

Richmond County Historical Society

'Those who don't remember their ancestors don't deserve to be remembered!'

April 2018 Newsletter



Tom Morgan



**Surveyor's transit, Leak-Wall House,
donated by G. R. Kindley**

Trying to find old family property boundaries? Morgan may help you.

Tom Morgan, professional surveyor, will present a program April 16 at 7 p.m., Rockingham City Hall, for the Richmond County Historical Society.

His subject will be on how families can research historical land boundaries through using a power point presentation.

In August 2016, Morgan retired from the N.C. of Site Lands Records Program.

That year he and his wife, Susan M. McCaskill a native of Moore County, moved to Hoffman to remodel his uncle's homeplace there.

Morgan graduated from N.C. State University in 1971 and has been active in the surveying profession since, being licensed in 1978. In 1979 he began Brunswick Surveying selling it in 2006. In January 2008, Morgan joined the staff of the N.C. Secretary of State as Land Records Manager.

He retired in August 2016. That year he was appointed to a 4-year term as chairman of the N.C. Secretary of State Land Records Advisory Council. Prior to that he received the "Surveyor of the Year" Award from the N.C. Society of Surveyors in 1997 and 2000, and then the National Society of Professional Surveyors "Surveying Excellence Award in 2001. (See Page 2)

Tom has joined several organizations in the county. Susan is an active member of the Rockingham First Presbyterian Handbell Choir. Both wish to become more involved meeting more individuals in the community.

Batman jumps at county airport

With WWII ending, the Rockingham-Hamlet Airport was given over to civilian use. In August 1945, it was announced that Congress had allotted \$75,000 for improvements at the airport 100 feet wide.

"This work is to be finished this fall and several airline companies have already applied for franchises to make our airport a regular stop for the transportation of passengers and mail," reported the Hamlet News-Messenger.

On November 27, 1946, it was announced that the dedication would be held Sunday at the Rockingham-Hamlet Airport. It was hoped that in the future "much of the mail, freight and express will be shipped by air," Rockingham Mayor William G. Pittman said.

On December 1, 1946, the new public airport was dedicated. Some 8,000 people driving some 2,000 cars attended the ceremony and viewed the "thrilling air circus." The main attraction was said to be the drawing for a new Ford vehicle, \$800 worth of furniture and 100 other "valuable" prizes. Raffle tickets were \$2 each.

Thrilling Circus

"Bevo" Howard and his acrobatic circus provided "plenty of thrills." Jack Aley of Station WAYN was there to broadcast the events. Profits of \$10,000 from the drawing were for the benefit of the Memorial Hospital fund.

The Rockingham Post-Dispatch on November 19, 1947, reported "Air Show Coming" in a headline to announce the coming November 27 of "Grady Thrasher's Aerial Circus" as a modern version of the old-time hair-raising flying circus days.

Grady's brother, Bud, had an act where Grady picked up Bud from the running board of a car and "...fly around the field while he is suspended by means of a rope ladder, then put him back on the car." Admission was \$1.

Again on July 9 the Nation's Best Air Show appeared at the Rockingham-Hamlet Airport for "12 spectacular events" including Batman Parachute Jumps, Airplane Picks Up Man from Top of Auto, and High Speed Aerobatics featuring professional stunt pilots "direct from 1950 Miami Air Maneuvers." Admission was still \$1 with children free if accompanied by a parent.