



# 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

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May 2017



Bob Lookabill

## BOB LOOKABILL TO SPEAK AT NEXT MCHS MEETING

The speaker for the May 21, 2017 Madison County Historical Society quarterly meeting will be Robert (Bob) Lookabill and he will talk to us about Madison County's singular major league baseball player, Oliver Dinwiddie Tucker.

Bob is a retired Navy Reserve Captain and holds two Masters Degrees, one in history from Marshall University and one in Strategic Studies from the Naval War College. He retired from the Defense Intelligence Agency where he was an analyst/supervisor. In addition to his aforementioned professional career and his present retirement activities, Bob is a huge fan of the game of baseball. Having inquired about

the mausoleum in a family cemetery on State Route 230 near Radiant he found that it was "the grave of O.D. Tucker who played major league baseball." Being a fan of the game he researched "Ollie" Tucker, as he was known to his fans. It is the story of this player about which he will speak, reminiscing about this Madison County native's intriguing accomplishments in America's other signature identity besides apple pie. Ollie was born in Radiant on 27 January 1902 and died in Radiant on 13 July 1940 at the unseemly age of 38. He played both minor and major league ball and though his major-league career was rather short having never found his niche there, he amassed an amazing career in the minor leagues. Ollie was inducted into the Buffalo Bison Baseball Hall of fame in 1986 and the International League Baseball Hall of Fame in 2008.

There is much more to the story of "Ollie Tucker, the slugging Virginia Gentleman," as the Buffalo Courier- Express referred to him and this will be told by Mr. Lookabill at the quarterly meeting.

The meeting will be held in the Madison County Administration Offices auditorium at 3:00pm Sunday May 21<sup>st</sup>. **(Please note the change in time of the meeting.)** Everyone is invited to attend and refreshments will be served following the meeting.



Steve Hoffman speaking at MCHS meeting

## STILLS IN MADISON COUNTY

Steve Hoffman was the guest speaker for the February 2017 quarterly meeting of the Madison County Historical Society. Steve, a well-known Madison County native, has numerous hobbies including the collection of antique tools, guns, coins (numismatics) and of course “stills,” which was the topic of his presentation to the Society. Sample equipment enhanced his description of the “moonshine industry,” its history in the Country and in Madison County.

Moonshine brandy was a provision for the Continental Army. In 1791 taxes were imposed on moonshine to raise money for funding the Revolutionary War the result of which was the Whisky Rebellion. When Prohibition arrived in 1919 moonshiners moved to the mountains. Distilled spirits cannot be made legally without a license and there is much lore surrounding the untaxed liquor made in the mountains of Virginia including Madison County. In Madison, there were two bonded distillers, the Fishbacks and the Hoffmans. Sales records from 1909 show a gallon sold for \$3 and it was usually sold by pint or half pint. Most moonshiners made distilled brandy from fruit. For making your own personal moonshine (You get caught for selling it not making it.) one begins with clean water and fresh fruit, apples and peaches are probably the choice. Mash apples and add sugar after 24 hours and then yeast. After a few days, it bubbles and tastes sweet. Place in still with fire under it and cook slowly. At 172 degrees, the alcohol comes off and it takes 10-12 gallons of mash to make one gallon of moonshine. Steam cools back into moonshine 130 to 140 proof so temper with water to make 60-70 % proof. Strain

and put in jars. Makes one thirsty just thinking about it!!



