, Mr. Ambrose Lucas in 2002. It was made with the understanding that SFHA would preserve the Spring Lake Civic Center for the community and reopen it. The building still stands strong today waiting patiently for the next generation of dreamers to renovate, reopen and restore it to the Sandhills Community as promised.

The SFHA Board is excited to inform supporters and funders that site development plans were approved by the Town of Spring Lake Board of Aldermen on August 29th! To arrive to this point the journey has been a long and detailed process. It began with multiple consultations and site visits from Town of Spring Lake Officials, construction managers and NC State Historic Preservation Specialist to understand the delicate nature of restoring a historic structure so that its architectural features are left intact.

Each phase of renovations have also involved continuous research by Grant Writer/ Consultant, Beverly Parks for information on historic renovation projects and construction companies in the state that do this specialized work.

Here are some of the steps to help you better understand what has occurred so far:

- Community meetings and fundraising activities
- Grant writing (ongoing)
- Building stabilization-roof replacement
- Clean-out and removal of building contents
- Research to secure architect and engineer
- Meetings with architects & civil engineers before entering into a contract
- Site visits by potential funders
- Meetings and communications during and after site plan development
- Bid process for potential contractor
- Permits for any and all work that has been done on the site
- Removal and disposal of asbestos from window frames
- Meetings with Town of Spring Lake Inspections & Cumberland County Planning Dept.
- Special Use Permit & Site Development Plan approval process
- Contractor search

We thank all supporters for your continued interest in seeing this project completed and the building reopened.

Memories from the Old Spring Lake Civic Center



All photos from Sandhills African American Heritage collection



Sandhills Family Heritage Association has been an Official Partner of the Veterans History Project of the American Folklife Center at the US Library of Congress since 2009. The Library of Congress's Veterans History Project is committed to honoring veterans and collecting and preserving their stories.



Myron Jones is a retiree who served 25-years in the US Air Force. For more than 19-years, Myron was employed with the Fayetteville Area Convention & Visitors Bureau as Director of Sales. He has worked closely with Sandhills Family Heritage Association promoting African American heritage tours in the Sandhills. He is an SFHA member and resource person for SFHA's Veterans History Project and Deerfield Cemetery Project. Myron holds a Master of Arts Degree in Organizational Management. His home church is Spring Lake Memorial Missionary Baptist Church in Spring Lake where he is an usher.

Photo by Myron Jones

My name is Edwina Clarkson. I was born at Walter Reed Army Medical Center while my father was stationed at Andrews AFB. After graduating from high school, I joined the USAF myself in 1978. My first duty station was in Tacoma, Wa at McChord AFB as a Telecommunications Operations Specialist. I was later transferred to Shaw AFB in Sumter, S.C. then McGuire AFB N.J in the Air National Guard. I changed my AFSC (Air Force Specialty Code) to become a Training NCO with the 111th Fighter Wing at the Willow Grove Joint Reserve base in Pa.



Photo by Edwina Clarkson

I later again changed my AFSC to become the NCOIC (Non Commissioned Officer In Charge) of the Judge Advocate General's Office with my same Unit. I left the Guard and worked as a Law Enforcement Officer with the Pennsylvania State Police. I am the proud mother of four children, grandmother of six and great grandmother of two beautiful little boys. I've since returned to Fayetteville to care for my parents and aunt who were ill but have unfortunately passed. I joined the Sandhills Family Heritage Association as a volunteer in an attempt to give back to a community which did so much for myself and my family. Edwina is an SFHA Veterans History Project resource person.

Happenings at the Farmers Market

By Doris Lucas



Doris Lucas is an active member of the Sandhills community. Lucas volunteers with her church and with SFHA to organize health and wellness workshops and events. Lucas, who holds a Master's Degree in Health and Physical Education, taught for the Cumberland County school system for 33 years and also served as a sports medicine trainer. Lucas has been an SFHA association member for over ten years, She is a member of the SFHA Sankofa Players and serves as Coordinator of the SFHA Health-Wise program.

TEACHER AND STUDENT REUNITE AT FARMERS MARKET

The Sandhills Family Heritage Farmers Market in Spring Lake, NC offers members of our community so many delightful activities, yummy cuisine and opportunities to connect in unexpected ways. In addition to our large selection of fresh vegetables, homemade desserts, and an array of savory dishes, we also offer lessons on canning, quilting, and beloved aspects of our rich African-American history.

As a proud volunteer with the dedicated Sandhills team, I have been privileged to lead

exercise classes that help local participants control balance, manage diabetes, and combat arthritis, among other ailments. Our programming aims to serve our town and provide loving care to all who attend. The wonderful thing is that sometimes our Farmers Market allows people to reunite just by chance.

