

CLAY COUNTY PROGRESS - April 13, 2017

BRNHA Partnership funds music tribute sculpture

By Sandy Nicolette, CCCRA President

The Clay County Communities Revitalization Association (CCCRA) has been awarded a grant from The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area Partnership (BRNHA) to install a metal sculpture which will be titled "A Tribute to Traditional Music."

"These grant awards will support community projects across Western North Carolina," said Angie Chandler, executive director of BRNHA. "By spotlighting our cultural traditions and natural wonders, we help sustain these assets, build community pride, draw more visitors, and grow the regional economy."

The BRNHA awarded 21 grants totaling \$180,000 to help support projects across the North Carolina mountains and foothills, focusing on craft, music, natural heritage, Cherokee culture and agricultural traditions.

These five facets of the region's heritage earned the 25 counties of western North Carolina a congressional designation as the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area in 2003.

"A Tribute to Traditional Music" will be a 5' tall, three-dimensional metal sculpture depicting a guitar, banjo and fiddle designed and to be built by local craftsman Joe Miller of Miller Forge in Brasstown. The sculpture, to be placed in front of Hayesville Town Hall and along the Quanassee Path, will honor the traditional musicians who have been part of the community's history. The sculpture will pay tribute to traditional songs with Anglo/Celtic roots and the Cherokee songs which influenced Appalachian ballads. It will serve to remind people that the Historic Courthouse courtroom served as the location of gatherings which included traditional music, dating back to the opening of the courthouse in 1888. The sculpture will also remind people of the musicians who continue to play traditional music at the Peacock Performing Arts Center, Clay's Corner, John C. Campbell Folk School and during the Festival on the Square.

We are appreciative of the support for this project by the BRNHA Partnership. The installation of the sculpture in downtown Hayesville will call attention to our place on the BRNHA Music Trail.