



The Herald

Presbyterian Heritage Center at Montreat

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Spring 2024

Chesky Begins Role of Executive Director

January 1, 2024 marked a significant addition to the Presbyterian Heritage Center’s “collection”: a new Executive Director! After a seven-month search, Anne Chesky took over the reins from Ron Vinson, who retired on December 31, 2023.

Anne is not new to Montreat and the Swannanoa Valley. Born in Lexington, Kentucky, she moved to this area as a child when her father began teaching English education at Montreat College. Although residing in Riceville, she spent much time in Montreat on both the college campus and the rest of the Montreat cove. She fondly remembers summers in the creek, hiking the trails, and playing games on Welch Field.

She left the area during her last two years of high school to attend the esteemed NC School of Science and Math in Durham. The experience piqued her interest in science and pointed her to a focus on environmental science. She received her undergraduate degree from UNC Asheville in environmental studies. After graduating, she spent the next two years with AmeriCorps, in two one-year stints in West Virginia and New York City.



Anne Chesky became PHC's Executive Director on January 1.

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Francis Goodrich's Craft Revival

By Anne Chesky

In early 1890s Brittain Cove, NC, Rebecca Taylor Davis handed an old coverlet to New York-born Presbyterian missionary Francis Louisa Goodrich. “I’ve brought you a present, knowing that you take delight in such as this,” Davis told her new friend.

Unbeknownst to Davis at the time, this coverlet—woven in the “Double Bowknot” pattern with wool that had been dyed brown with chestnut and oak bark—would spark the craft revival movement in western North Carolina and eventu-

ally lead to the formation of what is known today as the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild.

Beginnings

American missionaries from varying denominations, like Francis Goodrich, began making their way into Appalachia shortly after the Civil War, labeling white mountaineers as an “exceptional population” in need of aid, alongside Native Americans, newly-free African Americans, Mormons, and other marginalized American groups.

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Francis Goodrich, Presbyterians & Education

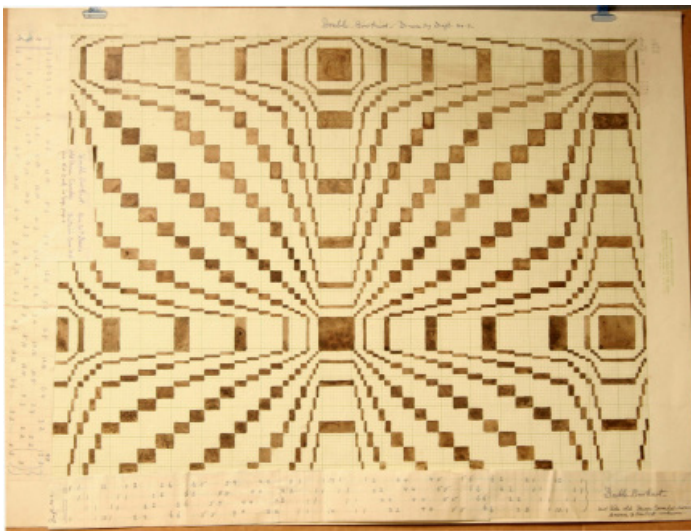
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Goodrich arrived at Riceville's College Hill School, located a few miles east of Asheville, to assist another mission teacher, Evangeline Gorbold, in the fall of 1890. Gorbold taught; Goodrich, an unpaid volunteer, took up most other duties—visiting homebound residents, bringing food or medicine to the sick, helping with funeral arrangements, and generally doing any tasks that would endear her to the community.

After serving two years at the Riceville school, Goodrich and Gorbold moved just over the mountain to Brittain Cove. Here they helped establish another day school. More than 80 children attended the first year—more than double their expectations.

Inspiration

Outside the classroom, Goodrich worked particularly to uplift women in the community, starting “mothers’ meetings,” which provided a social space for women to share news, offer advice, and support each other. Goodrich aspired to “bring material help to the poorer among these neighbors without hampering them, or injuring their self-respect.”



Watercolor, early-to-mid 1900s, illustrating the Double Bow Knot weave pattern.

So when during one of these meetings Davis gifted her the “home-woven coverlet, forty years old, slightly faded, but still beautiful in its golden brown and cream white hues,” Goodrich was inspired. In this “Old Brown Coverlet,” she saw a method of bringing supplemental income into the hands of mountain women.

According to Jan Davidson's introduction in a reprinting of Goodrich's 1931 book, *Mountain Homespun*, by the 1890s, Colonial Revival style had emerged and hand woven coverlets had become sought after commodities.

But these coveted blankets could generally only be found in museum displays. So when Goodrich sent the coverlet to her northern friends,

“the admiration it received made [her] believe that if [the women] in the cove could produce the like, a market could be found.”

