

Caswell Horticulture Club

proudly presents

The Gardens at The Caswell County Historical Courthouse



A Self-guided Tour

**144 Court Square
Yanceyville, North Carolina**

Your tour begins at the Court Square:



Court Square: As the first public garden project of the Caswell Horticulture Club, the Yanceyville Town Square has always been their top priority. It is located in the exact center of the county (note the

Geodestic Survey marker in the NE quadrant) and is a focal point of the town and Historic District. An irrigation system was installed, aged boxwoods were replaced and a twice yearly planting of annuals was initiated. The CHC also decorates the Square and Courthouse every Christmas.

From the Court Square, proceed to the front of the Courthouse through the iron gates. Follow the brick sidewalk to the left down the Memorial Path.

Memorial Path: As a connection between the Memorial Garden and the front of the courthouse, a Memorial Path was created on the east side. This brick path is dedicated as a memorial to the citizens of Caswell County. Many of the bricks are engraved with messages and the names of loved ones.

Memorial Garden:

The Memorial Path leads to the Memorial Garden, which contains memorials to many citizens of Caswell County. The two dedicated benches provide a spot of respite on the courthouse grounds. This lovely garden contains



many plants familiar to historic homes in the county such as boxwoods, hollies and crape myrtles. The centerpiece is an armillary, which was designed and donated by Swann Forge.

Follow the Memorial Path back to the front of the Courthouse, crossing over the center sidewalk to the Veterans' Walk. The Veterans' Walk will continue around the right side of the Courthouse to the Courtyard Garden.

Veterans' Walk: The Veterans' Walk, connecting the Courthouse to the Agriculture Building, consists of a walkway made up of bricks which are dedicated to past and present local war heroes. These Veterans, whose names are engraved on the bricks, have served in wars ranging from the 18th century to present day battles.



Courtyard Garden: This garden, located on the west side of the courthouse, was designed to provide a shady seating area between the two government buildings. In the center of the circular patio of engraved bricks is an historic millstone donated



by the Honorable & Mrs. James Long. This millstone came from Long's Mill. The garden is landscaped with evergreens, Knockout

roses, lavender and other perennial plants. The garden is designed to be low maintenance with four season benefits.

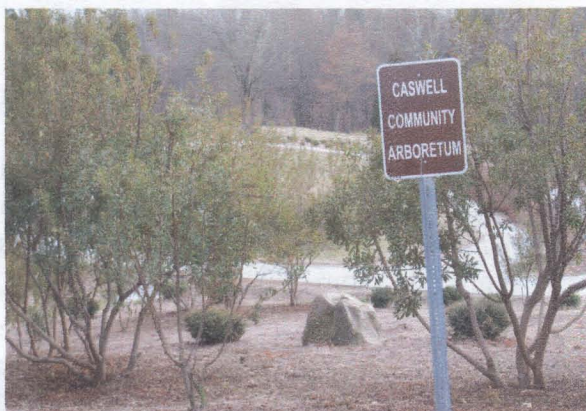
Continue your tour down the staircase at the Agriculture Building to the Old Jail, Poteat Schoolhouse and Arboretum. Cross the parking lot and follow the sidewalk in front of the Old Jail. For handicapped access, go to the front gate of the Courthouse. Follow W. Main St. to Fire Dept. Drive; which will continue to the back parking lot of the Courthouse.

Old Jail: When you follow the directional sign down the Agriculture Building stairs, and across the parking lot, you will see the Old Jail; a late 19th century, two-story brick building of Romanesque Revival design which served as the county jail until 1973. Note the rich brick corbel cornice treatment at the eaves and original cell block made by "Stewart Jail Works Company, Cincinnati, Ohio".



Poteat Schoolhouse: The Poteat Schoolhouse is a one-room school that was moved from its previous location on the County Home Rd. to its current location in 1987. The work was done by Bartlett Yancey High School students under the direction of Cy Vernon. The building is currently maintained by the Yanceyville Rotary Club, with Wally Ewalt as Project Manager.

Arboretum: The Caswell Community Arboretum was begun in 2004. Previously it was abandoned county property that was used as a dumping place and was completely overgrown with non-native invasive species, primarily Golden Bamboo and Chinese Privet and continues to be an on-going work in progress. Open 365 days a year, it is located on approximately two acres of Caswell County property in the Historic District with features that provide diversity. An all native arboretum, it focuses on providing for wild-life with seed and berry producing trees, native grasses, a butterfly garden and host trees for butterflies. Among its frequent visitors, in addition to butterflies, are song birds, wild turkeys, deer, and insects. The walking trail is hard surface, has two entrances, is approximately ½ mile in length and meanders downhill, providing a moderate workout. Parking is available behind the Historic Courthouse.



