

WGTH ISSUES & PROGRAMS LIST

FOURTH QUARTER 2018

OCTOBER – DECEMBER

PRESERVATION OF LOCAL HISTORIC SITES

Preservation of local historic sites generates community awareness and pride. The awareness of the types of people, businesses and industry that helped to establish an area is crucial to understanding the heritage that the predecessors initiated. Pride emerges as the community sees where it began and how it has developed and matured into its current status. Additionally, the charm and eye appeal of a community are enhanced when the local historic sites are preserved with aesthetically pleasing design and landscaping.

Program: Pre-recorded infobit for Section House Dedication

Dates: October 10 – 13, 2018

Times: Various (throughout the day) Duration: 3 minutes 21 seconds

Guest: Lynna Mitchell, Chairperson of the Richlands Section House Restoration Committee

Trains were an important part of the history of Richlands, Virginia, and the surrounding area. The railroad and coal industries were the lifeblood of the region. In fact, they remain influential and significant today. Trains hauling coal can still be seen at many locations throughout the area. Initially, passenger and other railcars came through; but coal cars have been the predominant and enduring feature of local rail history.

Quite a few influential and dedicated Richlands area citizens are enamored with both their town and its history. The combination constrained them to take part in the final revitalization project of a plan that began in 1995, that being the restoration of the Richlands Section House. [Note: A section house is where the railroad foreman lived and steam engines got their coal and wood.] The land and existing structure were given to the town by Norfolk Southern. The restoration began once the Richlands Section House Restoration Committee was formed and approval was received from the Richlands Town Council to proceed. Since 2011, funds have been contributed from private donations, help from the town, and matching grants from Federal funding through the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Lynna Mitchell, chairperson for the Richlands Section House Restoration Committee, recorded an informational invitation asking listeners to attend the much-anticipated dedication of the Richlands Railroad Foreman's Section House Project on Saturday, October 13, 2018, beginning at 9:30 a.m. Lynna announced the activities planned for the day, along with many of the names of individuals and groups that would be participating. She called it "a celebration of the town and its people."

The opening ceremony, according to Lynna, featured a concert by the Richlands High School Choir, the Presentation of Colors by the Richlands High School JROTC, the National Anthem by the Richlands High School Blue Tornado Marching Band, the Pledge of Allegiance by Casey-Shortt VFW Post 9640, and a special ceremonial "Striking of the Spike" by Tim Taylor, the town manager, and W. T. Hedrick, Pocahontas Division track supervisor for Norfolk Southern. All these activities took place at the section house location.

The featured presentation of the day was called, "The Mural Speaks." Muralist Ellen Elmes painted a part of the town's history on a

free-standing mural adjacent to the section house. She entitled it, “Richlands and the Rails: Stories from the Clinch Valley Line.” She and various individuals who were depicted on the historic mural, or had relatives involved, told their stories to the audience at the dedication.

Refreshments were served and guided tours of the section house took place. [Note: The section house is to be used as a visitor’s information center and railroad museum.] The Richlands History Club was on hand to assist. Other activities took place at nearby venues. Live musical entertainment from a variety of local musicians was performed into the afternoon. There were children’s activities scheduled, including some at the library just down the street. One very special opportunity, related to the dedication, was the postmark available that day at the Richlands Post Office.

IMPORTANT ELECTION DAY INFORMATION FOR VOTERS

Being aware of what is on the ballot and taking time to study the candidates, amendments, and any other issues involved during an election is most helpful to a voter. In fact, being informed should be considered a responsibility that accompanies the privilege of voting. Also important, is knowing general information such as: what is required to vote (i.e., photo identification), basic laws regarding voter registration and absentee voting, and to what location the precinct has been moved in the event that changes have been made.

Program: Broadcast of a pre-recorded interview

Dates: October 25 and 29, 2018

Times: 7:08 – 7:34 p.m. (10/25) and 11:08 – 11:34 a.m. (10/29)

Duration: 26 minutes

Guest: Brian Earls, Director of Elections and General Registrar for Tazewell County

Although the dispersing of information regarding upcoming elections is always important, it was crucial for the 2018 General Election. The 2018 election had many voters confused, largely because of precinct changes within Tazewell County. Additionally, there had been a significant number of people that registered to vote for the first time this election, previously inactive voters who were not aware that optical scan machines are now being used, and voters unfamiliar with the presence of questions on the ballot in addition to the candidates.

