



# Davidson Historical Society

January 2006

## Executive Board

Brenda Barger  
*President*

Elizabeth Martin  
*Vice President*

Carol Barber  
*Treasurer*

Jean Cunningham  
*Secretary*

Caroline Plyler  
*Historian*

### *Members at Large*

Rupert Barber

Jan Blodgett

Sherman Kahn

Margaret Kuras

David Malushizky

Kate McIntyre

Martha Montgomery

Yvonne Richards

Christy Shi

Bill Vinson

## Our Purpose

*The Davidson Historical Society promotes an understanding and appreciation of the history of Davidson, North Carolina and its surrounding area.*

## *On the Road with DHS...*

### *Machpelah Church and Cemetery*

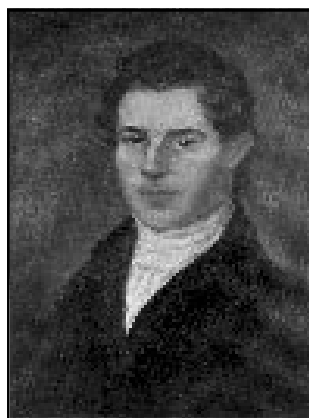
Across the Catawba River in eastern Lincoln county, just off Highway 73, sits a small, unassuming family cemetery and church. However, within the stone walls of this rural cemetery are the graves of several prominent North Carolinians and their family members.

Among those buried in the cemetery are: General Joseph Graham, revolutionary war hero, ironmaster and planter; Alexander Brevard, ironmaster and planter; James Graham, 4-term U.S. Congressman; Robert Hall Morrison, founding president of Davidson College, and his wife Mary Graham Morrison (daughter of Joseph Graham).



*Machpelah Church—Lincoln County 1848*

Machpelah Cemetery was established in 1801 as a family graveyard by brothers-in-law Joseph Graham and Alexander Brevard. The site is located midway between Graham's Vesuvius Furnace (home still standing) and Brevard's Mt. Tirzah plantation (destroyed in 1968) near the road to Charlotte.



*Robert Hall Morrison*

In 1929, Brevard bequeathed funds for the church, which was completed in 1848. The magnificently austere little building is of brick laid in Flemish bond, covered with weathered white paint. The interior continues the simplicity with bare plaster walls and plain wooden pews. The pews and slave gallery are thought to be the original.

The first pastor of the church was Robert Hall Morrison, serving from 1848 until services ended after the Civil War. Previously, he served as the first president of Davidson

*...see On the Road on page 3*

## Events Calendar 2006

**Sunday, March 19, 2006**

### **The Making of Period Clothing**

*4:00 p.m., Davidson Town Hall*

Local history buff Sarah Sue Hardinger creates authentic period clothing for historical re-enactments and local theater productions. She produces clothes that are faithful to the time period in style, material and method. This means she hand sews garments if sewing machines did not exist at the time! Join us as she talks of her experiences and displays some of her period clothes on DHS models.

### **Town Day**

**Saturday, May 6, 2006**

The Davidson Historical Society will have a special activity for Town Day! Look for us near the Green.



### **The War That Made America**

*Hosted by Graham Greene*

Many of you enjoyed last year's DHS program about Ft. Dobbs State Historic Site in Statesville. This four hour documentary is an opportunity to learn more about the French and Indian War as we commemorate its 250th anniversary.

Airing soon on PBS. Check your local listings.

## *A Note from the President...*

The Davidson Historical Society anticipates a very active year in 2006. Plans are currently underway for numerous historical plaques on North Main Street homes with the Society cost sharing. DHS will pay a sizeable portion for plaques on college homes as well as private residences to designate the year the home was built as well as the early residents. Melissa Withers already has a plaque on her home on South Main Street. Be sure to stop and take a look at it.

Town Day will be here before we know it and the DHS will have a presence near the Green. Jan Blodgett is finalizing walking tour details for various areas of town and we are now looking for volunteers to lead groups on an "as needed" basis. Let a society officer know if you are interested. We may try short tours on Town Day.

Did you know that the town of Mooresville is establishing an Historical Museum in their downtown area? We are supporting them in this effort with hopes of one day having our own place in Davidson.

We thank each of you who are currently members of the Davidson Historical Society. This past fall we established new membership levels. If you have not yet become a member, we encourage you to join today.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barger". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a dark ink on a white background.

Brenda Barger

**On the Road** . . . *continued from page 1*

College from 1837 until 1840, when he retired due to ill health. He then moved to his Cottage Home plantation in Lincoln County (near his wife's family home) where he remained until his death in 1889.

The church building no longer houses an active congregation.

## Sources:

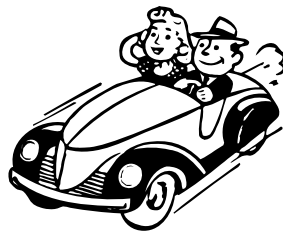
Lincolnton-Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce  
<<http://www.lincolnchambernc.org/?section=9>>

Bishir, Catherine W. and Michael T Southern. *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003.

Machpelah Cemetery Census.  
<<http://rfci.net/wdfloyd/macpelah.html>>

*Want to see it for yourself?*

*Driving directions:*



Follow Highway 73 west into Lincoln County. Approximately 6 miles after crossing Highway 16, turn left onto Brevard Place Road (SR 1360). The Church and Cemetery will be on your right, at the corner of Brevard Place Road and Old Plank Road (SR 1511). There is a historical marker at the corner with information about the cemetery and some of the people that are buried there.

*If you're on the road,*

*don't miss these nearby sites!*

- ◇ Cottage Home Historical Marker  
Home of Robert Hall and Mary Graham Morrison. House no longer standing.
- ◇ Ingleside  
Private home, visible from the road
- ◇ Tuckers Grove Camp Meeting  
One of the oldest continuous black camp meeting grounds in the south.
- ◇ Vesuvius Furnace  
Home of Joseph and Isabella Davidson Graham. Their son, NC Governor William A. Graham was born here. Home is a private residence, ruins of iron furnace of the same name lie across the street.
- ◇ William A Graham, Jr. Farm  
Commissioner of Agriculture and son of the governor. Well known for the 16-sided "Round Barn" that remains on the property and is visible from the road.

## A page from history...

*This advertisement appeared in the Davidson College Magazine, 1909.*

*Shared by the Davidson College Archives.*



# THE DAVIDSON SHAVING PARLOR

WALTER JOHNSON, PROPRIETOR

DEPOT STREET

DAVIDSON, N. C.

# D•H•S

The Mooresville Museum is a nonprofit, local organization dedicated to the preservation of regional history and public interests. It is a grassroots endeavor that combines personal, public and private collaboration for the benefit of providing the public with a tangible repository of items and artifacts of local significance. Public education is a major focus of the efforts of the Mooresville museum.



*132 Center Avenue, Mooresville  
The Mooresville Museum is on the way!*

Currently there is no physical museum, but the Mooresville Museum board and the town of Mooresville hope to open one this year. John Mack recently donated the downtown building that housed wholesale supplier Charles Mack and Sons.

For more information: [www.MooresvilleMuseum.org](http://www.MooresvilleMuseum.org)



## **Davidson Historical Society**

Post Office Box 144  
Davidson, NC 28036

*We don't just talk about Davidson's past...  
We are working to preserve it.*

**The Davidson Historical Society** was founded in the late 1980's by a group of concerned citizens led by Taylor and Irene Blackwell. Over the years DHS has presented programs by outstanding local and regional personalities on varying topics, toured historically significant sites in the area, and financed projects which promote the history of the area.