

Fort Defiance

Chronicle

Winter Issue

December 2021

Fort Defiance
P.O. Box 686
Lenoir, NC 28645
828-758-1671

Board Of Directors

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Newsletter

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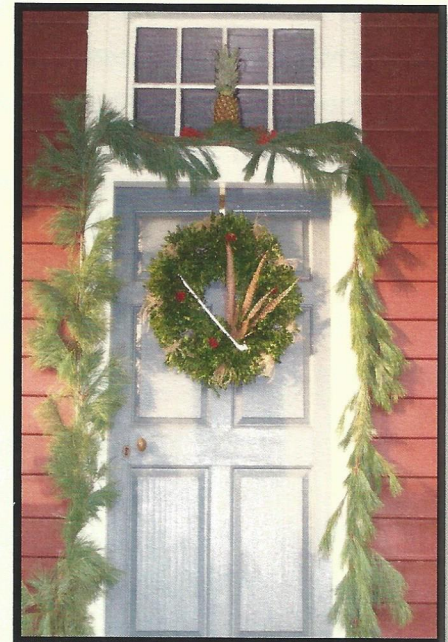
Kelly Coffey

Barbara Freiman

Jonathan Baird

Fort Defiance Victorian Christmas

Come have a Dickens of a time at the Fort
Defiance Victorian Christmas December 11 and 12
10am till 4 pm

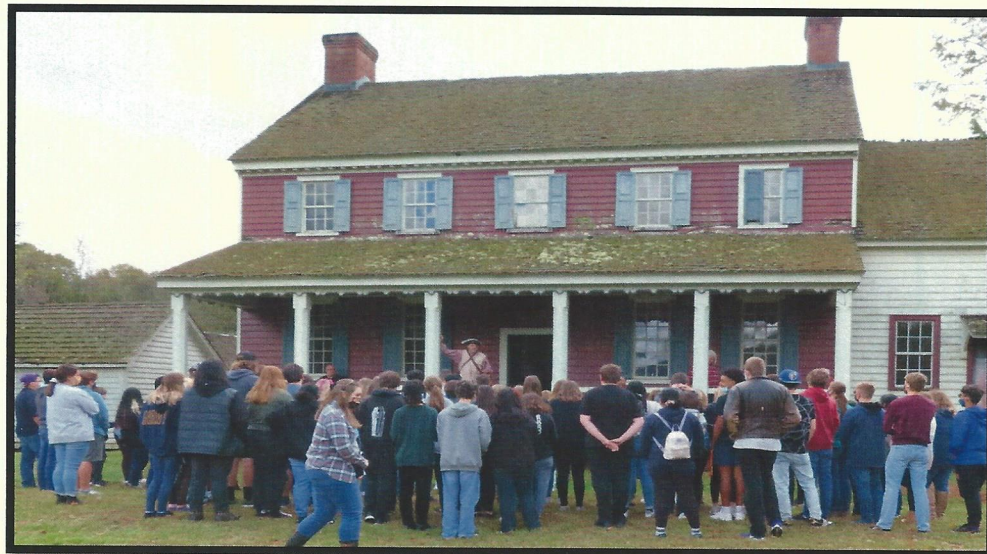


Activities include caroling, reading of letters from the Lenoir's of long ago, Burning of the Holly with a special guest to officiate the ceremonies on Sunday at 3:00 pm. Wassail and other refreshments will be served to warm your "spirits" and transport you back in time. Access to the grounds is free, donations are encouraged. Tours of the decorated house is \$10.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children under 15 and children under 5 are free.

For more information call 828-758-1671, email us at fortdefiancenc@gmail.com, or follow us on Facebook.



On September 25, and 26, Fort Defiance hosted a Colonial Days, a series of events in honor of the Overmountain Men's march to King's Mountain.



On October 29, social studies instructor Cindel Chavers, brought eighty-six students, from Caldwell County Early College to Fort Defiance to learn about early American history in North Carolina. The group listened to music, heard a lecture about the Battle of Kings Mountain, and toured the house and grounds.

FRIENDS OF FORT DEFIANCE

It's Renewal Time

Friends of Fort Defiance support the day-by-day operation of the site. The organization's bylaws state: *"Membership in the Corporation shall be open to all persons, organizations, institutions, foundations, and corporations who are interested in or in sympathy with its purpose. Prospective members shall apply to the Corporation and upon acceptance by the Membership Committee of the Board, as well as payment of annual dues to the Corporation, they shall be enrolled as members in good standing."*

Memberships are for the calendar year. Categories of membership, depending on the amount of the donation are available: Patriot/Individual, \$20; Militia/Family, \$40 (family is defined as two parents and their dependent children); Lieutenant/Supporter, \$75; Captain/Patron, \$100; Colonel/Sponsor, \$500; General/Benefactor, \$1,000-up.

Benefits are available for the Friends. For those who have a family membership, family members are defined as spouse and dependent children. All donors shall receive a free admission which includes a tour of the house. Captain/Patron, Colonel/Sponsor, or General/Benefactor will be admitted free to special events, if they make a reservation for the event when reservations are required. Colonel/Sponsor and General/Benefactor may have free use of the grounds, but reservations must be made in advance. All contributors receive a 10% discount for items purchased in the gift shop, and for events for which there is a charge.