Anticipating these concerns and potential issues among Tazewell County voters, an interview was done with Brian Earls, Director of Elections and General Registrar for Tazewell County. Brian explained the reason for the change to optical scan machines. He noted that the change had, actually, occurred just prior to the June primary. Although it was unlikely that it could have happened, there was concern that it might have been possible to interfere with the touchscreens and PCU's that had been used in previous elections. Therefore, Tazewell County was forced to change to the optical scan machines on very short notice.

Brian, also, addressed the issue of precinct changes for a significant number of Tazewell County voters. His office had received a large number of inquiries, and a number of complaints, regarding the relocation and/or consolidation of several precincts. He explained that the Board of Supervisors had ordered that some cost-cutting measures be put in place. The Electoral Board of Tazewell County reasoned that the best solution was to consolidate several precincts which would require fewer election officers. Other considerations had to do with a location no longer being available and several that were in disrepair or not as safe as was desirable. He gave very good verbal directions and assured listeners that signage would be posted to assist voters in finding their new precincts.

As usual, Brian covered what was on the ballots. This, also, was a potential cause for confusion, because several town elections were

taking place at the same time. Therefore, there would be precincts where those living within town limits would be eligible to vote in both the town and Congressional elections. However, those living outside the town limits would only receive a Congressional ballot. He noted that there would be questions on the ballots, as well, and spoke in layman's terms about their general content.

Brian detailed acceptable forms of photo ID's and invited anyone who did not have a photo ID to come to his office in the courthouse to get one made at no charge – even on Election Day, if necessary. Cutoff dates for absentee ballot requests by mail and in-person absentee voting at the Registrar's office were among other topics that were addressed.

CARING AND SHARING WITH LESS FORTUNATE CHILDREN

Many children in the United States who are considered to be underprivileged still have some clothing, books, and basic toys. In most foreign countries, children in need only dream of having anything they could call their own – especially a nice toy. It is good for children who are materially blessed to be aware of the needs of other children and to desire to demonstrate caring through sharing.

Program: Broadcast of a pre-recorded interview

Dates: November 5 and 8, 2018

Times: 11:07 – 11:32 a.m. (11/5) and 7:07 – 7:32 p.m. (11/8)

Duration: 25 minutes

Guests: Abram McConnell, Mid-Atlantic Regional Director for Operation Christmas Child (OCC)/Samaritan's Purse

Vladimir from the Ukraine, a former OCC shoebox recipient, who now packs shoeboxes with his family in the United States

In an interview recorded in a private home during a presentation and testimonial given to a Mothers of Pre-Schoolers (MOPS) group, the far-reaching benefits of Operation Christmas Child (OCC) shoeboxes were explained and lauded. Abram McConnell was there representing OCC as the Mid-Atlantic Regional Director. He talked about the mission of OCC – to bring the Gospel to children in need around the world. He gave some statistics of shoebox giving since it began, stating that 157 million shoeboxes have been delivered around the globe. Abram shared ideas for how to pack shoeboxes – what to include and what not to include. He suggested some “wow” items such as a soccer ball and pump or a nice stuffed animal and, then, what might be some well-received items to fill the rest of the box. He encouraged folks to include a letter and a picture of themselves and/or their families and to conclude with a prayer for the child receiving the shoebox. After talking about the effectiveness of using shoeboxes for sharing the Gospel with children, he introduced Vladimir.

Vladimir is from the Ukraine. He explained the impoverished conditions in which he and his family dwelt. They had a very large family, but they lived in a small apartment. In frigid temperatures, ice would freeze on the wallpaper inside the apartment. The paper peeled off when the ice thawed. They had only makeshift toys and one ball to share. One little girl had a Barbie doll that she played with on her porch while all the little girls in the neighborhood looked on adoringly. It was such a treasured item, she did not allow anyone else to touch her Barbie.

Then one day when he was nine years-old, he and his siblings were invited to a Christmas party. They were excited and took the bus to this event. They were surprised because the room was so brightly colored and festive. Even more surprising were the smiles on the faces of all the adults who were giving the party. He and the children with whom he grew up were used to darkness and gloomy colors and faces. Vladimir said it would have been enough if they had just eaten the cake that was

provided and enjoyed the music and singing. When they were given shoeboxes full of toys and other things, he and the others were ecstatic. The one item he still remembers most was dental floss. He thought it was some strange kind of American candy. It was years later, when he went to the dentist in the United States, that he finally found out what its purpose is.