Sample stills

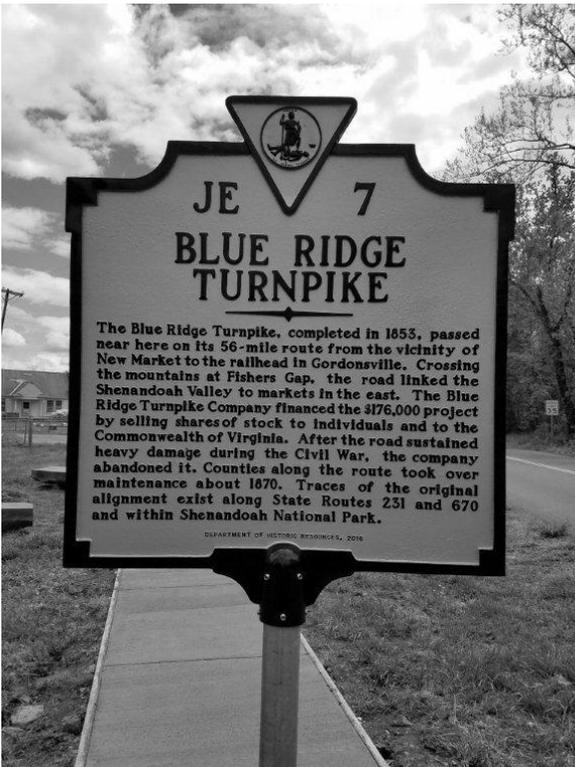
Fun and interesting presentation from a man who says he has a BS degree in talking. Thanks Steve.

## NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A lot has happened since the last newsletter. We are now in our “New Museum” in the basement of the Kemper Residence. We would love to have lots of visitors now that we can offer tours of the Servant Quarters and the Law Office as well as the main Residence. All the remodeling and changes have led to the depletion of a lot of our reserves. As you know we operate on donations, dues, and monies made from the Kemper “Teas” that the ladies host each Spring and Fall. We would certainly love to have more members and if it doesn’t suit to be a member, we would appreciate any monetary donations that come our way.

The “Grand Opening” will be held at 12 noon on May 19, 2017 in front of the museum. We hope lots of people will be able to attend. The Chamber of Commerce will assist with the ribbon cutting at that time.

The Blue Ridge Turnpike Marker has been returned with Shenandoah spelled correctly. A date for that dedication will be announced later as we coordinate that with State resources, as this is a Virginia State Marker. Our society paid for the marker with donations received for that purpose.



Most of you probably saw the article about 2 chestnut trees being planted at the sports complex in Culpeper. Former Veterinary Tech, George Cole, who left a large portion of his estate to the American Chestnut Foundation was instrumental in this project being carried out. Our society planted 3 "Dunstan Chestnut Trees" (they have been blight free for over 50 years in test plots across the country) near the Blue Ridge Mountain Memorial on the Criglersville school site. This is their 2<sup>nd</sup> year and all 3 have greened up this spring. We are adding a sidewalk to the monument area that should be finished by the time you read this



## AN INVITATION FOR YOU



THE MADISON COUNTY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
MADISON, VA

IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT  
THE MUSEUM HAS A  
"NEW HOME"  
IN THE LOWER LEVEL OF  
"THE KEMPER RESIDENCE"  
414 N MAIN STREET

PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR  
"GRAND OPENING"  
FRIDAY MAY 19, 2017  
AT 12:00 NOON FOR THE  
RIBBON CUTTING  
AND REFRESHMENTS

THE MUSEUM AND KEMPER RESIDENCE  
WILL BE OPEN FOR TOURS FROM  
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM  
TUES. - THUR. - FRI.

## SAVE THE DATE-- JUNE 17, 2017

On Saturday, June 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm there will be a play at the Pavilion at Graves Lodge entitled "Shenandoah The Land and The Legacy". This is a story about the lives of the people who were

displaced by the formation of the Shenandoah National Park written by BS Productions (Bob Slaven and Shirley Workman). The profit from this wonderful production will be used to maintain the monument that was built to honor those people. The cost of the ticket will be \$45 including the meal prepared by Graves Mountain Lodge. For more information or tickets contact Max Lacy (540-718-8889) or Shirley Workman (540-718-6884). Hope to see a lot of people there.