Reestablishing a more or less forgotten skill in the mountains required locating women who still had the knowledge—and equipment—to weave a coverlet from beginning to end. Soon Goodrich and members of the mothers’ meetings had found an old loom stored in a local barn, a woman who could weave, another who could warp a loom, still another who could dye with indigo, and a nearby family who could produce the coverlets. In three weeks, they produced three coverlets. All three immediately sold; a handicraft revival had begun in the mountains.

Allanstand Cottage Industries

Though successful programs combining handicraft with social work had already seen success in other areas of the US and Europe, Goodrich's program was a first for Southern Appalachia.

By 1902, Goodrich had set up Allanstand Cottage Industries in Allanstand, NC, near the North Carolina-Tennessee border. She paid women to weave in their homes and then purchased each work piece by piece to sell. As the industry grew, she began commissioning a wider variety of handwork, including rugs, brooms,



Frances Louisa Goodrich (1856-1944), 1943. On the left is the famous Double Bow Knot coverlet woven by one of Rebecca Taylor Davis' sisters and given to Goodrich.

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Francis Goodrich

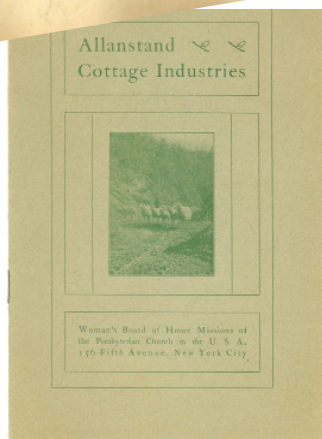
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baskets, chairs, and dolls. In 1908, she opened a shop in downtown Asheville to sell mountain handicrafts to tourists. Many crafts were also sold by mail order through the Presbyterian Church.

In 1931, Goodrich gave Allanstand to the fledgling Southern Mountain Handicraft Guild (now the Southern Highland Craft Guild). The Allanstand Shop currently operates out of the Folk Art Center on the Blue Ridge Parkway in Asheville, just a few miles from the former location of the small Riceville schoolhouse where Goodrich got her start as a missionary in the mountains.

For more, check out *Mountain Hometown* by Frances Goodrich (1931). The 1989 edition includes an introduction by Jan Davidson which was particularly helpful in writing this article.

Riceville School, 1892. Eva Gorbold and Francis Louisa Goodrich are pictured far right.



This Allanstand Cottage Industries promotional booklet was written by Frances Goodrich and published by the Women's Home Mission Board of the Presbyterian Church, c1901.

PHC Begins a New Chapter

January 1st not only ushered in a new year, but also a new chapter in the life of the Presbyterian Heritage Center. Ron Vinson retired as Executive Director on December 31, 2023, and Anne Chesky began as the new Executive Director on January 1, 2024. Ron was the PHC's first Executive Director, making the passing of the baton to Anne a significant milestone. Although much will stay the same, 2024 will bring new initiatives and opportunities.

Computer Upgrades

Thanks to extremely generous gifts from the Celetta P. Jones and Harry T. Jones, Jr. Fund and other Jones family members, the PHC will be upgrading our computerization and information technology. This project will allow staff to be more efficient in their work, be interconnected with each other, provide higher levels of security, and allow expanded forms of communication.

Museum Assessment Program (MAP) Grant

We are proud to announce that the PHC has received a MAP grant from the American Alliance of Museums. Since its inception in 1981, the Museum Assessment Program (MAP) has helped more than 5,000 small and mid-sized museums of all types strengthen operations, plan for the future, and meet standards.

Through a one-year process of self-assessment, institutional activities, and consultative peer review with a site visit, PHC will emerge with:

- Greater alignment of activities, mission, resources
- Analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities
- Prioritized road map for improving operations and meeting standards
- Enhanced credibility with new and existing donors
- Improved communications between staff, board, and other constituents
- Expert advice, recommendations, and resources
- Increased capacity for strategic planning
- Preparation for museum accreditation

The staff and board will be working hard on these initiatives in the months ahead to ensure we are meeting the needs of our various stakeholders.

Chesky, New Executive Director

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Her work involved environmental preservation, which she found to be a fascinating specialty of environmental studies. After her demanding but exhilarating experience, she returned to WNC, enrolling in a Masters of Appalachian Studies program at Appalachian State. As she learned more and more about Appalachia and wrote a research paper on Riceville, she began to shift her focus from environmental to historical preservation. After graduating with her master's degree, she landed a job at the Swannanoa Valley Museum (SVM) in Black Mountain, first as a part-time employee then moving up to be the Director a year later. Her four years at SVM deepened her love and appreciation for history and the people who created it. Her evolutionary education process continued: she completed a certificate in Nonprofit Management at Duke University and then moved to Athens, Georgia to obtain a Masters of Cultural Anthropology at the University of Georgia. After graduating, she returned to Black Mountain and the Swannanoa Valley Museum for another four years, advancing the museum and its programs.