Even though Vladimir grew up in a Christian home, he was overwhelmed that someone over in America, whom he had never met, cared enough to send him a package in the Ukraine. He was a little surprised to see children that he did not think were Christians at the party; because he had, mistakenly, thought the Christmas party was only for Christian children. Vladimir said the Gospel was presented in about every form imaginable: songs, stories, skits, puppet shows, etc. He could not imagine that there would be any child in attendance that did not know the good news of the Gospel by the time it was over. One of his sisters got a Barbie doll that she let other girls take home to “spend the night” with them.

Vladimir went on to explain how he has become a shoebox packer with a passion for the ministry that involves packing, praying, and sending shoeboxes. He packs them with his children and travels as a zealous ambassador for OCC; because he believes, whole-heartedly, in the ministry and the life-changing impact it has in the hearts and lives of children worldwide.

COMMUNITY EVENTS HONORING LOCAL VETERANS

Veterans are so deserving of heartfelt appreciation and recognition for the sacrifices they have made for our country and its citizens. Preserving freedom can be costly. Lives have been lost, bodily harm has come to many, and the trauma experienced and witnessed has resulted in many cases of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

When some thoughtful people in a community take time to rally in support of local veterans and give them the honor they are due, it is good to make an effort to be certain that all area veterans are aware of these events and feel welcome to participate.

Program: Infobits regarding area Veteran's Day celebrations, parades, breakfasts, and luncheons

Dates: November 6 – 11, 2018

Times: Various (throughout the day) Duration: 51 seconds (Jerry)

Guest: Jerry McReynolds, Chairperson for the Veteran's Day Celebration in Tazewell, Virginia

The information for the Richlands, Cedar Bluff, and Honaker areas were consolidated and recorded in-house.

Due to the kindness and patriotic passion of some local citizens and organizations, the recognition of veterans has become an integral part of local community events. Rather than the events becoming a burden or something to check off a list, the organizers seem to view them as opportunities to show genuine appreciation and respect for the honorees. With greater frequency, the events are changed somewhat or enhanced in order to freshen up the celebration.

The messages broadcast on WGTH, throughout the days prior to and on Veteran's Day, gave the type of event, the times, locations, and any other necessary particulars. Most of the Veteran's Day events included a meal that was served at no cost to the veterans and, most often, it was free for family members, as well. Other events included parades and/or musical salutes and entertainment. All local veterans were invited and encouraged to participate. Whenever possible, the organizers of some of the smaller, enclosed celebrations desired to know ahead of time who was attending so that the honoree could be recognized by name and other service-related information.

PROMOTING LOCAL GOSPEL MUSIC CONCERTS

Music is something that is commonly enjoyed by most people. However, Gospel music is more than just a source of pleasure or satisfaction. Based on listener responses, Gospel music can be eternally life-changing. Because of the Subject and Source of the lyrics, it also has the ability to settle a worrisome spirit or heal a wounded soul or a broken heart.

Gospel concerts give the artist(s) the added ability to explain what prompted them to write and/or sing a particular song. The testimonies of the artists have greatly impacted many lives. Furthermore, most Gospel artists are willing to stay and minister one-on-one with their fans after a concert.

Program: Live interview with Nathan Stanley and Jeff McCracken

Date: October 31, 2018

Time: 11:28 – 11:46 a.m. Duration: 18 minutes

Guests: Nathan Stanley, talented musician and grandson of the legendary musician, Dr. Ralph Stanley, and Nathan's promoter, Jeff McCracken

Program: Live telephone interview with Michael Combs

Date: November 30, 2018

Times: 11:33 – 11:48 a.m. and 7:08 – 7:23 p.m. Duration: 15 minutes

Guest: Michael Combs, popular and personable Gospel music songwriter and singer

Both the interview with Nathan and Jeff and the interview with Michael Combs were done prior to upcoming concerts. Typically, verbal invitations will be given several times during an interview and the date, time, and location will be mentioned repeatedly by the artist or promoter and the person doing the interview.

Not only do interviews give the listener a glimpse into the personality and genuineness of an artist, but there is a lot of information shared that gives the listener a special feeling of familiarity – both about the person and their music. Should the listener have an opportunity to talk directly to the musician after the concert, they will probably know such information as: the latest release, the artist's personal favorite song, where the artist grew up, how and when the artist started in music, etc.

PRESERVING HERITAGE AND HISTORY AT CHRISTMAS

Living in an area with the rich heritage and history enjoyed by Tazewell County and the surrounding region of Southwest Virginia, creates special opportunities to demonstrate the culture that prevailed in the past. The exceptional quality of preservation of possessions and other property, the journalizing of family and community events, the careful recording of genealogies (often found in family Bibles), and maintenance of other information and memorabilia have allowed museums and historical societies to provide well-documented accounts of local history. Many history buffs have been able to do research that allows even the fictional books they write to provide background from a given period of time with reasonable authenticity.

