



SANDHILLS SANKOFA NEWS

The Official Newsletter of Sandhills Family Heritage Association

THANK YOU, HILLSDALE FUND, INC.

Sandhills Family Heritage Association Board of Directors is elated to have received a generous \$50,000 grant from the Hillsdale Fund, Inc. Their understanding of the importance of cultural and historic preservation for present and future generations is exciting! The decision to financially support our long-awaited renovation project moves it so much closer to being a reality!



SFHA is committed to restoring the Spring Lake Civic Center while maintaining its historic architectural features, so our planning has been thorough to ensure that all aspects of the project are done as advised by state restoration specialists. In addition, required steps by Cumberland County Planning Board have been followed and project plans approved by Town of Spring Lake Board of Alderman.

The property is an educational site for teaching about native plants that were used by our ancestors for health and economic survival. Structures onsite as well as captivating stories about them aid visitors and local residents to envision life as it was experienced more than one hundred years ago. Reopening of the Spring Lake Civic Center will allow more year-round programs and activities to be offered to communities.

SFHA is grateful that Hillsdale Fund selected our renovation project because this puts us closer to the \$500,000 goal. To learn more about other partners and supporters, please visit the website at www.sandhillfamilyheritage.org.

Thank you very much!

THANKS FOR 2022 SUPPORT

Grateful for 2022

Sandhills Family Heritage Board is grateful to grantors/funders, all donors, supporters, members, friends, volunteers, etc., who contributed in any way to the projects, programs, events and activities of SFHA in 2022. Grantors and supporters from across the state provided funds and other resources at a time when they were needed to help SFHA rebound after financial losses during the pandemic. Resuming programs and activities that were suspended is our focus now that gathering can be done so safely.

Tremendous gratitude is owed to our major funders and donors to the Spring Lake Civic Center renovation project. Thank you for understanding that renovation of older structures can be costly and must not be rushed, so finding experienced individuals is critical to this project.

New and returning vendors helped ensure the market season was a success! New and returning customers stopped in to shop for delicious fresh produce and engage in other interesting activities that were going on at that time. The market was the perfect gathering space for our Sankofa Youth and visiting youths to have hands-on experiences as well as learn how to be leaders.

The number of volunteers increased to assist with food distribution. Hardships that contributed to spikes in food costs to families prompted more food and supplies to be made available through the food distribution program. Thank you to Second Harvest, Dunn Lillington District AME Zion Churches and the Servants Heart Team! The impact you made in 2022 was record-setting!

Our board, staff, and grant writer/consultant are invaluable to this organization. Years of dedicated service by these individuals have made things happen for citizens in the Sandhills.

The future looks bright for SFHA because of all of you!



Photo by Sandhills Family Heritage Association

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2023



**Sandhills Family Heritage
Association**

SAVE THE DATE

26

FEBRUARY

2023

3pm

**Bethel AME Zion Church 255 Vass Rd Spring Lake, NC
Rev. Vincent Long, Pastor**

Manchester, NC

The African American Experience

Video and Written Documentary Presentation

Made Possible by the

FAYETTEVILLE - CUMBERLAND CO.
ARTS COUNCIL

**THE HISTORY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN
CONTRIBUTIONS IN MANCHESTER,
SPRING LAKE,
OVERHILLS AND
SURROUNDING AREAS.**

SFHA HONORS SANDHILLS CITIZENS FOR THEIR LIVING LEGACY OF SERVICE



Photo By Sandhills Family Heritage Association

REPRESENTATIVE MARVIN LUCAS *PUBLIC SERVANT AWARD*

Janet Brower, SFHA Board Chair, presented the SFHA Public Servant Award to NC Representative Marvin Lucas for his outstanding service in education, the community and government. He has represented District 42, in Cumberland County for over 20 years and voted to bring \$400 million to Cumberland County. That included \$250,000 for Spring Lake Civic Center Renovation Project. His reelection to NC House of Representatives is a testament to his effectiveness as a public servant.

JRep. Lucas' life of public service is demonstrated as a former Mayor of Spring Lake, Cumberland County School Principal for over 20 years and 20 years in NC House of Representatives. He is also an active member of Bethel AME Zion Church. We are grateful for his years of public service.



Photo By Sandhills Family Heritage Association

ALEXANDER LUCAS *LIFETIME SERVICE AWARD*

Alexander Lucas received the Lifetime Service Award for his 30 years of military service (3 years active duty and 27 years in the Army Reserve) and continuous Sandhills community service.

