

# Saxe Gotha Dispatch

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## Friends of the Museum to Focus on Strategic Plan at 2024 Fundraiser

The Friends of the Lexington County Museum are pleased to announce they will be holding their annual fundraiser gala at 6:00 pm on Saturday April 20.

Unlike last year, this year's fundraiser will take place on the grounds of the museum (231 Fox Street Lexington). Tickets will be \$60 in advance and \$65 at the door.

Sponsorship opportunities, which range from \$150 to \$2500, are available and are tax-deductible. Your ticket allows you to:

- Learn more about the future goals of the museum.

- Hear wonderful music provided by the Lexington Trio



- Enjoy dinner and drinks. This year we're pleased to announce that Shealy's BBQ will be providing dinner.

- Bid on silent auction items, ranging from zoo tickets to Blowfish tickets to gift certificates from your favorite Lexington businesses.

All funds raised will go to assist the museum in meeting the goals set forth by the new

strategic plan and the enhancement of exhibits.

Donations are tax-deductible. To learn more about the gala or to find out how to become a sponsor, just give the museum a call at 803-359-8369. You may also purchase tickets or sponsorships here: <http://lexingtoncountymuseum.org/get-involved/>.

## Museum Past and Upcoming Outreach Efforts

Museum staff members continue to speak to various groups about the museum and the history of the county. Over the past few months, museum employees have spoken to Laurel Crest Retirement Home, the Lexington Main Library, Pinpoint Community, Gilbert-Summit Library, the Columbia

Antique Study Guild and others.

In the future, museum staff will speak to the Lexington County Main Library, Laurel Crest Retirement Home, and the Gilbert Summit Library.

If you'd like to have a museum staff member speak to your group either virtually or in-

person, don't hesitate to give us a call. We can speak on a variety of topics related to the museum, the county, and its history. Some of the most popular topics include the quilts and other artifacts from the Dutch Fork, Lexington County-made rifles, and the history of alcohol in Lexington County.

## Introducing our Cataloging Communities Project

Over the course of the last year, the Lexington County Museum has been engaged in ongoing work to identify people enslaved in this county prior to 1865. We can now identify over 1400 individuals held in bondage in Lexington County. This list has been compiled into a resource with complete source citations for researchers. We also see this project as a way to help connect people with their enslaved ancestors. Each person is listed in our index with reference to the names of their children, husband/wife, and the name of their enslaver. With this ongoing work we hope to bring attention to the people who have not previously had their history readily available to researchers.

The project found its beginnings in two different areas of research. First, a review of the John Fox Papers held here at the Museum, as well as Duke University and the University of South Carolina, provided a wealth of information about the local community. In particular, Fox, an enslaver of a fairly large number of people by Lexington County standards, kept unusually detailed records in which we find not only seventy six people enslaved in his household, but small bits and pieces of information about people held in bondage by other families in Lexington as well.

Second was the work done by Paul Stoetzel, a professional genealogist employed by the Museum as a Historical Interpreter. Prior to coming to the Museum, Paul had conducted about one hundred and fifty research projects. Only about half a dozen of these had been for people descended from slaves, but those few projects all had one thing in common: they became exceedingly difficult to research as the clock was turned back before 1870. Each time, Paul asked colleagues if there was any single resource a researcher could consult to find names of people held in slavery. The answer was not just a “no,” but a “no” delivered with incredulity that such a question might be asked.

Since the review of the John Fox Papers was proof that such information was out there waiting to be seen, the logical answer to that “no” was to collect the data all in one place. To be clear, the information is not hidden, but rather is simply not organized in such a way as to make it easy to identify. Property records exist, but typically are indexed by the names of the buyer and seller, and almost never by the names of enslaved people being bought and sold. Probate files containing wills are almost entirely non-existent prior to 1865. Court records contain a wealth of information, but again, are indexed by the legally recognized parties. This means that it is a rare case indeed where a name can be typed into a search field on *Ancestry* or *Family Search* and a result returned with anything of real value to descendants of those slaves.

For example, a researcher who finds that they are descended from Isaac and Lucinda Walker can locate the Walker family in the 1870 Census, but will likely find no reference to them prior to that. The Lexington County Museum, however, has in its possession a draft copy of the Will of Christian Frank (the official version was lost in the 1865 fire), which includes the Walker family by name and includes enough information about them to verify they are the same family found in 1870. Using this record, not indexed on publicly searchable databases, that same researcher would find that their ancestors had been enslaved by a local shoemaker who owned a shop on Main Street. A quick review of the information opens up entire new avenues for research, and allows the Walkers’ descendants to paint new pictures of their lives.

