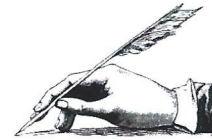




Fort Defiance

Chronicle



Summer Issue

August 2023

Fort Defiance
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Board Of Directors

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Nell Fisher

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Bill Karr

Bob Kogut

Stephen Rauchfuss

Doug Davis

Tina Triplett

Monty Minton

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Open Position

Newsletter

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Sandra Watts

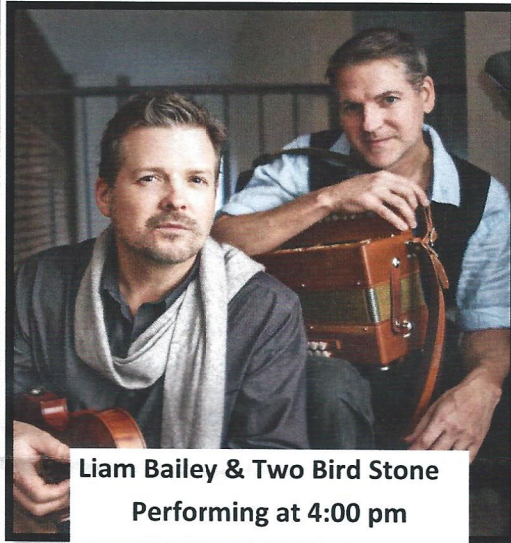
Kelly Coffey

Barbara Freiman

FIRST ANNUAL CELTIC FESTIVAL & OPEN HOUSE

SEPTEMBER 17, 2023

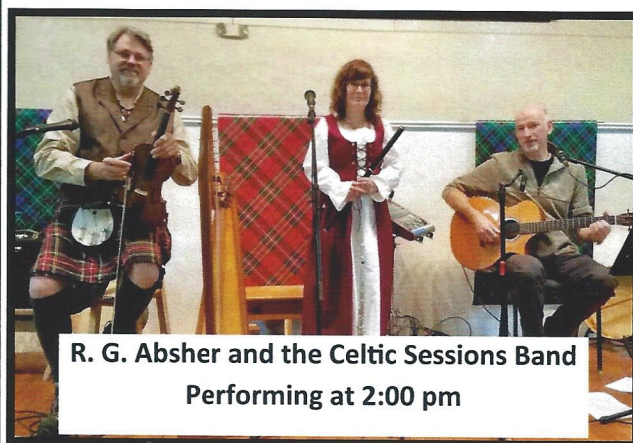
2:00 PM - 6:00 PM



Liam Bailey & Two Bird Stone
Performing at 4:00 pm



Mary Greene Celtic Trio from Horn In the West
Performing at 3:00 pm



R. G. Absher and the Celtic Sessions Band
Performing at 2:00 pm



Puddingstone
Performing at 5:00 pm

The Board of Directors at Fort Defiance invite the public to a Open House and the first Annual Celtic Festival held on **Sunday, September 17, 2023 from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm**. The four groups playing are well know performers and are well known and very popular musicians from our area. The afternoon will be filled with **music, food and history**. Bring a chair and plan to spend the afternoon in the Yadkin Valley known to many as "The Happy Valley"

Admission is free. Donations are always appreciated.

1792 Fort Defiance Drive, Lenoir, NC 28645

Pictures from June 10th & July 15th Lunch & Learn With William Caldwell, Park Ranger And John Hawkins



William Caldwell gave a lecture on ways that a few of the more local American Indian nations were involved in the American Revolution and the impact their efforts had on the greater policy of the war and the local impact to the backcountry Patriots like William Lenoir.