Mr. Lucas is a founding member of SFHA and served over 10 years on the board of directors. He helped to develop our first 5 year strategic plan and form the vision and mission of the organization.

He has donated fresh produce to the farmers market and helped build the Brush Arbor and Plank Road replica. As a member of the Sandhills Sankofa Players, he helps preserve local African American history through storytelling and historic reenactments. He is also an active member of Bethel AME Zion Church.

"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

SFHA ANNUAL APPRECIATION DINNER HONOREE

PAMELA JONES MARKS *SERVANT HEART AWARD*

Pamela Jones Marks, SFHA Food Distribution Coordinator, was honored for her Passion and Inspirational Leadership to answer the call to help those in need. Pamela and husband Michael Marks, along with a team of dedicated volunteers, work as a team to ensure success of Love Grove AME Zion Church Food Pantry, Diaper Bank, Senior Food Boxes, and mobile distribution sites.

Matthew 25:35 NIV

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.



Photo By Sandhills Family Heritage Association

PAMELA JONES MARKS with Volunteer Food Distribution Team



Photo By Sandhills Family Heritage Association

MANCHESTER-SPRING LAKE AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT

SFHA IS SEEKING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

ISFHA is documenting the African American history of the Manchester-Spring Lake and Overhills areas from the period of slavery to present day. If you or someone you know have information to document the stories, histories, and activities that occurred during this time period, **please contact SFHA at 910-309-2198.**

The history, heritage and culture of the African-American community in the Manchester-Spring Lake area is intertwined with the history, heritage and culture of residents in surrounding areas. It is a connection of which we are proud, and for which we are grateful. The linkages to people, land, products, services, and community resources helped our ancestors survive. SFHA is working diligently to preserve this history and heritage in honor of all we have learned from those who came before us.



Photos By Sandhills Family Heritage Association

Sandhills Family Heritage Association

Seeking information

**MANCHESTER-SPRING LAKE-
OVERHILLS AREA**

African American History



- CHURCHES AND PASTORS
- CEMETERIES AND BAPTISM SITES
- SCHOOLS AND EDUCATORS
- COMMUNITY ELDERS



- BUSINESSES AND ENTREPRENEURS
- MILITARY AND GOVERNMENT SERVANTS
- TRAILBLAZERS AND PIONEERS
- FARMERS AND HANDCRAFTERS
- UNSUNG HEROES & SHEROES



- SERVICE PROVIDERS
- FAMILY HISTORIES
- IMPORTANT LANDSCAPES
- COMMUNITY EVENTS, ACTIVITIES AND TRADITIONS

This is an ongoing project

Please call 910-309-2198

SPRING LAKE CIVIC CENTER BUILDING PROJECT

RENOVATION UPDATE 2022

“What’s going on with the Spring Lake Civic Center”? This is a great question many may ask when passing by the building. Work behind the scenes by SFHA Staff, Board and Consultant continues, so that everything will be in order when construction is scheduled to begin. The information in this article will provide facts to help you better understand the processes to starting renovations.

Several preliminary steps are required by the county and town before the first nail is driven or removed in any project. The approval process for building renovations began following discussions, consultations and then acceptance of the plans by SFHA’s Executive Board. Renovation plans and site development plans were prepared by professional architects. The plans were submitted to Cumberland County Planning Board which later presented them to Town of Spring Lake Aldermen for approval. The board learned much from those we engaged to accomplish the first major step of approvals which did not happen overnight.

The search for a contractor has consumed much time by Zoom meetings and on the property with visits by potential contractors followed by lengthy conversations. The board is pleased to report that we are a step closer to getting someone who has a vested interest in the community and who is willing to be project manager for the building renovation! There are still conversations to be had and details to be worked out before an actual contract is developed and signed. This process continues to be challenging, but our commitment to the community to reopen the Spring Lake Civic Center/Sandhills Heritage Center remains strong! We realize that the community and supporters are anxious to see work on the property begin.

We are committed to restoring this community treasure, with your help! Remember that donations for the building are still needed to reach our \$500,000 goal and we are only \$150,000 away from obtaining this amount. Presently, we are waiting for firm quotes for phases of this work since supply costs continue to rise, yet we press onward!