## WELCOME TO THE MUSEUM AT KEMPER



Railroad exhibit in its new home

Elsewhere in this issue, you will find your invitation to the Grand Opening of the Society's Museum in the basement of the Kemper Residence. Please come to see the new space, if not on May 19<sup>th</sup>, then on any Tuesday, Thursday, or Friday between 10am and 2pm. At the same time, you can tour the upper floors of the Kemper Residence and visit the Servant Cabin and Law Office. These areas have been ready for your visit for a long time, but they have seldom been open. One of the exciting things about moving the Museum to Kemper is that we will now have volunteers in place to show off the entire property. The buildings are owned by the County and leased to the Historical Society. Our last issue contained several photos of the work in progress and summarized work done in the basement to get ready for the museum. This article will repeat some of that information and provide a feel for some of the "issues" that arose along the way.

The Historical Society Board voted on February 11, 2016, to move the Museum. The early

months involved reworking the lease with the county, upgrading plumbing and the HVAC system, and trying to figure out what to do about the inside brick walls. The walls were built back in the 1850s; additional work was done on them during the 1980s. Unfortunately, the walls shed dust that is not compatible with museum space. Experts were consulted (use of the property is subject to an easement granted to the Virginia Historic Landmarks Board in 1989) and many ideas were considered. The final decision was that we could not put any kind of sealer on the walls. So, we had wood panels installed in front of some of the walls and invested in a new vacuum cleaner!

Meanwhile, plans for work in the (newer) back part of the basement continued. The wiring was redone, ceiling installed, windows repaired, and a new back door installed. We learned that the existing back door had once been painted in the faux grain style. One of our volunteers is currently working to restore that finish so we can display it as a closet door.



Medicine exhibit moved from the Arcade Museum

Closing in one doorway and opening another created office space for the Museum. New lighting was installed where needed, and the entire basement was given a new paint job! Beply White supervised the project on behalf of the Historical Society. John Weaver was the lead contractor for the project.

On March 22, 2017, exhibit cases, other furniture, boxed up exhibits, and inventory were moved into the renovated spaces. Volunteers, led by Beply White, put in many hours to get things unpacked and situated. A few things are still being tweaked, but we are "blown away" by how great things look!



The loom is set up for viewing

The Museum is open for visitors Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm. Volunteers on duty will be on able to help with research, tours of the Kemper Residence, Law Office and Servant Quarters.

## LUNCHEON TEAS SUPPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Thanks to enthusiastic support from Madisonians and friends from nearby communities, the Spring Luncheon Tea was another success. Attendance was at full capacity in the Kemper Residence.

Even though summer is not even here yet, plans are underway for the Fall tea scheduled for September 27. Our chefs are testing recipes so we can offer some new items along with the popular standbys. You'll just have to join us to find out what will be new!

The Fall tea will mark 15 years since a group of loyal and dedicated volunteers began donating, preparing and serving all the food for this semi-annual event. Some of the faces have changed over the years, but their loyalty is firm. Over the years, the Tea Group has been responsible for raising significant funds for the Society.

We hope you will mark your calendars for September 27, and make your plans to be present. As usual, we are happy to accommodate groups up to six, as well as individuals who can meet new friends.

We look forward to another successful tea to support the Madison County Historical Society.

## MEMBERSHIP

We have several new members this quarter.

Mary Blow  
David & Elizabeth Snead  
Pam & Jim Nelson

Welcome to the Society.

Remember that Society membership is a wonderful gift any time of the year. A copy of the Society membership application can be obtained at the following link:

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

To those of you that have already renewed your Society membership for 2017, thank you. For those of you that have not yet had a chance to renew, please do – we need your support.



New home of the Museum

## SOCIETY FACEBOOK PAGE

The Madison County Historical Society has a Facebook Page showcasing the new "home" of the Museum. The Historical Museum has moved from the Arcade on Main Street to the Kemper Residence just further north also on Main Street. The Facebook posts will include pictures of our exhibits and also feature the quarterly program speakers and other events pertaining to the history and preservation of our beautiful Madison County.

Please "like" our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/pg/madisonvahistoricalsociety> and "share" our posts with friends.

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.madisonvahistoricalociety.org](http://www.madisonvahistoricalociety.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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**MAY 2017**