



# Preserving Yesterday Enriches Tomorrow



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MADISON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

[http:// www.madisonvahistoricalsociety.org/](http://www.madisonvahistoricalsociety.org/)

P.O. Box 467, Madison, Virginia 22727

November 2014

## GORDON LOHR SPEAKER AT NOVEMBER 16, 2014 MEETING



Gordon Lohr

Our speaker for the November 16<sup>th</sup> quarterly meeting will be Mr. Gordon Lohr. The topic of his presentation is "The Early Virginia Rifle." The talk will cover the characteristics and manufacture of the early Virginia Rifle, also known as the "Kentucky" style. These rifles were made by schools of gunsmith all up and down the Valley of Virginia and into the Piedmont. Examples of these rifles will be shown along with the accoutrements necessary for their use on the frontier.

Mr Lohr, grew up in Madison County and is a graduate of Madison High School. After graduating from Bridgewater College with a degree in Biology he taught school on the Eastern Shore of Virginia where he was chairman of the science department for 25 years and also taught microbiology at the Eastern Shore Community College.

After retiring from teaching he was director of the Revolving fund which enabled Preservation Virginia to find buyers for historic properties that were in danger of loss if not restored. Mr. Lohr has been collecting 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century antiques since he was a young man and his avocation has always been the collecting of antiques and their restoration. He frequently provides historic house tours for Colonial Williamsburg for Forum each year as well as for their special donors. Mr. Lohr also does fine arts appraisals and helps identify objects from archeological finds at Montpelier.

The meeting will be held in the County administrative offices auditorium at 2:00pm Sunday November 16<sup>th</sup>. Everyone is invited to attend and refreshments will be provided in the Kemper residence next door following the presentation.

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY AT HOLIDAY MARKET

The Historical Society will have a table at the two indoor Holiday Markets. The dates are Nov. 22 and Dec. 13 at the Fire Hall. We now have a new supply of our special Kemper Tea blend for sale and will have it at the markets. This is a great way to support the Society and get some holiday shopping at the same time.

## RETURN OF THE AMERICAN CHESTNUT



The speaker at the August quarterly meeting was Mr. John Scrivani, who is with the Virginia Department of Information and Technology. The subject of his talk was the effort to restore the American chestnut to the forests of the eastern woodlands.

Of four billion hardwoods in the eastern United States woodlands in 1900, one in four was an American chestnut. The American chestnut grew and replaced itself quickly, was eco friendly, a valuable source of food for wildlife and the source for many valuable commercial products.

In the late 1800's blight was introduced into this country, most probably from Asia, which attacked the bark of the chestnut and virtually destroyed this tree over a period of about fifty years. The blight does not affect the roots of the tree so sprouts continue to grow but do not grow to a height of much more than 16 inches before succumbing to the blight. Some mature trees still exist in Madison, Amherst and Nelson Counties.

The mission of the American Chestnut Foundation is to "restore the American Chestnut to eastern woodlands to benefit our environment, our wildlife and our society." The mission requires developing a blight resistant tree and this is being done through a process called backcrossing, first crossing being 50% American Chestnut and 50% Chinese Chestnut and continuing selectively crossing the best, strongest and most resistant tree from each crossing until an almost 100% American Chestnut exists.

## SUMMER SATURDAYS A SUCCESS AT ARCADE MUSEUM

This summer the Arcade was open on Saturdays during the months of June, July and August. The goal of the Madison Historical Society's Board was two-fold: (1) to attract tourists who were visiting the county and (2) to provide the opportunity for county residents to visit, who had been unable to do so previously, because of a workweek schedule.

The sandwich board sign most likely played a major roll in attracting visitors to the Arcade. A couple from Montana, disappointed that the Chamber of Commerce was closed, noticed the sign and paid the Arcade a visit. They were very complimentary of our museum and our state. We also had visitors from Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Florida, and Pennsylvania, as well as from other counties in Virginia.

A young woman from Richmond, noticing on our web site that we were open on Saturdays came to do some research on her family.

Thanks to Judy Mahanes, who supplied statistics, we were able to determine the average number of visitors for both the weekday openings and the Saturday openings. Surprisingly, we learned that, on the average, we had one more visitor on Saturdays than we had on the weekdays during the summer.

Thus, because of the success of the Saturday openings, the Board has decided we should continue the program in the future. However, if we do so, we will need more volunteers. Not only do we need volunteers to cover on Saturdays, but we also need more weekday volunteers. If you enjoy history, meeting people, and have an extra four hours each month, we have a place for you at the Arcade.