In 2020, she was offered the position as Executive Director of the Western North Carolina Historical Association, which operated the Smith-McDowell House Museum. During her tenure, the museum transitioned from a house museum to become the Asheville Museum of History. Over the next three and a half years, she led the restoration of the Smith-McDowell House and creation of the Asheville

Museum of History, the first history museum in Asheville. The museum opened in the fall of 2023.

Through all her studies, work responsibilities, and raising her 5½ year old daughter, Ella, Anne managed to find time to author five books, including an historical book on a 1936 murder in the Asheville Battery Park Hotel.

Anne learned of the PHC Executive Director opportunity from Ron Vinson, who she had worked with during her time at the Swannanoa Valley Museum. She admired the work Ron had accomplished during his 16 years at the PHC. As noted earlier, she had a special love for Montreat and had studied about the many accomplishments by Presbyterians (she herself is one!) in this area. After many discussions with the PHC Search Committee, Anne accepted the opportunity to lead the PHC's efforts to "Honor the Past, Inform the Present, and Influence the Future."

What is Anne's vision for the PHC? "I want to help increase visitation and raise awareness of the incredible resource the PHC is," Anne stated. Among other things, as our Mission Statement outlines, through exhibits, programs, and archives, that visitors may understand and appreciate what God through Jesus Christ has done with and through His people. Sharing about the history of the Presbyterian and Reformed faith, the history of Montreat, and understanding the history of Presbyterian global missions will remain the PHC's primary three-pronged focus. But new technologies, forms of access, and ways of interrelating with people will help drive achievement of the mission.

The Search Committee and Board are delighted Anne has joined the PHC. Board Chair, Dick Ray, enthusiastically commented, "We couldn't have found anyone more qualified and appropriate for the position. Ron is a tough act to follow, but Anne is the perfect person to take us into a new chapter."



Collection Spotlight

On display in our exhibit "Who Are Presbyterians?" is a 12-foot tall pulpit made from southern yellow pine. The pulpit, from Bethany Presbyterian Church in Statesville, NC, originally stood on a four-foot platform and was painted white. The pulpit dates to 1778 and is believed to be the only surviving pulpit built in NC during the American Revolution.

Bethany Presbyterian Church was founded in 1775. Notably, in 1865, after Bethany's white pastor advocated for the abolition of slavery and removed the bar separating the Black and white congregationalists, Bethany became the first congregation in NC's Piedmont in which the Black congregation withdrew to form their own church--Freedom Presbyterian.

Mark Your Calendars! Free & Open to the Public

Open Now!
Visit the **PHC Exhibits** Check
www.phcmontreat.org or call
828-669-6556
for current operating hours.

Mondays at 3:30pm
Montreat Walking Tours
Ongoing

Wednesday, July 17
Montreat Adult Summer Club
presentation by **Anne Chesky**

Saturday, July 20
PHC Ice Cream Social

Coming in September
Presbyterian History in the
Swannanoa Valley

Friday, October 25 at 7:00pm
Distinguished Lecture on the
Reformation
Dr. Adam Neder
Upper Anderson

Wednesday, December 4 at
3:00pm
Christmas Tea at PHC

SAVE THE DATE:
Fall 2025
Conference: Missions in a
Changing World



Dr. Adam Neder Headlines 2024 Distinguished Lecture on the Reformation



Acclaimed teacher and insightful theologian Adam Neder will be the featured speaker for the 2024 Distinguished Lecture on the Reformation. Dr. Neder was recently appointed Professor of Theology and Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences at Belmont University in Nashville.

Prior to his Belmont appointment, he was the Bruner-Welch Chair in Theology at Whitworth University, where he won numerous teaching awards. He was voted most influential professor four times by Whitworth senior classes.

Dr. Neder is the author of *Theology As a Way of Life: On Teaching and Learning the Christian Faith* and *Participation in Christ: An Entry Into Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics*. He is currently editing a book for Baylor University Press titled *Teaching Theology: Essays Personal and Theological*

in which many of the world's best theologians and biblical scholars offer theological reflections on the art of teaching theology.

He has contributed numerous essays to various books and encyclopedias, and his work has appeared in journals and magazines including *The Scottish Journal of Theology*, *The International Journal of Systematic Theology*, and *Christianity Today*.

He received his M.Div. and Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary. He and his wife Janet have a deep affection for Montreat.

The 2024 Distinguished Lecture on the Reformation will be held on **October 25th at 7:00 pm in Upper Anderson**. Please make plans to attend and hear Dr. Neder.