The lecture was about 45 minutes with time for questions and discussion at the end. Approximately 40 visitors were in attendance. Directors on hand were Monty Minton, Doug Davis, Bob Kogut, Bill Karr, Nell Fisher and Sandra Watts. Bob Kogut and friend Mark Thibodeaux provided music



John Hawkins gave a lecture on Stoneman's Raid Through Caldwell County. After the lecture, board member Doug Davis and Jonathan Bryant, a history teacher at Hibriten dressed as Union Soldiers and demonstrated life as a soldier. Past board member Doug



Pegram brought a broken sword that was dropped by one of Stoneman's officers after looting a home during the raid. After the lecture and demonstration, visitors shared comments and ask questions of the participants.

Thank you to all those who attended the event. Directors on hand were Doug Davis, Tina Triplett and Sandra Watts.

**Lenoir, Fort Defiance, & Indians:
Native Encounters Along the Blue Ridge**

**By
Kelly Coffey**

Most readers of this newsletter know that the Fort Defiance house was named after a nearby fort constructed as a refuge from Indian attacks. Perhaps less well known is the regional context for this defensive action, and William Lenoir's role in responding to the Indian threat. The following article elaborates on Native American interactions in northwestern North Carolina in an effort to understand these aboriginal relations comprehensively.

Numerous archaeological sites in North Carolina's northwestern mountains and foothills reveal that Native Americans lived here for thousands of years. Some locations were seasonally occupied; others had established villages. When the first Europeans arrived, i.e. the Spanish in the 1500s, they found a thriving Indian settlement in the Burke County foothills. But the Spanish were transient and made no attempts to live here long-term. Almost 200 years passed before other Europeans entered the region, claimed land, and established homes. These people, primarily from the British Isles and Central Europe, found no Indians living in the territory they were settling. Diseases from Europe, unknown in the Americas, had spread quickly and wiped-out Indian populations even before Europeans entered an area.

While Indians did not make the region their home in the 1700s, that doesn't mean they were absent as white people moved in. They hunted, travelled through, traded, and, at times, violently attacked early European settlers. The Cherokee lived in far western North Carolina, as well as parts of South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee. But they ventured into our part of the state, as well as other Indians who lived as far away as the Ohio River valley (i.e. the Shawnee).

Friendly Encounters

Dr. Thomas Whyte, an archaeological professor at Appalachian State University, says that the region was crisscrossed by numerous trails used by Indians hunting or traveling to other regions. According to tradition, Quaker Meadows in present-day Burke County was so named because a Quaker used the location as a meeting point to trade furs with Indians. The deerskin trade was a major economic activity in the 17th and 18th century, so such nonviolent business relationships with Indians was customary.

Ferguson native Margaret Martine says that one of her ancestors named Coffey lived in a log cabin in the Globe. One day while he was out hunting and his wife was alone in the house, an old Indian chief traveling through the area stopped at their cabin, looked through a hole in the chinking, and said, "I see you Coffey!" The wife was terrified, but no harm was done. He was just passing through and saw an opportunity to have a little fun at her expense.

Such peaceful encounters were probably common, but violent incidents were more likely to be remembered and appear in the historical record, in the same way that crime and violence makes headlines today. In general, attacks occurred in the context of: 1) the French and Indian War; 2) the Cherokee War; and 3) random attacks by rogue Indians unconnected to any larger conflict or strategy.

French & Indian War

The French and Indian War occurred at a time when settlement was just beginning to take place in western North Carolina. People lived along the Yadkin and Catawba Rivers and tributaries, but there is little evidence of settlement west of the Blue Ridge. One exception was Andrew Baker who lived in present-day Watauga County. The war (i.e. Indian threats) forced him out, but he eventually returned. There was a risk of French-allied Indian raids from the north, particularly the Shawnee. The Cherokee, however, originally allied themselves with North Carolina colonists, which deterred the Shawnee. That situation changed dramatically in late 1758 after the Cherokee had joined a campaign to the north to capture Fort Duquesne. They "were very dissatisfied with their treatment during the campaign and returned home angry with the colonial forces." As a result, the following April and May, the

Cherokee attacked settlers along the Catawba and Yadkin, killing as many as 20 persons. Then again in January and February 1760 the Cherokee “swept through the backcountry settlements, killing everyone they found.” In response, the colonists organized successful expeditions against the Indians, who eventually gave up and signed a peace treaty in December 1761.