The holiday season, especially Christmastime, is a natural time to gather together. It lends itself nicely to sharing historic traditions, songs, costumes, foods, decorations, etc. There is no better place to enjoy learning history than in the same structures in which it took place.

Program: Pre-recorded infobit for “A Frontier Christmas”

Dates: December 4 – 7, 2018

Times: Various (throughout the day) Duration: 1 minute 14 seconds

Guest: Charlotte Whitted, executive director, Historic Crab Orchard Museum, Tazewell, Virginia

A highly-anticipated annual Christmas celebration is “A Frontier Christmas,” hosted by the Historic Crab Orchard Museum in early December. Many families from the region mark their calendars early so they will not miss this event. Great care is taken to provide as authentic an experience as possible. Almost all the folks who volunteer at the museum turn out in their traditional garb. With the restored cabins and the barn, the setting is perfect for enjoying “living history.”

Charlotte Whitted, executive director for the Historic Crab Orchard Museum, records an infobit that is warm and welcoming. Charlotte invites listeners to come to the museum grounds to experience Christmas as it would have been celebrated by pioneer families who settled in the area. The ambience she describes is captivating with authentic foods, hot apple cider, fires in the cabins’ fireplaces, and singing by local families.

PROMOTING COMMUNITY THROUGH SHARED CELEBRATIONS

Christmas is the perfect time of year to gather together as a community and celebrate the blessings of family and friends. Singing together, eating cookies and drinking hot chocolate, taking group pictures on a sleigh, etc. all add to the joy of the season and the feeling of community these small towns enjoy.

Program: Infobit for “A Small Town Christmas”

Dates: November 27 – December 1, 2018

Times: Various (throughout the day) Duration: 1 minute 4 seconds

Guest: Connie Allen, event coordinator for the Town of Richlands

Program: Infobit for the Cedar Bluff “Concert in the Square”

Dates: December 13 – 17, 2018

Times: Various (throughout the day) Duration: 47 seconds

Guest: Linda Singleton, chairperson for the Cedar Bluff Business and Professional Association and representative for Singleton Funeral Service (sponsors of the event)

Program: Broadcast of the pre-recorded “Concert in the Square” and interview with Brother Bob Smith, evangelist, from the Claypool Hill Church of Christ

Date: December 17, 2018

Time: 9:07 – 9:57 p.m.

Duration: 50 minutes

Guests: The Claypool Hill Church of Christ Choir

Chris Thompson-Whitt, choir director

Linda Singleton, hostess for the Town of Cedar Bluff

Bob Smith, evangelist, from the Claypool Hill Church of Christ

Christmas, as it is celebrated in the towns of Richlands and Cedar Bluff, resembles the sweet celebrations seen in the beloved Hallmark movies. Friends and families come out to join together and to “get in the Christmas spirit.” Hot chocolate and wassail (or hot apple cider), cookies, laughter, singing, and cherished fellowship abound amongst the beautiful Christmas decorations.

This year was Richlands' first formal celebration of "A Small Town Christmas." Connie Allen, event coordinator for the town, did much of the planning and decorating, as well as, speaking on behalf of the Town of Richlands. Connie welcomed everyone from the area to come out and enjoy the decorated square next to the Post Office and numerous festive activities for children and adults that were taking place on Saturday, December 1st. She announced the day's activities and locations some of which took place at other nearby venues. The day was, also, beneficial for local merchants.

The Cedar Bluff "Concert in the Square" has been a long-standing, annual event. Sponsored by the Cedar Bluff Business and Professional Association and Singleton Funeral Service, various choirs have sung and, then, led the audience in Christmas carols. The choirs stand in the large, beautifully-decorated gazebo. Hot chocolate and wassail are provided by Singleton's Funeral Service and the Richlands Women's Club provides cookies. The setting in the Cedar Bluff Town Square is always lovely.

This year, the Claypool Hill Church of Christ Choir put on the Christmas concert. Their choir director, Chris Thompson-Whitt, then, led in the singing of Christmas carols by the choir and the audience. Linda Singleton gave the opening welcome remarks. (This was an emotional time, since this was Linda's first event following her recovery from a recent stroke.)

WGTH recorded the live event and re-broadcast it later that night so the participants, themselves, could listen. An interview was done with evangelist Bob Smith and broadcast after the event, as well.