Gifts for matching funds or specific projects are also appreciated, and they are considered separately from donations to the Friends of Fort Defiance. All donors are recognized in the Fort's newsletter.

All contributors will receive "Fort Defiance Chronicle" the newsletter published six times per year. The newsletter which is mailed, one per family, promotes upcoming events at the Fort, keeps the supporter abreast of what projects are being planned and promoted, and includes one or two historical articles that relate to the Fort or the Lenoir family.

Consider giving a membership as a gift at Christmas or for some other important occasion in the life of a family member or a friend. Fort Defiance will notify the recipient of the donor's thoughtfulness.

All renewals received from this point will be credited to 2022 membership unless the donor specifically requests 2021 membership.

Checks should be made to Fort Defiance, Inc, and mailed to P. O. Box 686, Lenoir, NC 28645, or hand-delivered to the Fort. A form can be found on the last page of this newsletter.



CHRISTMAS AT FORT DEFIANCE

Transcribed by Ike Forester

12-24-1856 From Sarah Gwyn Lenoir (wife of Rufus) at Ft. Defiance to children at "Pumpkin Plains" (Gwyn Home) in Elkin, NC

To the Sheriff of the Court of Christmas, or his deputy Laura Norwood who is hereby lawfully authorized to proceed in execution of this writ. Whereas information has this day been made to me, Santa Claus, Chief Justice of the Court of Christmas, that Sarah Gwyn and Elizabeth Gwyn, and other young persons associating and confederating with the aforesaid defendants have congregated themselves together in the vicinity of Elkin with mischievous intention; and I, decreeing that the merry government of my good realm will be better established by an investigation of this charge; you are therefore hereby commanded to take the bodies of the said defendants, together with the aforesaid confidants and associates, wherever to be found, and then safely keep and convey, with horse saddles, mules, carriages and all other lawful and expedient modes of transportation, so that you have them before me in my high Court of Christmas, to be opened and help on Christmas day next in the midst of Pumpkin Plains, that they may then and there show cause, if any they have, why they should not eat a pumpkin pie and that they may be further dealt with according to my just sentence.

Herein fail not and have you then and there this writ and return how you have executed the same.

Issued Dec. 24, 1856

Santa Claus



12-28-1860 To Aunt Sade from sister

Mary Ann Lenoir Gwyn in Elkin

This has been a very still Christmas with us at the Plains. It don't seem like Christmas or at least Christmas used to be in days long since! Nor does it seem like the days when we spent Christmas as Mother Church teaches her children to keep it; for we have not even so much as sung a Christmas hymn. Even the negroes have got so worldly minded, they are hard at work for themselves instead of frolicking and enjoying themselves. I have a right bran new pretty calico dress and I have not even put that on!

We did not dress the school house for Christmas. I reckon if Laura and Ann had been here it would have been did.

12-26-1862 From Lizzie Lenoir (wife of Thomas Isaac Lenoir) to her Aunt

My dear old Aunt,

I am spending the day with Mother and we have concluded to drop you a line to let you know we are sober today, if we did get tight on eggnog yesterday! It is enough to set anybody to spirits, the way we have been whipping the Yanks – and Burnside resigning, and all them things. Well we had a mighty eggnog yester morning – I can't tell you all we did & said – that would be impossible. Jim walked off in the frosty air – and went to and fro and wandered up & down on the earth and came by the Rectory and Mrs. Ingrim was patting and dancing & carrying on in high style. I thought Jethro must be there fiddling for them but it did not turn out so. All of them spent the day at the Barn yesterday [Tuckers Barn] and Jethro came in in the evening and we tried to get up a dance but he did not have his instrument along. Poor fellow he looks like he had just been dug up. He has had the yellow jaundice and looks like he had been whittled down till there is mighty little of him left. What did you and your old man do for Christmas? We had a mighty quick time.



12-31-1863 From Julia Reagan visiting at
Fort Defiance

I suppose you would like to know how we spent Christmas. Cousin Sally, Aunt Sade & myself made a Christmas tree for the little folks. I got several nice presents. We were preparing to have a nice time at home Christmas day but were invited to a dinning up at the Pattersons and of course we had to go. There were quite a crowd there & I believe every one enjoyed themselves exceedingly. We were invited over to town but didn't go. Cousin Jones gave a dinning & they all had a big dance at Mr. Norwoods that night.

12-27-1870 To Sarah Lenoir (wife of Rufus) from Adelaide Cilley

Please accept this little tidy for Loula, with my love and best wishes for a happy Christmas. I made it on purpose for her and hope she will use it every day on her own little chain.

