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## NEWS August 2014

### A BLOOM FROM HISTORY



As you stroll along the path in the gardens at the east (Lake Lure) end of the bridge, you will see the blooming Franklin tree, a wonderful reminder of how dedicated botanists have saved important American species from extinction.

Discovered by botanists John Bartram (1699-1777) and son, William (1739-1823) in a small grove along Georgia's Altamaha River in 1765, this tree was named in honor of their friend, Benjamin Franklin. A member of the tea family, its white flowers bloom in late August and may continue blooming as its leaves change to red in October.

The Franklin Tree, or *lost camellia*, disappeared completely from the wild by 1803. Only through the efforts of the Bartrams did this truly native American plant survive. All cultivated plants in existence today descend from one or more of their collected specimens.

### WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE GARDENS TO SHARE WITH VISITORS? JOIN US TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2 AT 10:30 AM

Come to the Lake Lure Visitor Center Tuesday, September 2 at 10:30 AM as we offer training for ambassadors and docents led by Kathy Tanner. The training is not only for docents, those of us with enough knowledge to lead organized tours of the bridge, but also for ambassadors, those of us who chat informally with visitors to the bridge and answer their questions when we are working as volunteers. If you have already taken the training, you are welcome to do so again.

Please let Alice Garrard know via e-mail at [alicegrrrd@gmail.com](mailto:alicegrrrd@gmail.com) that you plan to attend so that she and Danny can assemble enough information packets for everyone. If you've already contacted her, there's no need to do so again. We do ask groups requesting docent-led tours for a donation of \$5 per person.

### PLANTER PRESENTATIONS TUESDAYS AT 11:00 AM



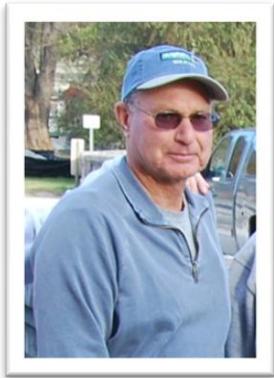
Terry Ashley (right) talks succulents (Photo by Sandra Nelson)

Each of our garden beds has a chairperson, someone who pays special attention to the bed and its plants and shares information about its care with other volunteers. Now volunteers can come to the LLFB Tuesdays at 11:00 AM for a 20-minute presentation. Each Tuesday a planter chairman will share information about his/her particular garden planter, including plant identification, pruning and potential diseases and pests. The chairperson will also answer questions. These sessions are open to anyone who is interested.

This Month we honor two men whose significant volunteer efforts have created and maintained the infrastructure of the bridge and gardens. Our "two C's," Chuck and Charlie are always willing do whatever it takes to get the job done, whether by leading others or doing it themselves. We salute them!



## VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH: CHARLIE YELTON



*One of the founding members of the LLFB and a Board member of the Friends of LLFB from its beginning, Charlie is the "go-to guy" that everyone relies on. In addition to leading the Infrastructure Committee, he built the two benches that fit into the stonework along the bridge*

*walkway. He has led the team of volunteers that have developed and continue to maintain the irrigation and electrical systems in the gardens. His grinning good humor brightens our days!*

Charlie's story: Charlie Yelton is a native of Rutherford County. He graduated from North Carolina State University with an Engineering Degree, and he served in the United States Navy for four years, fourteen months of that in Viet Nam. He and his daddy owned and operated Yelton's Garage in Rutherfordton for many years.

Currently serving as Chairperson of the Rutherford County Habitat for Humanity Board of Directors, Charlie also serves on the Monday Habitat work crew. He is also an active member of Rutherfordton First United Methodist Church.

He and his wife Emily have two sons, two daughters-in-law, and two grandsons. They moved permanently to Lake Lure in 1998 after living in Rutherfordton for 25 years. Charlie and Chuck Watkins have co-chaired the LLFB infrastructure committee.

