



North Cross School

For Immediate Release

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“Doc” Holliday Still Creates a Buzz

“Doc’s” Dental Diploma (?) Donated to North Cross School

ROANOKE, VA (May 1st, 2013)— While preparing for the annual Big Flea sale at North Cross School, volunteers discovered a diploma believed to belong to John “Doc” Holliday, the gunfighter, gambler, and dentist known for his association with Wyatt Earp and for his involvement in the legendary Gunfight at the O.K. Corral. The diploma is dated March 1, 1872 and was issued by the Pennsylvania College of Dental Surgery and confers a Doctor of Dental Surgery (D.D.S). The recipient is listed as John H. Holliday.

Jenn Mitchell, who has chaired the school’s Big Flea fundraiser for years, knew that they needed to check it out. The diploma was part of a large donation made by someone who had purchased a building and wanted to give its contents to North Cross to sell at their annual Big Flea sale. There were a number of different items in the truckload including dental equipment, pictures, furniture, and some framed pictures. Mitchell said, “At the time, we get so many things coming in, we don’t always have the time to examine each and every item. We wait for the two weeks prior to Big Flea to do that - when we start to price items and place them out for folks to buy.”

Volunteers began a search of the internet to see if Holliday actually graduated from the dental school - and he did - they also reached out to other resources. Owner of Salem Printing, John Mitchell, was called in to offer an opinion. Dr. Wanda Finney, North Cross School’s World Languages Department Chair, is also an archivist. She was called to render her opinion because, as an archivist, she has experience with historical documents. Finney offered to help by calling the archivist at the University of Pennsylvania, because they had taken over the Pennsylvania College of Dental Surgery in 1909. “They did not receive the diplomas from Pennsylvania, but they did share information that is helpful to my search. I’m now contacting the Holliday House Association/Holliday-Dorsey-Fife House in Fayetteville, Georgia, for assistance. On to the next clue”, she said.

As they unpack items and readying them for pricing, anything that seems valuable is always set aside for another set of eyes to value. During the setup period, unusual or unique items are set aside to be valued by external resources. Next week, Kelly Goldsmith, who owns Goldsmith Appraisal Service, will come to North Cross, as she has done in the past, to help determine the value of collectibles and antiques.

The Big Flea sale and Family Fun Fair is open to the public free of charge, and will be held on the North Cross campus on May 11, 2013. Doors will open at 7 a.m. at the Carter Athletic Center. It promises to be a fun day, and who knows, you may find a treasure, too!

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About North Cross School

North Cross School is a college-preparatory day school grounded in a strong liberal arts and science curriculum combined with exceptional co-curricular programs. The academic program, from junior kindergarten through twelfth grade, prepares students to become responsible, successful citizens by encouraging them to explore their interests and develop their talents. The School is located at 4254 Colonial Avenue, Roanoke, VA, 24018. For more information, visit www.northcross.org.