Photo By Sandhills Family Heritage Association

REASONS TO PRESERVE SPRING LAKE CIVIC CENTER

- 1) *The property is a gift from the Spring Lake Civic Center trustees to the African American community.*
- 2) *The building has historic value to the Town of Spring Lake and Cumberland County.*
- 3) *The building was constructed by African American residents and is over 78 years old.*
- 4) *The building was a place for voter registrations and civil rights meetings that led to desegregation of schools, restaurants and theaters in Cumberland County.*
- 5) *The civic center site is a tourist destination and community education center.*
- 6) *The new renovated Center will serve as "A Model for Neighborhood Revitalization".*
- 7) *The new Heritage Center will be a site for social, environmental, economic, and cultural education.*
- 8) *The renovated building will house a community kitchen, African American history archives, food distribution services, community meeting rooms, community education for youth and adults, heritage tourism, and SFHA headquarters.*

"Ambrose Lucas, a founding member of the Spring Lake Civic Association and a family member, was instrumental in choosing SFHA to serve as stewards for this valued community asset. As the Civic Association members wished, he gifted the land and the building to Sandhills Family Heritage Association with full trust that they, and the community, would work to reopen the building and return it to community use."

**N.C. Representative Marvin W. Lucas, District 42 -
Cumberland County**



Photo By Sandhills Family Heritage Association

FAMILY HERITAGE COOKING

The Main Ingredient is Love By Josephine McRae Robisch



Photos By Sandhills Family Heritage Association

My name is Josephine McRae Robisch and I live in Spring Lake, North Carolina. I am a mother and grandmother of nine and great grandmother of six children. I grew up on a farm in Harnett County where there was plenty of food and lots of laughter in our home. My mother, Addie Mae McRae, now deceased, got her greatest enjoyment out of cooking for her family and extended family. She instinctively knew the amount of ingredients to use in her recipes because she did not measure anything. I inherited her love of cooking, method of preparing food and sense of humor.

I am a purist when it comes to cooking cornbread. No cornbread mix for me. I prefer using regular corn meal and adding my own ingredients with a special touch of love. My family wouldn't think of eating any type of greens at my house without "real cornbread." I cook the way Mama did, that is, no measurement of ingredients.

Recipe — Jo's Buttermilk Cornbread

Self-Rising Corn Meal

1/4 stick of melted butter (I like the real thing)

1 egg beaten

A pinch of sugar (optional)*

Buttermilk

***A pinch is the amount you can pinch between your first three fingers.**

The Main Ingredient is Love By Josephine McRae Robisch Continued...

First, know how many people you plan to serve. Then based on that number, decide how many pieces of cornbread to allow for each person. That requires you to guess-timate the amount of corn meal it will take.

The first thing I do is sift the corn meal into a bowl. That makes the cornbread lighter. Then add a pinch of sugar, and stir in melted butter, lightly beaten egg, and buttermilk until the mixture is the consistency of pancake batter.

Pour batter into greased pan. Bake in a preheated oven at 450 degrees until nice and brown (approximately 25-30 minutes). Cut in 3-inch squares and serve with a pat of butter and a loving heart. If the family does not like this cornbread, then you forgot to put in the LOVE! One of my childhood favorites was a piece of hot cornbread, a glass of cold buttermilk and a good story that made me laugh.

Serves 6-8 people.

Recipe—Crackling Cornbread

This is a variation of the
same Buttermilk
Cornbread recipe.

Just add pork cracklings
to the batter and
cook according to
directions above.



SFHA Volunteer Service Award

Presented to

Josephine McRae Robisch

In recognition of your Culinary Skills
and Volunteer Support of Sandhills
Family Heritage Association

December 3, 2016

Hoe Cake

Our enslaved ancestors used
this simple variation of corn
bread made from corn meal,
water and salt.

They mixed the ingredients in
a thick batter and cooked it
on the flat of a hoe over an
open fire, hence the name
“Hoe Cake.”

*Thank
you!*

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

**Duke Energy Foundation
The Hillsdale Fund
NC General Assembly
Marion Stedman Covington Foundation
Historic Fayetteville Foundation Fund
Cumberland Community Foundation
The Conservation Fund's Resourceful Communities
The Cannon Foundation
Preservation NC
NC Healing Communities Fund
NC Community Foundation
North Carolina Humanities
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation
Mott Philanthropic
Carolyn Riddle Armstrong Foundation
PNC Bank
Fidelity Charitable Trust**

NOV-DEC FOOD DISTRIBUTION STATISTICS



361

HOUSEHOLDS SERVED



933

INDIVIDUALS SERVED

Get Involved
**IN YOUR
COMMUNITY**

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

zelle

**Pay with
Zelle®**

Right from your banking app

Send Payment To:
sandhillfamily@yahoo.com or
910-309-2198

Click below



All major Debit and Credit Cards
accepted.

No PayPal Account needed.

SANDHILLS FAMILY HERITAGE ASSOCIATION
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