Such a moment took place on the morning of July 9th. While looking through a Sandhills 20th Anniversary book, one of our visitors, named Edwina, recognized a picture of her former teacher. She asked a volunteer, "Is this Doris Lucas, the Mrs. Lucas that worked at a local high school?" The volunteer replied, "Why yes. There she is...only one table away." The fellow volunteer then asked me, "Doris, do you know Edwina Clarkson?" I was so shocked and replied, "Yes, I do!" Edwina and I locked eyes, truly recognized each other and ran to embrace in a big hug.



Happenings at the Farmers Market

Continued

Though we briefly saw each other when she first arrived, we finally had confirmation that we did indeed have a shared history. Nearly five decades ago, I coached her at Pine Forest Sr. High on our volleyball team and our first girls' track team. Edwina was a dynamic track star whose 400-meter relay team was unbeatable, and her 200-meter dash was one of the fastest in the county. She and her teammates won many meets and were celebrated conference winners. My heart was deeply touched to see her after so many years, and I am so grateful the Farmer's Market gave us a chance to reminisce about the good old days, renew our connection and build on a new friendship beyond teacher/student. Truly, food for the soul!!

So we invite you all to come join us at the Sandhills Farmers Market in Spring Lake now through September 24th (9am to 1pm). Not only can you purchase fresh produce and gain more knowledge about African-American history — who knows, you may get to visit with someone from the past that you really cared about. We look forward to seeing you soon!



Doris Lucas and Edwina Clarkson



Edwina Clarkson—1972
Pine Forest Junior High



Making new friends, storytelling and fellowshiping at Sandhills Farmers Market in Spring Lake.

SFHA- SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

Shirley Cheatham Smith, SFHA Ambassador



Shirley is a founding member of SFHA and served in several positions in the organization. Here she serves as volunteer at our farmers market, supports young entrepreneurs and shares her knowledge of healing plants and herbs.



A Storyteller



A historic re-enactor with Sandhills Sankofa Players



Teaching youth about Gardening and Gleaning, an SFHA Senior-Youth Project



Shirley and friend Mattie Williams volunteering at Sandhills Sankofa Festival

Sandhills Sankofa Youth

By Chanai Winborn, Sankofa Youth Coordinator

Did you know that the Sandhills Family Heritage Association's Sankofa Youth Program teamed up with 4-H through the Cumberland / NC State County Cooperative Extension? What does that mean for us? We have gained tons of benefits from this partnership. Some of the benefits include; access to the 4-H programing, resources and curriculum.

What is 4-H?

4-H is a U.S.-based network of youth organizations whose mission is "engaging youth to reach their fullest potential while advancing the field of youth development. Their mission fits perfectly with he mission of the Sankofa Youth Program which is to provide opportunities for youth to learn, lead and grow.

According to the Cumberland County Cooperative Extension website, "4-H is the largest youth development organization in North Carolina, educating hundreds of thousands of young people each year. Extension's 4-H program is growing the next generation of leaders and equipping youth with the skills to succeed." We have partnered with them to introduce the skills of entrepreneurship and public speaking to the youth in the Sandhills area. Volunteers from the Cooperative Extension have visited the farmer's market site this season to introduce outdoor grilling skills! 4-H also has many camps and competitions that the youth can take advantage of. Some programs can even count as high school credits!



How can you get involved?

We are accepting youth ages 8-18 and adult volunteers to be a part of the 4-H Sankofa Youth Program. Getting involved with 4-H is easy and costs nothing. Unlike other youth organizations, 4-H doesn't require a uniform and there are no national fees. Children along with the Adult coordinator select their 4-H education project so they can choose one that works well with things they are interested in. If you would like to volunteer or sign up your child for the 4-H Sankofa Youth Program please visit our website and fill out the form <https://www.sandhillsfamilyheritage.org/contact-us> or contact the Youth Coordinator, Chanai Winborn at 910-500-6085.

*Thank
you!*

**Grantors, Sponsors & Individual Donors
for supporting SFHA Programs of H.O.P.E.!**

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JULY-AUGUST FOOD DISTRIBUTION STATISTICS

408 
HOUSEHOLDS SERVED

1,214 
INDIVIDUALS SERVED

463 
VOLUNTEER HOURS

3,413 
DISTRIBUTION MILES

Get Involved
**IN YOUR
COMMUNITY**

Become a member of SFHA
for an annual fee of only
\$20

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