The Cherokee War

The French and Indian War ended with the establishment of the Proclamation Line of 1763, a boundary that was essentially the Blue Ridge escarpment. The British declared that land west of this line was Indian territory and white settlers were forbidden to cross it. The British recognized the right of the Indians to use force if they did. American colonists mostly ignored the boundary and moved west. This action set off a series of extremely violent conflicts between the Americans and the Cherokee which lasted from 1776 to 1795. The Cherokee and British were natural allies, given the desire of both parties to keep Americans east of the Blue Ridge.

In response to Cherokee aggression, a string of forts was constructed in locations at the base of the Blue Ridge escarpment and at least a couple west of the Blue Ridge. They included:

- Fort Crider (Grider or Cryder) in present-day Lenoir. The site was once Lenoir High School, now residential apartments.
- Fort Defiance in Caldwell County (Hwy 268) near the Yadkin River. Following the war, William Lenoir built his house near the site and called it by the same name.
- McDowell’s Station at Quaker Meadows.
- Davidson’s Fort. The fort for which the town of Old Fort was named. It has been reconstructed on Lackey Town Road.
- The Black House in Wilkes County. The origin of the name is unknown. It was burned by Indians and a second fort was built on the same site and given the name the Red House.

A fort was located at Mouth of Wilson (creek), a community in Grayson County Virginia not far from the Ashe County line. This fort was kept by Enoch Osborne. His brother, Solomon Osborne, was killed by Indians in present-day Watauga County while hunting there in 1772.

Various Local Incidents

A man named James Logan, his wife, and children lived in McDowell County. In January 1780, they were warned by a neighbor that Indians had been seen nearby. Logan sent his family to Cathey’s Fort while he hid the family’s cow and some gold he had panned in a nearby stream. Then he joined them at the fort.

After a few days, Logan decided to go back for the cow, and took his young son John. Logan loaded a pony with corn to use for feed, and placed John on the pony. He had the foresight to tie John’s legs to the pony because if the pony got excited, it would buck John off. James led the cow while John and the pony followed. After going some distance, they were fired on by Cherokees. As expected, the gunfire scared the pony, and it took off running toward the fort, but John was securely fastened in place on its back. Arrows whizzed by his head, but he made it safely to the fort. Unfortunately, his father did not. The men at the fort set out to help James fight the Cherokee, but they found him dead and scalped, with no Indians in sight.

One of the first settlers in Altamont (Avery County) was hunting one day along a ridge and saw below a group of Indians kill two white men who were hiding out in that area to avoid service in the Revolutionary War. The Indians then trampled their bodies “beyond sight” in a mud hole. The hunter hurried to his cabin a half mile away and took off with his wife and child to Fort Crider. It must have been a long and difficult journey, as they had to eat their small pet dog which had followed them.

In the same community a group of patriot Revolutionary War soldiers chased “a party of marauding Cherokees to the rock cliff just above Pisgah Church” but were forced to retreat because the Indians were overpowering them.

Settlers React

Incidents such as these compelled the local militia leader to ask William Lenoir, in 1776, to organize a ranger unit to patrol the area between the Yadkin and New Rivers in order to be on the lookout for Indians before they arrived in the more thickly settled areas. Lenoir complied and put together approximately 50 men, assigning them to territories along the Blue Ridge. However, there is no record that they ever saw Indians. Lenoir later joined an expedition that took the fight to the enemy, i.e. a military assault on the Cherokee homeland in far western North Carolina.