While the work continues, as of this publication we now have over fourteen hundred people who can now begin to tell their story, even if in just the tiniest of details. The catalog is available for researchers by appointment. It can also be viewed as part of a tour or at our upcoming Spring Open House.

# Friends of the Lexington County Museum Sponsorship Application

## Sponsorship for “Moving Forward” Museum Fund-Raiser Gala:

<u>      </u> <b>Diamond Donor</b>	<b>\$2500</b>	<b>(\$1660 tax deductible)</b>	<b>Includes 14 tickets</b>
<u>      </u> <b>Platinum Donor</b>	<b>\$1000</b>	<b>(\$400 tax deductible)</b>	<b>Includes 10 tickets</b>
<u>      </u> <b>Gold Donor</b>	<b>\$500</b>	<b>(\$140 tax deductible)</b>	<b>Includes 6 tickets</b>
<u>      </u> <b>Silver Donor</b>	<b>\$250</b>	<b>(\$10 tax deductible)</b>	<b>Includes 4 tickets</b>
<u>      </u> <b>Bronze Donor</b>	<b>\$150</b>	<b>(\$30 tax deductible)</b>	<b>Includes 2 tickets</b>

**Name of Donor (as you want it to appear)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Contact Person (if different from above)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail** \_\_\_\_\_

**Amount Enclosed \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Make Checks payable to Friends of the Lexington County Museum, P. O. Box 637, Lexington, SC 29071**

## Museum Visitation in January and February 2024

Visitation usually slows down after the holidays and this year was no different.

saw 328 visitors, including tourists from ten states other than SC as well as France and Germany.

Lexington Counties come out for field trips.

In January, 201 visitors came to the museum, including visitors from eight states other than SC as well as Albania. In February, the museum

The number of school groups visiting the museum decreased as well. We had various public and private groups from Richland and

## Museum to Host Annual Herb Fest

Join the Lexington County Herb Bunch on Saturday, April 6th from 9 am to 3 pm for the 12th Annual "It's All About Herbs" Festival at the Lexington County Museum. Festival admission is free for all. Activities include a plant sale with many varieties of herbs, vegetables, herb and plant related vendors, food vendors, and free herb mini-demonstrations. A tour of the grounds will be offered at 1 pm as well.

The Herb Fest is great for anyone who has an interest in gardening, cooking, or is just interested in learning more about herbs. Parking will be available in the museum's two lots (one on Fox Street and one off of Columbia Avenue) and along the museum's picket fence on Fox Street. Please refrain from parking in front of our neighbors' houses. For more information call the museum at 803-359-8369.





## Museum to Host Murders and Mysteries Tour in Lexington

The Lexington County Museum will offer its free “Murders and Mysteries” walking tour of downtown Lexington on May 3rd starting at 8 pm. This tour is a great way to learn about the history of the town and the buildings downtown and hear some very interesting stories along the way. Attendees will learn about some of the murders, trials, and other crimes that occurred on Lexington’s Main Street in the 19th and early 20th centuries. This free tour will begin at the town’s Icehouse Amphitheater and will last about an hour. Attendees will follow a guide between Church Street and South Lake Drive. Because of the mature subject matter, attendees must be 18 or over or have parental permission. This event is offered at no cost and no reservations are needed. For more information or questions, please call the museum at 803-359-8369 or email us at [museum@lex-co.com](mailto:museum@lex-co.com)





## Museum Calendar of Events

- April 6      “It’s All About Herbs” Herb Festival  
9 am to 3 pm  
Free to attend  
Lexington County Museum Complex  
Activities include a plant sale with many varieties of herbs, herb and plant related vendors, food vendors, free herb mini-demonstrations, seminars, and a silent auction.
- April 26      “Murders and Mysteries” West Columbia Walking Tour  
8 pm  
Tour begins at the Riverwalk Amphitheater  
109 Alexander Road West Columbia, SC  
Free to the public  
Attendees will learn about some of the spookier and more gruesome aspects of West Columbia’s history as we will discuss murders, crimes, and mysteries that occurred on or near State Street. Because of the mature subject matter, we ask that attendees be 18 or over or have parental permission.
- May 3      “Murders and Mysteries” Lexington Walking Tour  
8 pm  
Tour begins at the Icehouse Amphitheater  
107 West Main Street Lexington, SC  
Free to the public  
Attendees will learn about some of the spookier and more gruesome aspects of Lexington’s history as we will discuss murders, crimes, and mysteries that occurred on or near Main Street. Because of the mature subject matter, we ask that attendees be 18 or over or have parental permission.
- May 5      Spring Open House  
2 pm to 5 pm  
Free to attend  
Lexington County Museum Complex  
231 Fox Street Lexington, SC  
The public is invited to see the historic structures at the museum. Children will be able to participate in a scavenger hunt. The Open House will also feature demonstrations of historic crafts such as blacksmithing. Light refreshments will be served.

