Terry Reece, nephew of Byron Herbert Reece, will be the keynote speaker at the Reece Society’s 11th annual meeting on Saturday, May 31st. The meeting will be held at the Reece Farm and Heritage Center and will begin at 10:00 a.m. in the pavilion.

A business session of the Society membership will be conducted, including the election of a slate of directors for the 2014-2015 membership year. For entertainment, Jerry Taylor will present a brief musical program featuring his portable organ. Jerry is a master organist and is the owner of some 31 organs of various types and time periods. The meeting will conclude with a catered lunch at the pavilion, followed by an opportunity for attendees to visit the Welcome Center and the exhibits area of the Farm.

Terry Reece was 10 years old when Byron Reece died, and he has fond memories of his uncle and his visits to the Reece family home place. In terms of his life’s work, he has an interesting background in law enforcement and nursing, having earned a bachelor’s degree in both business administration and nursing. We eagerly wait his address and his reflections about his famous uncle. Those who have heard Terry previously already know that we are in for a treat.

A special mailing will be sent in early May regarding this meeting. This will include vital information and a registration form. Please make your plans now to join us for this annual gathering and celebration.
The Byron Herbert Reece Society (BHRS) has established the first-ever Bettie Sellers Poetry Contest to recognize the Georgia Poet Laureate (1997-2000) and longtime faculty member of Young Harris College. Bettie Sellers, the author of *Wild Ginger, Liza’s Monday and Other Poems, Spring Onions and Cornbread, Morning of the Red Tailed Hawk, and The Bitter Berry: The Life of Byron Herbert Reece*, taught at YHC for 32 years, was an expert on Byron Herbert Reece, and a charter member of the BHRS.

Entry fee is $5 for three poems. Details and entry form are found here: [http://ByronHerbertReeceSociety.wordpress.com/2014/01/13/bettie-sellers-poetry-contest-2014/](http://ByronHerbertReeceSociety.wordpress.com/2014/01/13/bettie-sellers-poetry-contest-2014/). Note that the deadline for postmark is Friday, May 2nd.

The winner of the contest will receive $300, and the winning poem will be published on the Byron Herbert Reece Society website.


How Will Our Garden Grow?

The Reece Farm and Heritage Center will this year begin to look more like a farm as we plan to have a vegetable garden in the space below the Welcome Center. Already a plot has been tilled, and soon we expect to see rows laid off and seeds and plants put in the good earth. The Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapter in Union County High School, under the direction of their sponsor/teacher John Petitt, has agreed to plant and tend the garden. The vegetables to be planted are yet to be determined, but most certainly we will see corn in the mix - if for no other reason than to honor Reece's poem "I Know a Valley Green with Corn."

**IN MEMORIAM**

**Rodney McCombs**
8/3/1933 - 9/13/2013

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**Ondee Ravan**
6/11/1927 - 1/23/2014
Coming Soon, Farm Tour App

Through the efforts of many folks, including Larry Garrett of Union County government, Yvonne Jouffrault (Tour Buddy Apps), Fleming Weaver, John Kay, Cheryl Smith, Pete Smith, and Debra March, the Byron Herbert Reece Farm & Heritage Center will now have an app (available through the iTunes store) that will allow visitors to tour the farm and its exhibits and sites while listening to Dr. Kay’s descriptions, intermingled with the music from Jim Clark’s “The Service of Song” CD.

The Tour begins with an introduction, followed by stops at the Welcome Center, Poetry Plaza, Mulberry Hall, the Main Barn and surrounding farm structures, Wolf Creek, and the Pavilion. Other information on the app includes a history of the Reece Family, history of the area, and an overview of surrounding towns. One aspect of the app is a list of surrounding attractions and lodging. It’s not very populated yet, as plans are to solicit a small fee from these tourism entities to help pay for the annual fee associated with keeping the app up to date with technology. Yvonne will be working on submitting the app to iTunes during the week of April 7th. It will take a week or so to go through the process, then it will be available to the public to download at no cost.

If you download the app and see something that needs correcting, added or changed, please let me know (Cheryl Smith, csmith@georgia.org). We’ll be able to make changes to everything EXCEPT the Farm Tour. I can also update the photos if someone has any that are better than what we are using.

