



Preserving Yesterday Enriches Tomorrow



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MADISON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 467, Madison, Virginia 22727

November 2005

STEVE HOFFMAN TO SPEAK



Steve Hoffman addresses Society

The next membership meeting of the Madison County Historical Society will be held Sunday, November 20 at 2 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Madison County administration building. Steve Hoffman, well known local historian, will talk about and display paperwork pertaining to the Madison County Government from 1775 to the present. Come and see what surprises he has in store. Following Steve's presentation refreshments will be served in the Kemper residence. We hope to see many members at this event.

HOLIDAY EVENING AT THE KEMPER RESIDENCE

On Friday, December 2nd from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. after the Madison Christmas Tree Lighting, the Society will host an Open House with music by Prasada Duet. Hot cider and cookies will be served. Please come and join us for this special holiday event at the Kemper Residence.



SOCIETY VISITS MONTPELIER



Ann Miller greets members of the Society

On a warm Sunday afternoon in August the Historical Society toured Montpelier, the home of James Madison. The group was greeted in the parking lot by Ann Miller who gave a brief overview of the history of the family homes of the Madison's.

The tour then proceeded to the front lawn where one could see the spectacular 90 mile view of the Blue Ridge Mountains enjoyed by Mr. Madison. At this point the group was joined by John Jeanes, Director of Restoration at Montpelier. He described the beginning of the project. In 2001 Montpelier received a Mellon grant for a feasibility study. In January 2004 after an agreement was reached with the DuPont heirs work began in earnest. In part the agreement stated that there would be a new Visitors Center that would include a DuPont Gallery. Deconstruction was completed in March with a small wing of the former DuPont addition kept to use as a work area.

At this time it was discovered that the house originally had a brick exterior. There were many cracks in the brickwork which was from three different periods and it is surmised that the stucco was put on to blend these together as well as seal the cracks. Brick is being produced by a company in North Carolina and the limestone for the mortar comes from a Gordonsville quarry.

One of the most interesting discoveries made during the deconstruction period of the entrance was that the sidelight windows were actually

pocket windows that slide down into the masonry when open.



The mansion wrapped in plastic

The house is wrapped in plastic so that masonry work can continue during the winter months. The limestone mortar cannot be applied during periods of freezing weather without this protection.

The roof will be covered with cypress shingles. A geothermal HVAC system will be installed through the use of 12 wells which will be dug 460 feet deep. This system will maintain a comfortable temperature for the interior and furniture pieces but may not be as comfortable for visitors. Society members were able to see the beginning hole for this system located to the rear of the mansion.



Members view the dining room

The dining room is the only room that was ever inventoried so it will be the most completely accurate restoration. Other areas will be restored based on available information. New information continually comes to light through research as well as discoveries being made during deconstruction.



In the Madison bedroom

In the Madison bedroom (the former DuPont kitchen) the roof was constructed to support a deck above. It is believed that this was an idea of Thomas Jefferson who wanted people to be able to have a place to enjoy nature. Mr. Madison used sheet metal left over from the construction of the Capitol in Washington, DC to reinforce the roof.

There are 35-45 traditional craftspeople working on the project on any given day. They are trying to use the same materials as were originally used in the mansion as possible. Thirty two of the original fifty two doors are still intact. Much of the Madisonian heart pine flooring remains. Work will continue year round with the present projected completion date in spring 2008.

What has been discovered during the deconstruction is that the Madison mansion was a very sick building. The plaster was cracked in many places. The brickwork, especially on the Nellie Madison side of the house, was deteriorating. Weight bearing walls were missing. The house was in danger of collapsing in on itself in the not too distant future. All in all it would seem that this project commenced at a very apropos time.

Mr. Jeanes thanked the Society for coming and suggested a return tour in the future to view the progress. Members who took advantage of this opportunity were most impressed with the tour.

MEMBERSHIP

Since the last Newsletter, we have gained 10 new memberships and have received 23 renewals. It has been very gratifying to see so

many of the renewals upgrading their level of membership. The Board is most appreciative. Thank you. Our new members are: Earl and Barneata Bennett III of Reva, Douglas and Anne Farmer of Haywood, Jim and Pat Gaines of Madison, Frank and Beverly Gray of Locust Dale, Anne Howard of Jeffersonton, Patricia Lattin of Culpeper, Don and Jackie Pamerter of Stanardsville, Gene and Susan Pell of Syria, Edward and Alyson Sparks of Orange, and Peter and Julia Williams of Rochelle. We are happy to have you with us and hope you have a rewarding membership experience

KEMPER TEA

The Fall Tea took place at the Kemper Residence on Wednesday, October 26th at 12:30pm. Our ever faithful guests and some newcomers were served a delectable assortment of savories, sweets, scones and fruit. We received enthusiastic comments regarding the delicious fare and what a wonderful and relaxing afternoon. A special tea "Holly Days" was available for the first time. Samples were served and received a good review. The tea may be purchased at the Arcade or by calling Rita Cunningham at 948-6542. The next tea will be held sometime in January. At that time a special tea blend "Kemper House Tea" will be served. As always a special thanks to our wonderful volunteers who make, donate, and serve every sweet morsel: Anne Hughes, Mary Haught, Heidi Sage, Lee Decker, Genevieve McLearn, Jill Schreiner, Betty Lynn Yowell and Rita Cunningham. Beppy White volunteered as a server for the first time and is now a member of our exclusive Kemper Girl group.