Such defensive activities were common. In a presentation given at Fort Defiance, National Park Ranger William Caldwell said, "Of all the pensions and service records I've studied of men who journeyed to the Battle of King's Mountain, about two-thirds of them talk about serving against the Indians in some way." Some described themselves as being Indian spies, i.e. actually dressing like Indians, conducting surveillance on Indian villages, and looking for any sign that they might be planning an attack. Others served as rangers on the frontier, guarding against Indian incursions. Some were involved in expeditions to destroy Indian villages.

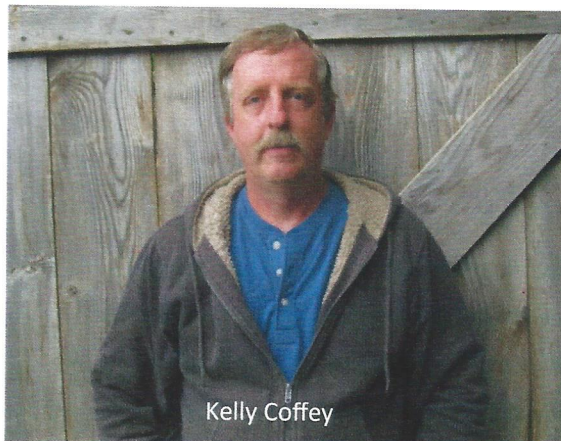
In summary, the latter half of the 1700s was a dangerous time to be living in northwestern North Carolina. Peaceful trade and friendly interactions with Indians gave way to violent attacks on settlers. Time normally spent making a new home and establishing communities was taken up in constructing and occupying forts. Spying on, ranging for, and counterattacking Indians drew men away from productive tasks, such as clearing land for a farm or operating a grist mill.



Modern Cherokee reenactor outfitted in clothes and gear typical of the late 1700s. Note the war club he is holding.

Photo by Kelly Coffey

A much-extended version of this article will soon be posted on my website www.blueridgeloire.org It will contain more stories of local Indian violence including that of a man who had an eerie premonition of an attack on his camp.



Bernhardt Furniture Foundation Grant Funding



Thank you to the Bernhardt Furniture Foundation for funding of a grant to be used for replacing the steps around the main house and steps leading into the public restrooms. Pictured above is Fort Defiance President, Sandra Watts receiving a check from William F. Howard III, Treasurer of the Bernhardt Furniture Foundation.

Now Hiring -Site Director

Fort Defiance is looking to hire a part time site director. This individual is responsible for managing and directing the day to day operations, programs and activities of the organization. These operations include but are not limited to:

- Individual is responsible for greeting guests and giving tours of the house.
- Assist with compiling and research of information for the newsletter,
- Keep up with "Friends of Fort Defiance" memberships and keep them informed of organization activities.
- Maintain the organization records, files, documents and archives.
- Uphold and adhere to the policies and bylaws of the organization
- Organize and implement programs for the general public and school groups.

If interested, please contact Sandra Watts for more details by emailing fortdefiancenc@gmail.com.

Board Highlights

The Board of Directors met on July 12, 2023 at Fort Defiance at 5:30 pm. Board members present were: Doug Davis, Ike Forester, Nell Fisher, Bill Karr, Stephen Rauchfuss, Bob Kogut, Tina Triplett, Monty Minton and Sandra Watts.

- Sandra Watts gave a brief site report of the activities for May and June. She stated that grant requests had been submitted and received from the Lenoir Service League and the Bernhardt Furniture Foundation. A grant request to the Hogan Family Foundation has been submitted, with grant requests to be written to the Stevens Family Foundation and Blue Ridge Energy.
- Bob Kogut is in the planning stage of a open house/first annual Celtic Festival to be held on September 17, 2023 from 2:00—5:00. Bob has four groups lined up to play.
- Monty Minton stated the house restoration work is near completion. The shutters for the second floor have arrived and will be affixed to the house within the next two weeks.
- Nell Fisher, Bill Karr and Bob Kogut have been reviewing the by laws of the corporation to see if any changes are needed. A nominating committee was appointed consisting of Doug Davis, Bob Kogut and Stephen Rauchfuss to look for potential new board members.
- Sandra Watts discussed the advantages of Directors and Officers Insurance. Stephen Rauchfuss suggested and recommended Reliable Insurance Agency, Inc. Sandra Watts contact Kimmie Rogers, CISR, CIC of Reliable Insurance Agency, Inc. A quote has been received.