Board Highlights

- Board members present: Sandra Watts, Nell Fisher, Bill Karr, Bob Kogut, Stephen Rauchfuss, Tina Triplett, Money Minton. Site Director Jonathan Baird was also present.
- Bathroom repairs have begun.
- Board approved the purchase of acid free boxes and acid free tissue paper for the storage of Lenoir family textiles.
- Juan Pleitez from the office of NC House Majority Whip is researching additional avenues of funding for repairs.
- Grant request submitted to the Stevens Family Foundation.
- Monte Minton and site director Jonathan Baird to meet with the Soil and Water Conservation for aid with repairs to the driveway.
- Nell Fisher gave an update on the moving of the Historical Marker on Hwy 268 to a more visible site and the possibility of additional signage.
- Suggestions for hosting a Victorian Christmas event the second weekend in December.

In Gratitude

To Revolutionary War Re-enactors from Davidson Fort who helped with Colonial Days.

To Dragonfly Traders Company who sold 18th Century goods for Colonial Days.

To Volunteer Eugene Trantham and Board Members Doug Davis, Stephen Rauchfuss, and Sandra Watts for helping with Colonial Days.

To R. G. Absher for playing the fiddle and telling of the Battle of Kings Mountain for the Caldwell County Early College visit.

To Board members Tina Triplett and Sandra Watts, and Volunteer John Hawkins for helping with the Caldwell County Early College visit.

To Board member Tina Triplett who is working with inventory of the Fort's holdings.

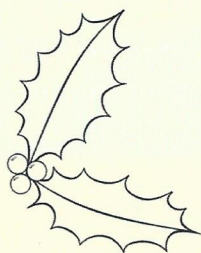
Fort Defiance will be closed

For the holiday

December 25 and 26.

The Site will reopen on

Saturday January 1.



WISH LIST

1. Past Perfect Inventory Software, approximately \$2,000.
2. Office and Housekeeping supplies, i.e. printers ink for HP Office Jet Pro 8600 Premium, business envelopes, paper, file folders, cleaning supplies, toilet tissue, paper towels, soap, etc.
3. Volunteers—regular and occasional—docents, administrative skills as well as special skills such as grounds care, building repair, or cleaning.
4. Bottled water or soft drinks and snacks for volunteers.
5. Volunteer to help with website.

FRIENDS OF FORT DEFIANCE

The following members have joined for 2021:

Patriot/Individual

Wanda Prince
Oscar Dobereiner
Cheryl Hill Sanborn
Lana H. Davidson
Virginia Fox

Militia/Family

John Hawkins
Nell Fisher & Bill Karr
R Kelly Coffey
Betty Buss
Jeanette A. Jacob

Lieutenant

Stephen Rauchfuss

Captain/Patron

Mary Kincaid
Dr. John W. & Hanna Thuss
Joe & Frances Delk
Lucy F. McCarl
Samuel & Sandra Ramsey
Jerry & Millie Brooks
David B Smith
Jeff and Rita Joines
Chuck Forester (In honor of Ike Forester)
James Pennell
Monty & Brenda Combs
Catherine Lenoir Brown Simpson (In loving memory of Carol Jean Sellers Brown)
Tina Triplett (in Memory of Ned Triplett)

Kim Browning (in Memory of Becky Phillips Forester)
Barbara Freiman
Steve McCord
Cheryl & Darrell Keener
Jean and Steve Branch
Anne and T. G. Daniel.

Colonel/ Sponsor

General/ Benefactor

Building Labatory LLC
Fraser's Ridge Homecoming
Barbara & Lawrence Freiman

Matching Funds Contributors

Steve and Jean Branch
Eliza Bishop
Liza Plaster
Monte & Brenda Combs
Joe & Francis Delk
Brenda Bernhardt

Specified Donations

Bernhardt Foundation (Restrooms)
Mike Bernhardt (Driveway)
Hogan Foundation (Driveway)
Covington Foundation (Roof)

Interested in becoming a Friend of Fort Defiance? Memberships are available for individuals, families, and corporations who are looking to support local history. Each level of membership comes with perks when visiting Fort Defiance. For example, free admission when visiting on regular days of operation, discounts for special event admission, discounts in the gift shop and discounts on ground rentals. Each member will receive a membership card and a copy of the bi-monthly newsletter via mail or email.

Anyone wanting to become a member should send dues in payment to Fort Defiance, P. O. Box 686, Lenoir, NC 28645.

Contact Fort Defiance at fortdefiance@gmail.com or call 828-458-1671.

-----Detach here-----

_____ Patriot/Individual	\$20-39
_____ Militia/Family	\$40-74
Family is defined as two parents and their dependent children.	
_____ Lieutenant/Supporter	\$75-99
_____ Captain/Patron	\$100-499
_____ Colonel/Sponsor	\$500-999
_____ General/Benefactor	\$1000-up

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code _____

Please Come Visit Soon!

Fort Defiance is located past the former Patterson School on Hwy 268.

Hours of Operation

April-October Thursday - Saturday 10 AM-4 PM
Sunday 1 PM - 4 PM

November-March Saturday & Sunday 10 AM - 4 PM

Admission

\$7 per Adult

\$5 for children (Ages 6 -15)

Like us on Facebook and Follow us on Instagram.

To schedule a group of 10 or more, please call for an appointment.



Presorted Standard
Postage & Fees Paid
Fort Defiance Inc.
Permit No. 28, 28645

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P.O. Box 686
Lenoir, NC 28645