--Cheryl Smith

Time for Membership Renewals

If you are not one of our 129 lifetime members, you will need soon to renew your membership for the June 1, 2014 – May 31, 2015 year.

The cost of an annual membership remains $25 for an individual or $45 for a family unit. Students at any level can join for $10. Lifetime memberships are $250 for the individual or $400 for a couple.

We continue to rely on memberships as a primary means of support for our various programs and activities, so your renewals are very much appreciated. A membership form can be downloaded from our website, or a form for renewal will be included in our annual meeting mailing.

Please send your completed form and check made out to BHRS to P. O. Box 811, Young Harris, GA 30582.
A DAY TO PRETEND

By Ann Reece Douglass

Little boys’ dreams and a creative mind
Exciting treasures he’s sure to find
While traveling along a dusty road
Or nearing a field recently hoed

A day to pretend that the world is his own
And filled with great dreams his young heart has sewn
Skillfully swinging the stick in his hand
While playing a game of kick the can

This precious child, so young indeed
Exploring the world, planting the seed
The farmland beauty and simple life
Visions and dreams free from all strife

A day to pretend is a special day
With memories forever tucked away
Capturing youth and the beauty within
Embracing the time it takes to pretend

Landscaping at Bridge

Thanks to Shirley Cole and her landscaping company we now have additional areas of flowering shrubs and other plants located in and around the vicinity of the pedestrian bridge. Shirley has kindly donated the plants as well as the labor required for the plantings. The only cost to the Society has been for the amendments to the soil. Truman Barrett of Rock Hill Farms, Inc. contributed 50 bags of compost for this project. We are grateful to both Shirley and Truman for these pro bono services.
In the years of planning and hard work that preceded the opening of the Byron Herbert Reece Farm and Heritage Center, Dr. John Kay and other leaders of the Byron Herbert Reece Society entertained a vision of a family friendly walking trail that would connect the new facility to Vogel State Park. Several preliminary meetings were held with the US Forest Service (USFS) to discuss a possible route for a trail that would involve Forest Service property bordering U.S. Highway 129. In December of 2011, a potential trail route was explored and flagged. This route was refined in December 2012 by a group representing the BHR Society, the city of Blairsville, the Blairsville – Union County Appalachian Trail Advisory Committee, the Southeastern Foot Trails Coalition, the USFS Blue Ridge Ranger District, Mountain High Hikers (MHH), Vogel State Park, and the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club.

Over the first several months of 2013, enthusiastic letters of support were obtained from Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris, the Byron Herbert Reece Society, Young Harris College, Vogel State Park, the Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center of UGA, the Blairsville Downtown Development Authority, and the Blairsville – Union County AT Community Advisory Committee. Most importantly, a letter of commitment was obtained from Michael O’Brien, President of MHH, to provide trail maintenance support by MHH volunteers for the proposed trail after its completion.

Additional meetings were held in 2013 and early 2014 with representatives of the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), Commissioner Paris, and Blue Ridge District Ranger Andy Baker to study the safety of the proposed road crossing for the trail near the north end of Vogel’s Lake Trahlyta. In late April 2013, Reid Dyer completed and submitted the formal written proposal for the trail following the format and requirements established by CoTrails (www.cotrails.org). CoTrails is a Forest Service initiative to foster collaboration among all trail users and maintaining groups. It provides a rational and consistent framework for approving new trails. In several follow up meetings between CoTrails and the USFS during the summer of 2013, the proposal was evaluated and prioritized, with the final decision resting with the Forest Service.

As a result of this process, the proposal has now made it on to the list of approved new trail projects in the USFS Blue Ridge Ranger District, pending approval by GDOT, a formal environmental impact review, and identification of the resources for actual trail construction.

The good news is that most of the hurdles have been overcome and there is reason to hope that trail construction could begin in late 2014 or early 2015.

--Dayton Miller
YHC Day at the Farm

Some 60 members of the Young Harris College faculty, administration, support staff, and student body enjoyed a special visitation and celebration at the Reece Farm and Heritage Center on Saturday, March 22.

Attendees gathered in the pavilion on a cool, early spring day, where they were treated to musical entertainment by Butternut Creek and Friends and a delicious lunch provided by the College’s Center for Appalachian Studies and Community Engagement. Afterwards many of the group visited the Welcome Center and toured the venue exhibits. All agreed that it was a wonderful time of fellowship, as well as an opportunity to learn more about his life as both a farmer and writer of one of YHC’s most famous alumni.