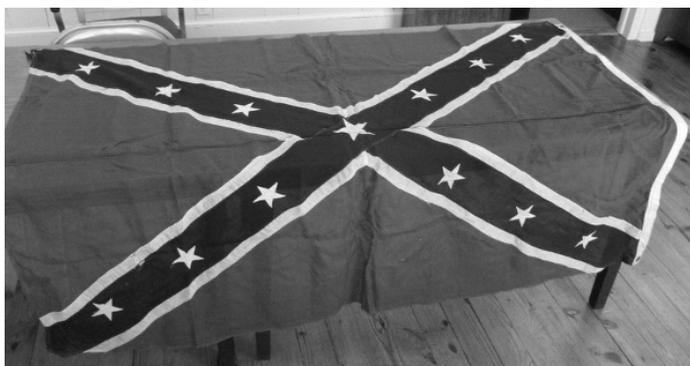
## ACQUISITIONS

Marjorie Cave, widow of Dr. William Belfield Cave, and her daughter Betsy were looking through an old trunk in the basement a couple months ago. Among other things they found were two old flags and a water goblet. They decided to donate them to the Madison Historical Society because they are part of the history of the county. One flag is a very old Confederate battle flag and the other is a Virginia flag. They are believed to have

belonged to Miss Norma Cave but we do not have any documented history about them.



Flag of the state of Virginia



Confederate flag

The third item is a water goblet. Mr. Alexander Hubert Cave, father of Dr. Belfield Cave, started the first Electric Company in Madison. When President Hoover built his Rapidan Camp there was a problem with the electricity at the Camp and Mr. Cave went up to meet with Mr. and Mrs. Hoover. It is believed that Prime Minister Ramsey MacDonald was also there. After dinner when Mr. Cave got up to leave, the President asked him if he would like a souvenir.



He said yes and picked up a water glass off the dining room table and put it in his pocket. This is the goblet (pictured) that Mrs. Cave has so generously given us along with the flags. We do appreciate these wonderful and historic gifts.



Moses Clore chair

Another Madison County treasure has a permanent home with the Historical Society. A ladder back chair made by Moses Clore, the great grandson of Michael Clore who emigrated to Virginia from Germany in 1717 and settled in what is now Madison County. Moses Clore is the ancestor of many of our Madison County furniture makers. One of Moses's sons, James Osborne, designed and manufactured the "Clore chair" of white oak with split bottoms. His son, Edward Ashby, kept up the tradition of furniture making by opening a factory on White Oak Run near Hebron Lutheran Church. This is our own E. A. Clore Sons, a world renowned furniture manufacturer. This Ladder back chair was purchased at a farm auction in Greene County by Marise and Bill Craig. Thanks to Steve Hoffman who saw it at the Craig's home and identified it as a Moses Clore chair. The Craig's have very generously donated it to the Historical Society where it will be on display at the society's Arcade Museum, another wonderful piece of Madison County history.

## EARLY MILLS IN MADISON COUNTY

Recently, two first time visitors to the Arcade museum came in with several vague questions about mills in Madison county way back when.

Their questions were not particularly specific, nor did they get particularly good answers from the Volunteer on duty that day. This article, outlining some of the information in the museum, is an invitation to scholars and authors among our readers to put together a comprehensive history of mills within the county. Please contact the museum if you are interested in taking on this project.

The information to follow comes from two sources. One is the classic *Madison County, Virginia—a Revised History* by Margaret G. Davis. This title is available for sale at the Arcade Museum. The other is a booklet of information compiled in 1936 and 1937 by Evelyn Weaver Tunison, working for the Virginia Writers' Project which created the Virginia Historical Inventory. This work was modeled on projects of the WPA and has been dubbed a Legacy of the New Deal in Virginia. More recently, the surveys done by Ms. Tunison were compiled and edited by Charles L. Perdue, jr. and Nancy J. Martin-Perdue, longtime residents of Twymans Mill and faculty members at the University of Virginia. The Arcade Museum owns a copy of the booklet on Mills.

From the early days, individuals were required to get a permit from the county before building a mill. The first permit granted by Madison County went to the Madison family in July 9, 1795 for what became known as Gillum's Mill at Madison Mills, VA. There were certainly earlier mills, but court records are hard to find for mills built before Madison County was established in 1792 (Davis, p. 109). Most of these mills are long gone, Graves Mill being a notable exception. The restoration efforts there create an exciting chapter for the future story of mills within the county.

The remainder of this article lists some of the mills established on named streams and rivers in the county. The information comes from the two publications mentioned earlier. The Museum welcomes additional information that readers may have to expand the historical record of mills within Madison County. There were certainly many mills that did not meet the specific criteria used in creating the following list.