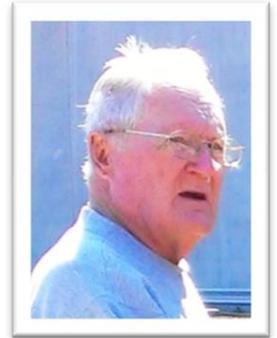
Charlie says: *I am very grateful to be honored along with my buddy Chuck, but we could not have completed all that has been done without the able help of Ed Dittmer and Kenneth Tanner. I have enjoyed my work on the bridge and making friends with all the great people involved with the project.*



## VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH: CHUCK WATKINS

As we also celebrate volunteer and LLFB Board member Chuck Watkins this month, Sandra Nelson says of him: *Chuck has worked diligently under all kinds of weather, installing water and electrical lines, lighting and basically anything else on our 'need to have' list. He has done all this and more with a positive attitude and a smile on his handsome face. No job is too small or large for this amazing octogenarian!*

Chuck's story: A snowy, windy 20° day February 14, 1932 in Bath, New York, accompanied the arrival of Elwyn Charles Watkins to the George Watkins Family. To boot, the birth was breach and the baby preferred a wet nurse.



Chuck spent his first nineteen years on an upstate New York farm providing him an environment of animal pets, 4-H club, sports galore, church activities and lots of work all associated with two loving parents, five sisters and three brothers plus endless relatives.

High school included a round of sports and band activities. However, he lost his senior year of schooling having contracted polio and spent six months in a reconstruction home.

After graduation he attended Alfred University graduating with a BS in Ceramic Engineering. Meeting his wife, Joselyn Watkins, at Alfred he considers the high point of his life. The couple has four children: Clay, a veterinarian in Charlotte; Laura, a Baptist Minister; Leslie who has an art business; and Melanie who is a CPA. They have 10 grandchildren and one great grandchild. The Watkins just celebrated 60 years of marriage. They have served together on more than four mission trips for various agencies.

In Chuck's words: *My working career provided the opportunity for the family to live in Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and North Carolina mostly associated with glass manufacturing. Also, this led to world-wide travel solving industrial problems and provided me with very interesting adventures for a "down on the farm boy."*

*Our utopia ended up at Lake Lure, North Carolina living and enjoying the mountains and lake. Activities here have involved tennis, pickle ball, the fire department, town government, church activities, Helping Neighbors and the Flowering Bridge. All of this has included knowing and fellow-shiping with the "cream of the crop" friends. I call this the "good life".*



## SPECIAL THANK YOU TO LINDA'S PLANTS FOR THEIR GIFTS TO THE LLFB GARDENS



We are very grateful this month to Linda's Plants for their gift of four loads of flowers that we used to freshen our gardens. We received many annuals and lots of color, including some New Guinea impatiens, asparagus fern, Persian Shield, blue lobelia, lots of petunias, silver frost, and verbena. We also got fuchsia and mandevilla. This generous donation from Linda's Plants allowed us to spruce up the east and west gardens, our hanging baskets, and to plant four new chairs and two rocking chairs that were donated to us recently! Please join us in thanking the very kind folks at Linda's when you stop by their location on US 64 between Lake Lure and Hendersonville. You can access their website at:

[lindasplants.com](http://lindasplants.com)

*Roses adorn the balustrade above the river's gleaming surface.*



All photos not otherwise credited in this issue are by Mike Lumpkin.



## THE BIRDS AND THE BEES AND SO MUCH MORE

A walk through the LLFB gardens is filled with an abundance of nature that is part of our ecosystem in the Hickory Nut Gorge. This area, known for its biodiversity, is said to be home to 37 rare species of plants and 14 rare animal species. We're doing our part to provide a happy habitat for the birds and the bees, as well as butterflies and moths.

Many birds summer in the Hickory Nut Gorge, attracted by our prolific deciduous trees. Our birds include many types of warblers and vireos, but people have also sighted bald eagles along Lake Lure and have seen Peregrine falcons speeding around the rock faces of our mountains. The red blossoms in the LLFB gardens attract hummingbirds, tiny but fierce in protecting the territory around a favorite food source. Birdwatchers will find this a birder's paradise.



Bees have also found our blooming bridge. We welcome them as they buzz about, collecting pollen and playing their vitally important role in our food supply chain. Butterflies and moths abound. They, like the birds and bees, are attracted to the area by our native plants, and spend lots of time fluttering around the plants in the LLFB gardens.

### *Kid's Korner*

