For IMMEDIATE Release

ABAC History Sits in Clayton Riehle’s Yard

TIFTON--Clayton Riehle is not an alumnus of Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College but he does have a big piece of ABAC history sitting in his back yard.

Originally from the northern foothills of the Allegheny Mountains on the Pennsylvania and New York state line, Riehle moved to Georgia’s Ben Hill County in 2004 to be closer to the family of his wife, Michelle. His first association with ABAC came when he was selected as the administrative assistant for the ABAC institutional research office in 2005.
When they moved to Tifton in 2011, the Riehles purchased the home of former ABAC Business Administration faculty member Betty Claxton.

“Little did we know that the beautiful pavilion that sat in the back yard was actually the train depot that used to sit in front of ABAC,” Riehle said. “We’re not certain how long the pavilion has been in the back yard, or really how it even came to be there, but it was very neat to learn that we now owned a piece of ABAC history.”

Students at ABAC once used the Moore Highway depot in front of Tift Hall to wait for the train to take them into downtown Tifton. When ABAC opened as the Second District Agricultural and Mechanical School on Feb. 20, 1908, almost 1,200 people attended, many by taking the train from Tifton.

Riehle is now the administrative assistant in the ABAC offices of Enterprise Data Services and the Registrar. Visitors to his office recognize immediately that his life isn’t all about work. One can’t help but notice the shirts and medals from a multitude of road races arrayed on the wall behind Riehle’s smiling face.

“Running is something I do for both my physical and emotional health,” Riehle said. “I’m regularly surprised by the difficulties that sort themselves out while I’m focusing only on my breathing, cadence and posture while running.”

Riehle’s activities don’t stop with running. He is currently pursuing a business degree from ABAC.

“With a full time job, it is taking me a little bit longer than the traditional student, but I look forward to the day I receive my diploma from the institution I love,” Riehle said. “One of
the best things about ABAC is the wonderful people I get to work with on a daily basis. My coworkers and the many students I interact with definitely keep me on my toes.”

Riehle means that in the literal sense because he stands at his desk instead of sitting. It keeps him in shape and allows him to be mentally and physically ready to answer questions.

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