Many thanks to Rob Campbell of the Center for Appalachian Studies for his collaboration in planning this event.

Special Recognitions

Mike and Patti Konkel of Blairsville have donated to the Reece Center a beautiful handmade lectern in loving memory of their son, Darrin Jon. Inscribed on the lectern are these words: “A Son is part of your life, your world, your heart, Forever.” This lectern is located in the museum area of the Welcome Center but will be moved to the pavilion for special programs. We thank the Konkels for this lovely and useful gift.

In appreciation of their generous gift of the grand piano, the Reece Society is dedicating the Reece Gallery and Theater in the loft of the big barn in honor of Terry and Cheryl White. The dedicatory plaque will read: GALLERY EXHIBITS DEDICATED IN HONOR OF TERRY AND CHERYL WHITE. We continue to be grateful to the Whites for their major contribution to our mission.

Some years ago Maurice Farabee and his wife Ann donated to the Reece Society a print of John Kollock’s painting of the Reece Farm Homeplace. We have now framed the print and will display it in a prominent place among our exhibits. Our heartfelt and belated thanks to Maurice for this gift.

The Institute for Continuing Learning at Young Harris College (ICL@YHC) has given the Reece Center a check in the amount of $4,000 for the express purpose of honoring in some distinctive fashion the memory of Bettie Mixon Sellers. A decision has been made to develop a memorial center behind the main barn along Wolf Creek. This will be a place for study, special activities, writing, or quiet contemplation. Our architect Garland Reynolds will soon design the features of this center. We are grateful to ICL for this generous gift in memory of one of the Society’s most influential and contributing members.
For the first time we have a committee to implement special events at the Byron Herbert Reece Farm & Heritage Center. We are a small group and we need assistance from our members to make these programs successful. We are asking for more people for this committee. If you know resource people who can help us or you would like to plan a program for us, PLEASE let us know by contacting us. The following are the programs we have planned, but we need help. These events and dates are TENTATIVE, so please contact the Center to make sure these events are being held. We can build much more support and attendance through special programming. We hope you can be a part of that. Thank you.

**PROGRAMMING PLANS/NEEDS**

**May 10, 2014:** Spinning the Old Fashioned Way - Cathryn Washell, a master spinner, will demonstrate this craft, and visitors will also be given the opportunity to spin their own yarn.

**June 28, 2014:** Mountain Herbs & Remedies - Resource people who grow or collect mountain herbs and wild edibles who can speak knowledgeably to groups of people; display of mountain herbs, remedies, and edibles.

**July 19, 2014:** Vintage Car and Motorcycle Show - Automobile/Motorcycle Club willing to show and talk to visitors about their vintage vehicles; a historian familiar with the construction of US 129 over Neel’s Gap and the history of roads in Union County.

**August 23, 2014:** Farmer’s Harvest - Contributions of meals made from fresh local harvest; volunteers to serve meals, make tomato sandwiches, and collect money from food sales; bluegrass entertainment.

**September 13, 2014:** Twilight Concert at the Farm - A concert band familiar with the classics and the favorite classical music of Byron Herbert Reece will honor the poet, exactly one day before Reece’s 97th birthday.

**November 29-30, 2014:** Christmas Open House - Basic natural decorations, food service volunteers.

--Ken Akins, Chair, Reece Farm Special Events Committee
Kakins025@windstream.net

“We are a small group and we need assistance from our members to make these programs successful.”
Reece Farm Opens for Third Season

On Thursday, April 3, the Reece Farm and Heritage Center opened its gates wide for another season of public visitation and on-site activities. The Center will remain open through November on Thursdays through Saturdays from 10:00 to 5:00 and on Sundays from 1:00 to 5:00.

Thursdays will be free admission days, while a modest charge of $3.00 will apply on other days for persons age 12 and older. Reece Society members will be admitted free on all days. There is no charge to anyone to visit the Welcome Center gift shop and museum.

Society members should note that the Board of Directors recently voted to cancel the 10% discount previously given to them on non-consignment items.

We welcome back Dawn Scarbrough as our gift shop manager. Please plan to drop by for a visit, and remember to invite your neighbors and friends to do the same.