# Lexington County Museum

231 Fox Street  
Lexington, SC 29072

Phone 803-359-8369  
Fax 803-808-2160  
E-mail museum@lex-co.com

## A Story Behind Every Door

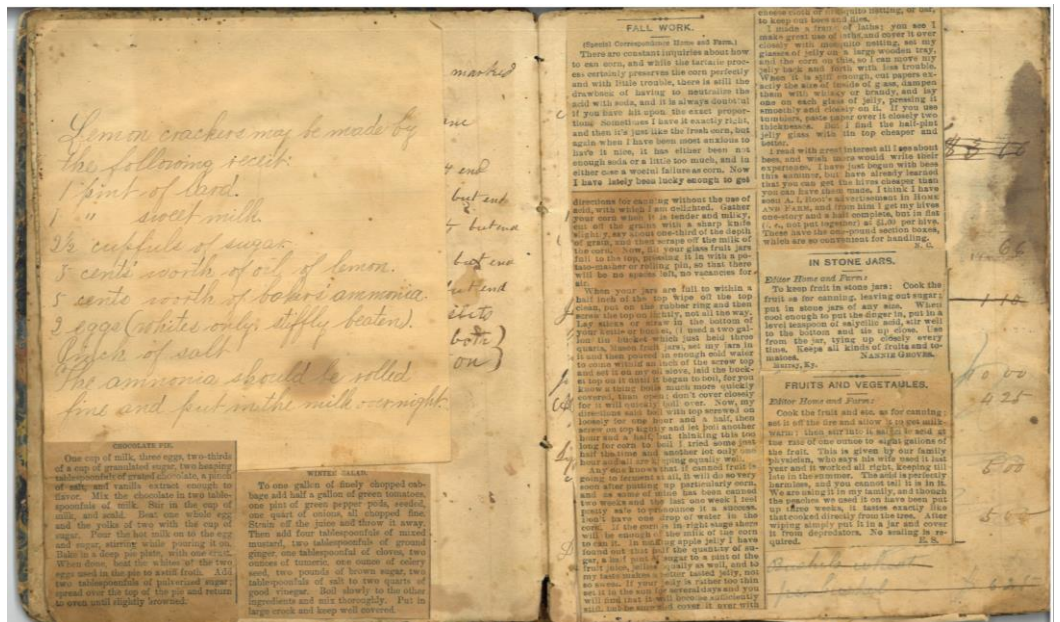


The Lexington County Museum was started in 1970 to collect, preserve and present the history of Lexington County. After initially having only one historic house, the museum expanded and now has thirty historic structures over seven acres in downtown Lexington. Through exhibits in historic houses, the museum interprets everyday life in the town of Lexington and throughout Lexington County from the eighteenth century to the start of the Civil War. The museum offers guided tours to visitors for a small fee and has thirteen different hands-on programs for school groups free of charge by appointment. These programs attract schools from around the state and educate students about the history of Lexington County and about the everyday life of Lexington County residents in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The Friends of the Lexington County Museum is a non-profit group founded in 1997 with an advisory board, officers, and a board of trustees representing all municipalities in Lexington County. Its mission is to enhance the Lexington County Museum through its duly appointed commission and to support, aid, and assist in the improvement and expansion of the Museum. The Friends group sponsors fund-raising projects to help further the Museum's valuable contribution to the county. The Friends group has raised over \$290,000 for the museum so far. To learn more about the Friends or to join, visit the museum's webpage (<https://lex-co.sc.gov/lexington-county-museum/friends-museum>).

## Highlighted Artifact from the Museum's Collections

This issue's highlighted artifact is a book that was reused by Victoria Crosson, aged 28, of Leesville in 1898 to record recipes. The handwritten recipes shown here are for tomato preserves, fruit preserves, and a jelly roll.



We're on the Web!  
<https://lex-co.sc.gov/lexington-county-museum> and  
[www.lexingtoncountymuseum.org](http://www.lexingtoncountymuseum.org)