ARCADE MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

The Madison County Historical Society Museum at the Arcade is very fortunate to have a strong team of faithful volunteers. They represent a cross-section of county residents. Some volunteers grew up in the county and others retired here. With their strong support the museum is open three days each week.

Museum hours are Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 10:00am to 2:00pm. For three years now the museum has also been open on Saturdays during the summer.

A list of volunteer workers includes: Penn Bowers, Lee Decker, John and Anne Ferguson, John and Linwood Imlay, Norman Jackson, Virginia McGhee, Carole Smith Milks, Barbara Nash, Michael O'Connor, Sandy Stowe, Jane Volchansky, Beppy White, Paul and Millie Wiesner and Emily Williams.

Lee Decker has taken the leadership role in preparing exhibits. She has been assisted by the Imlays, Rita Cunningham, Jane Volchansky, Carol Nash and Emily Williams.

Driving the greatest distance is Carole Smith Milks who comes all the way from Keswick. Carole grew up on the Smith Farm at Hood and serves as the family historian for her many siblings, nieces and nephews. She and the other volunteers come in once a month and serves as host or hostess for our guests. They sell items and assist those who call in for information using the very interesting and attractive research room set up by Jane Volchansky.

Since January of this year the museum has had 244 visitors coming from as far away as New Zealand. We hope you will come and see the new exhibits at your county museum.

THE ARCADE MUSEUM

The Arcade has a new exhibit. This one features the Madison Woolen Mills. Yes, there was a mill on the Robinson River which produced woolen blankets. Built by a Mr. Larkin in the 1880's, the mill was later owned by Hamilton Berry. Vee Tull, who is the granddaughter of Hamilton Berry, gave the Museum several of the blankets which had been produced in this mill. If anyone has more information on this mill, please call the museum at 948-5488. There seems to be very little information in print and this unique part of Madison history may be lost without input from those who might remember it or have a photograph of it. An artist's drawing of the mill is on display.

Do any of our readers remember mention of the hand-woven sheets and coverlets given to the

Society? The donor said she bought them at one of Aylor's auctions near Reva in 1999 and we thought they may have been woven here. After asking many questions we have determined that the articles were not woven in Madison after all but, instead, were brought here from North or South Dakota by the Arms family. Like several of our holdings that are not uniquely Madison, we will hold the linens because of their rarity.

The consultants made available to us through a grant from the Virginia Genealogical Society have looked at the holdings of the Madison County Historical Society and have given us their written report. Edward Gaynor and Ellen Welch from the University of Virginia Library System spent a day with us, looking at our storage methods and analyzing our needs. They recommended a computer program called Filemaker to assist in the retrieval of information. This program, however, calls for Windows XP or 2000. Our computer is not quite large enough to run this program. They also specified which items in the collection required acid free paper or boxes for proper storage. These items all have to be purchased. Funding for the computer program, the larger computer and the acid free papers and boxes will be of much concern to those whose responsibility it is to care for the items in the collection. Any financial help from our members will be appreciated.

We continue to have visitors looking for information about their ancestors. And we continue to ask for copies of unpublished genealogies—no matter how incomplete.

Please note the **GENEALOGICAL SEARCH** column in this issue of the newsletter.

ACQUISITIONS

The Longley Family has donated a number of items to the Society. These include lithographs of General Robert E. Lee and Martha Washington. The next newsletter will provide more information on this acquisition. Other items donated are a mirror, candlesticks, vases and table coverings and a large assortment of silk flowers for use in decorating the Kemper Residence.



Clore Chair

Sarah Jane Gibbs gave a special chair made by E.A. Clore who gave it as a wedding gift to her and her husband, Ralph Gibbs. The chair was made in the 1940's from pine boards from the Hebron Lutheran Church

GENEALOGICAL SEARCH CORNER

Elizabeth Hobbs from 1789 Gloucester Rd. in Gloucester Point, VA 23062 is seeking information on ancestors who lived in the Old Rag, Hazel Mountain, Nethers Mill area. These ancestors are Norris Jenkins, Gabriel Nethers, Francis Weakley and Mary Berry. If you can help her, please contact her at the above address or call Jane Volchansky (923-4584) who will relay information to her

2006 ORNAMENT



The 2006 ornament features the Piedmont Episcopal Church. It costs \$11.00 plus tax. This slight increase in price is due to an increase in manufacturing costs to the Society. Previous ornaments (the Courthouse for 2002, the Kemper Residence for 2003, the Arcade for 2004 and Hebron Lutheran Church for 2005) are also available and cost \$10.00 plus tax each. You can purchase ornaments at the Arcade and the Library. For more information call 948-5488.

The Madison County Historical Society is a non-profit organization founded and operated for the perpetuation and preservation of Madison County heritage and traditions. The mission of the Society is to record, preserve, and stimulate interest in the history of Madison County, its families, occupations and way of life.

Membership is for one year with renewals due on the anniversary date of membership. Membership and other contributions to the Society are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Types of Membership:

Benefactor	\$250 and above	Business	\$50
Partner	\$100 to \$249	Family	\$20
Friend	\$50 to \$99	Single	\$10
		Student	\$5

Membership applications are available at the Arcade and the Kemper Residence. For more information call the Society Office at 540-948-5488 and leave your name, telephone number, and address. We will send you a membership application or return your call to answer your questions.



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