#### Beautiful Run

- Elridge Wayland's Mill (Tunison #75)
- Steigle's Mill (Tunison #92)

- Repton Mills (Tunison #161)

#### Deep Run

- Old Mill (Davis, p. 110)
- Speedwell Mills, Ephram Fray's Mill (Tunison #24)

#### Gaar's Run (tributary of Deep Run)

- Burnt Woods Mill (Tunison #60, Davis p. 110)

#### Fleshman's Run (nearby)

- Jacob Yowell's Grist Mill (Tunison)

#### Grymes Run (and nearby creek)

- Anthony Twyman's Mill (Tunison #82)

#### Hughes River

- Nethers Mill (Tunison #209)

#### Rapidan River

- Old Wilhoite Mill (Tunison #105, Davis, p. 110)
- Madison Mills (Davis p. 111)
- Walnut Grove Mill (Tunison #68)

#### Robinson River

- Benjamin Lillard Mill (Tunison #227)
- Crigler River Mill (Tunison #114)
- Grist Mill (Davis, p. 111)
- Hemp Stone (Davis, p. 111)
- Mauck's Mill (Tunison #34, Davis, p. 111)
- Tub Mill (Davis, p. 111)

#### Staunton River

- Hood Mill (Davis, p. 110)
- Silas Utz Mill (Davis, p. 111)

#### White Oak Run

- Cave Mill or Crigler's Mill (Tunison #86, Davis, p. 111)
- Gaar Mill, originally Wilhoite's Mill (Tunison #100)

## **FALL TEA AT KEMPER ANOTHER SUCCESS**

The Fall Luncheon Tea on October 1st was at full capacity, thanks to support from a number of "regulars" and some guests who attended for the first time.

The team that hosts these semi-annual fund raising teas is grateful for continuing support from the community. Those with reservations who had to cancel at the last minute offered their payment as a contribution to the Society, which we all appreciate.

The Spring Tea is scheduled for Wednesday, March 25, 2015, so if you wish to join us, mark your calendars as soon as you can. We'll have a reminder in the Spring Historical Society newsletter.

Keep in mind that the Kemper Residence is available to rent for receptions, meetings or other events. The rates are very reasonable, and rental income supports Madison County Historical Society projects. If you or someone you know is interested in discussing use of the building, contact Mary Haught at 540-547-3503. Thank you for your continuing support. We look forward to seeing you at the Spring Tea!

## **ARCADE MUSEUM NEWS**

The Historical Society's Arcade Museum will close for the winter on Friday Dec. 19, 2014. It will reopen on Tues. March 3, 2015. This closure gives the staff a chance to make changes in exhibits, catch up on paper work, visit other small museums to get ideas to better our own and to thoroughly clean house

## **MEMBERSHIP**

We do not have any new members to the Society this past quarter. Membership renewals will be in the mail in early December so please watch for that.

## **BLUE RIDGE HERITAGE PROJECT**

The newly formed Blue Ridge Heritage Project is exploring ways to recognize the people who were displaced when land was acquired to form Shenandoah National Park. The group hopes to see memorials created in each of the eight counties (Albemarle, Augusta, Greene, Madison, Page, Rappahannock, Rockingham, and Warren) where land was taken for the park. The Project is led by Bill Henry of Greene County. The Board of Directors includes Bill Henry, along with Roy Dye, Ann Dye, and Kristie Kendall. Madison's Jim Lillard and Kit Johnston

are members of the Advisory Council for the Project. They hosted a meeting on Sunday, June 29, 2014 in the County Auditorium to give local people the opportunity to learn more about the project and offer suggestions about a memorial within Madison County.

At the meeting, Bill Henry discussed two purposes that he sees for the project. One is to honor the people and the sacrifices they made when displaced in the 1930s; another is to promote tourism in the counties today. To that end, he hopes to create committees within each county to plan memorials and organize participation by Tourism Offices and Chambers of Commerce.

Jim Lillard showed the group a list of 118 surnames of Madison County landowners who were displaced by the formation of SNP. Jim is seeking input from descendants, other relatives, and friends of these displaced people for planning a suitable memorial to these families in Madison County. Everyone emphasized that any memorials created by this project will be located outside the Park. The creation of a mobile exhibit that can be moved from place to place was suggested as a way to extend the reach of the project beyond the site of the permanent marker.

To move forward, the Project needs volunteers with time and ideas, and it needs money. Contact Jim Lillard at 540-547-3774 or Kit Johnston at 540-547-2317 with your questions, concerns, and offers to help. Watch the Madison *Eagle* for more coverage of the project. The Madison County Historical Society has voted to receive and hold tax-deductible contributions in a special fund for the Project. Make checks payable to the Madison County Historical Society with Blue Ridge Memorial Project on the memo line and mail to the following address:

Madison County Historical Society  
For Blue Ridge Memorial  
P. O. Box 467  
Madison, VA 22727

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.

Memberships expire at the end of the calendar year. Membership and other contributions to the Society are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Types of Membership:

Sustainer.....	\$500 or more	Business	\$50
Benefactor	\$250 to \$499	Family	\$30
Partner	\$100 to \$249	Single	\$20
Friend	\$50 to \$99	Student	\$5

Membership applications are available at the Arcade and the Kemper Residence, and on-line at the Society's web page - [www.madisonvahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.madisonvahistoricalsociety.org). (Click on "ABOUT US", and then on "application"). For more information call the Society Office at 540-948-5488. Please leave a message if no one answers. We will return your call. You can also email us at [madisonhistory@verizon.net](mailto:madisonhistory@verizon.net).

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