Volunteer Support in 2023

Over 100 individuals donated their time to the PHC during 2023 in a wide variety of projects. Members of the Heritage Council were the backbone of the 2023 Meet and Greet winter gatherings, the Ice Cream Social, the Montreat Tour of Homes, the Dessert Reception for the 2023 Distinguished Lecture, and the Christmas Tea.



Volunteers also led Montreat Walking Tours and helped the PHC staff in other areas. We are incredibly grateful for all who contributed their talent and time to the PHC this past year.

Thank YOU for a Record Year of Giving!

2023 Contributions

We are extremely grateful to our donors who made 2023 a record year of giving to the PHC. In total, more than \$444,000 was donated to the annual Heritage Fund, the Endowment Fund, and special designations.

The Heritage Fund, which is the operating fund, received \$285,640. Unfortunately, income to the Heritage Fund did not cover operating expenses, resulting in a deficit of approximately \$28,000.

We will be working to increase support to the Heritage Fund to sustain PHC operations.

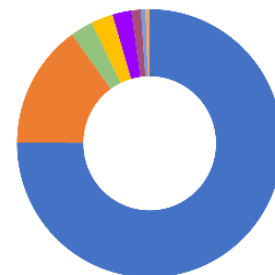
On the positive side, we received gifts to the PHC Endowment Fund of \$117,200, a record amount, bringing the total Endowment Fund to more than \$225,000 in less than three years.

We also received designated gifts totaling more than \$41,000 for infrastructure development, transition, and special events.

We greatly appreciate your generous support and look forward to seeing you at the PHC in 2024.

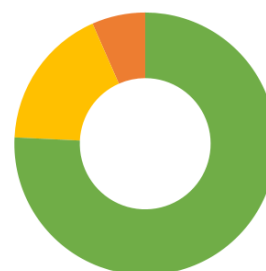
Income 2023

- Individuals (75.1%)
- Foundations & Trusts (15%)
- Churches (2.7%)
- Events (2.7%)
- Other (2.3%)
- Endowment (1.2%)
- Montreat Orgs. (<1%)
- Synods & Presbyteries (<1%)



Expenses 2023

- Programming (76%)
- Administration (18%)
- Fundraising (7%)



Legacy Giving Program to Launch in 2024

Later this year, the PHC will launch a legacy giving program which, along with the Endowment Fund, will help sustain the PHC for years to come.

A legacy gift is a planned gift of your estate. It can be realized currently or upon your death through gifts of retirement plan assets, insurance policies, or a designated gift in your will or trust. It is an excellent option to conserve current cash assets yet continue supporting the PHC in its goal of "Honoring the Past, Informing the Present, and Influencing the Future."

Legacy gifts typically contribute to the Endowment Fund, but can be designated for special purposes. Montreat residents and PHC friends Kitty Fouche and Dan Dean are heading up two committees working on this effort.

More details will follow in coming newsletters and communications as the plans for this important initiative unfold. In the meantime, please consider the PHC Endowment Fund in your estate planning and legacy giving.

Please email info@phcmontreat.org if you have any questions about the PHC Endowment Fund or planned giving.



Total Endowment Gifts

\$100,000+

Letta Jean & Skip Taylor

\$75,000 - \$99,999

Amy & Mason Blake

\$10,000 - \$24,999

Judy & Gene Shuford

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Eloise & Steve Shepherd

\$2,500 - \$4,999

Jane & Hugh Alexander
Alva & Ida Whitehead

\$1,000 - \$2,499

Kitty Fouche
Judy & Scott Gregory
Lila & Richard Ray
Kathleen & Tom Widmer

\$500 - \$999

Beth Fountain

\$1 - \$499

Kay & Dennis Stockdale
Lorenzo Small

2023 Heritage Fund Annual Giving

We are extremely grateful to all 2023 contributors to the Heritage Fund, the major funding source for the PHC. The Heritage Fund received a total of \$285,640 in unrestricted gifts and \$41,211 in designated gifts from individual supporters and organizations.



Our important work would not be possible without all of you!

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Cousins Foundation
Letta Jean & Skip Taylor

Calvin Society

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**The PHC honors the past,
 informs the present, and
 influences the future.**

As one donor said, "I give to the PHC because it is helpful to the church to learn from the past in order to do its mission today."

Please consider a gift to the PHC this year. To give:

- Mail a check to PHC at PO Box 207, Montreat, NC 28757
- Make a QCD from your IRA
- Donate online at www.phcmontreat.org/give or scan the QR code:



I'd like to support the PHC in the amount of:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Witherspoon Society | \$2,500 - \$4,999 |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Celtic Circle | \$100 - \$499 |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other Amount | \$ _____ |

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