FRIENDS OF FORT DEFIANCE

Your support is vitally important to the operation of Fort Defiance. **THANK YOU!** The following members have joined for **2023**:

Patriot/Individual

Oscar L. Doberiner
 R. Kelly Coffey
 Helen Nell Fisher
 Bill Karr
 Iredell County Extension Master Gardner Assoc. (in memory
 Of Michael W. Bernhardt)

Julie Mullis
 Matt O'Bryant
 Karen Barlow (in memory of Shirley Lenoir)

Militia/Family

Wanda Prince
 Liza Plaster (in honor of Steven Rauchfuss)
 Charles & Carol Bernhardt (in memory of Michael W. Bernhardt)
 Joanne M. Schwind (in memory of Michael W. Bernhardt)
 Kathryn H. Hamrick (in memory of Michael W. Bernhardt)
 Margaret M. Broyhill
 Jean Branch
 Betty Buss
 Lissa Holsclaw (in memory of revolutionary ancestor Colonel Isaac
 Lee)
 Nathan Hunt
 Valerie Connor
 Caldwell County Historical Society
 Douglas L. Pegram

Lieutenant

Pam Helton

Captain/Patron

Dr. Myra A. Dickson
 Brenda Combs
 Monty Combs
 Caron Josey Hobson
 Rutzinski Family (in memory of Michael W. Bernhardt)

Nathan & Julie Dixon (in memory of Michael W. Bernhardt)
 Joseph P. Logan (in memory of Michael W. Bernhardt)
 Alvin Johnston
 Evelyn Hartshorn Beam
 Mary A. Kincaid
 Gemstone District Roundtable (in memory of Michael W. Bernhardt)
 Roger & Jan Clary (in memory of Michael W. Bernhardt)
 Jane J. Smith
 Tina Triplett
 Steve McCord
 John Hawkins
 Dr. John W. Thuss
 Joe & Francis Delk
 Jeff & Rita Jones
 Jerry Brooks
 Kathryn LeNoir
 Kim Browning
 William & Denise Howard

Colonel/ Sponsor

Keith & Carrie Harrison (in memory of Michael W. Bernhardt)
 Scott & Karen Glover (in memory of Michael W. Bernhardt)
 Samuel L. & Sandra B. Ramsey
 James Pennell
 Anne & Alex Bernhardt Foundation

General/ Bene- factor

Barbara Freiman
 Yorke Lawson
 John Worsley
 Keith Haas Ent.

Specified Donations—Thank You

Stevens Family Foundation (Cemetery Restora-
 tion)
 Bernhardt Furniture Foundation (Upgrade Visi-
 tor Center)
 Hogan Family Foundation (Visitor Center)
 Blue Ridge Energy (upgrade heating & air)
 Broyhill Family Foundation (Capital Improve-
 ments)

Please become a "Friend of Fort Defiance". Memberships are available for individuals, families, and corporations who are looking to support local history and tourism. 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.

Fort Defiance, Inc. is a 501c3 non-profit organization . Anyone wanting to become a member of the "Friends of Fort Defiance" should send a check made payable to Fort Defiance, Inc. and mail it along with the membership form to Fort Defiance, Inc., P. O. Box 686, Lenoir, NC 28645. Or you can make payment by credit card on our website, www.historicfortdefiancenc.org.

Contact Fort Defiance at fortdefiancenc@gmail.com or call 828-758-1671.

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

Name: _____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____

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)

Children 5 and under free



Like us on Facebook and Follow us on Instagram.

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

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