CHC History

1996 The Caswell Horticulture Club was founded and currently maintains a 20-30 person membership from throughout the county. CHC is primarily a service based organization providing and maintaining community projects. We also participate in educational events and sponsor educational events.

2001 The CHC won the prestigious Minnett Duffy Landscape Preservation Award from Preservation North Carolina for its work in restoring the Courthouse Square in the historic district of Yanceyville. This work included the installation of an irrigation system, the replacement of shrubs and general maintenance.

2002 CHC members grew and distributed seedlings, trees and shrubs free of cost to the citizens of Yanceyville.

2003 The Caswell Horticulture Club, under the directions of Yancey Moorefield Smith, designed and installed the formal Memorial Garden on the East side of the Historic Courthouse.

2004 Under the direction of Yancey Smith of the Caswell Horticulture Club, the Community Arboretum began development with the clearing of the overgrown land.

The CHC installed the Memorial Path of engraved bricks leading from the Courthouse to the Memorial Garden.

2006 Under the direction of Pat Ewalt, the Veterans' Walk and Courtyard Garden were built between the Courthouse and the Caswell Agriculture Building.

2008 Directional wrought iron signs were designed, fabricated and installed under the leadership of John Swann for his Eagle Scout project.

Many of these projects have been funded by membership dues, memorials, donations, fund-raisers, and grants. The CHC itself has provided most of the labor in planting and maintaining these projects, although Dan River Prison Work Farm helped with heavy projects. The Caswell County Commissioners have provided some financial support.



Caswell County Courthouse Historical Dates

1857 -1861 Designed by noted Architect William Percival. It is located in the exact center of the County and is architecturally one of the most distinctive courthouses in the state. The unusually striking main facade, combining Italian Romanesque and classical features, is dramatized by the recessed main entrance porch on two levels, the brightly painted capitols of corn and tobacco, and the fine arched corbel course of the cornice. The structure is listed on the National Register of Historic Places in addition to the Yanceyville National Register Historic District.

1870 A notable historical event in which the courthouse played a major role occurred on May 21, 1870. On this day, State Senator John W. "Chicken" Stevens was murdered in the Courthouse, reputedly at the instigation of the Klu Klux Klan. Stephen's murder was instrumental in the Kirk-Holden War and the subsequent impeachment of Governor William W. Holden.

1921 The court square as it appears today was designed and engineered by Frank Moorefield. The monument, erected by the Daughters of the American Revolution, was dedicated to the confederate soldiers. There are also other smaller monuments listing soldiers from Caswell County who fought in WWI and WWII.

1940 The wrought iron fence that surrounded the courthouse was removed for repairs and transported to a forge in Virginia. It was never seen again and reportedly sold for scrap iron to benefit the war effort.

1975 The antebellum courthouse, the fourth constructed in the county, remained the seat of Caswell County government until the erection of a new courthouse and government facility in 1975.

1998 The Caswell County Historical Association pressed for the renovation of the 1861 Courthouse and secured a \$5,000 grant from Preservation North Carolina to do a color study of the building. David Black, Architectural Conservator was hired to do the study.

1999 The restoration, by Moser, Meyer and Phoenix of Greensboro began. At a cost of 2 million dollars the courthouse was totally renovated with new heating and air conditioning, new finishes, paint, carpeting, plumbing and elevators. The Courthouse Fence Project began with an intense fund-raising plan directed by Fred and Sally Smith. The citizens of Caswell County, over 350 contributors, donated the funds necessary to replace the fence to again surround the courthouse. This work was done by Bud and Shelly Swann of Swann Forge of Yanceyville, who donated their labor. Wally Ewalt acted as Project Manager.

2000 The County Commissioners gave the Historical Association the approval to coordinate with The National Association of Clock Collectors to remove, restore and reinstall the Courthouse Tower Clock. Many citizens donated their time to this project and a donation of \$5,000 by Wally and Pat Ewalt paid for expert labor.

This brochure was created by John Swann as part of his Eagle Scout project for the Caswell Horticulture Club.