

Preserving Yesterday Enriches Tomorrow



Madison County
Historical Society

www.madisonvahistoricalociety.org

August 2019

Old Madison Stores 1800s--2000



In August 1956, Criglersville general store owner Robert H. Gibbs served customer Lindsay Utz while they discussed topics of the day. The store, built in 1917 in Madison County, also served as the community's post office and telephone collection agent. In this rural area, the store was a community gathering place, with an old 1917 Simmons Giant coal-burning stove to keep people warm.

Our speaker for the August 18, 2019 Madison County Historical Society quarterly meeting will be Mr. Steve Hoffman: his topic will be "Old Madison Stores." Steve is a well-known Madison County native, who has overseen the family business of period furniture restoration, and served in a myriad of local capacities including membership on the Madison County Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, and Chamber of Commerce, and dedicated service to the Madison County Volunteer Fire Co. and Rescue Squad, to name just a few. His hobbies have included amongst others the collection of antique tools, guns, coins (numismatics) and even "stills", the subject of his most recent excellent presentation at the February 2017 MCHS quarterly meeting.

In his August presentation he will be talking about Ag and Business industries from the 1800's-2000. All of the businesses about which he will speak are now closed, and they include stores, blacksmith shops, distillers, farmers, doctors and tanners. He will tell us about and show monetary systems of Madison County and include in his display: calendars, advertisement items and store records books. He will briefly cover coop and furniture factories. As we have learned, Steve has the gift for story telling so this should be a very entertaining program.

The meeting will be held in the Madison County Administrative Offices auditorium at 2:00pm Sunday August 18th. Everyone is invited to attend and refreshments will be served following the meeting.

TASTE OF THE MOUNTAINS

Madison's renown Street Festival returns on Saturday, August 31, 2019. The hours are 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The Historical Society welcomes everyone to visit the Kemper Residence, Law Office, and Servant Cabin, all of which will be open that day. This year the Society is also partnering with Tracey Gardner and the Chamber of Commerce to offer a variety of exhibits and demonstrations around the circle in front of the Residence. Food Vendors will also add to the excitement on the North end of town! Tell all your friends to come visit!

A Note From The President

We have had a busy time since the last newsletter. Carole Nash gave a wonderful program about the Indian Movement in Madison County at our May meeting which drew a full house at the County Auditorium. We also welcomed several school groups at the Museum during May and June. It is so good to be able to have the youth come and see what we have preserved for everyone's benefit. A special thanks to all of the volunteers who have given their time to show what we have.

We will be having several new things displayed at the Taste of the Mountains Street Festival including an African Dance Troupe. We need lots of volunteers to show people around during the festival on August 31st, so please go by the museum (or call 540-395-5119) and sign up for a time slot. When you see folks on the street, tell them about what we are doing and ask them if they would like to be a part of it.

Thanks again for all the volunteers do to Preserve Yesterday and Enrich Tomorrow.

Thanks
Max Lacy



THE FAIR!

by

Pam Crigler Nelson



Nothing says "summer" like a visit to the Madison County Fair. Maybe it's the farm animals; the arts and crafts exhibits; the local music; the food; or the entertainment. Maybe it's the chance to visit with friends and family on a sultry July evening. In any case, the Madison Fair is clearly a local tradition with deep roots in Madison County history.

What was the Madison Fair like 100 years ago? Programs from 1913 and 1915 featured events focused on children's exhibits. Committee members included A. W. Yowell (Etlan High School), Mrs. M. E. Smith (Border School in Shelby) and others from various "Graded" schools spread throughout the county. Student entries were generally required to have a written report that included an estimate of labor costs. There were agricultural classes for the best acre of corn and the best ten ears of corn. Homemaking classes focused on food prep, basketry, and crocheting. Clothing construction featured best buttonholes, best clothing patches, and "Best Darned Hose." Academic categories included map drawing, penmanship, and original compositions. Both buggies and horse harnesses were included in business advertisements. The fairs were held on a Thursday and Friday in November.

The 1926 fair moved to mid-October and is believed to be the second fair held at the Madison Court House. According to the program, the admission price was 25 cents for both horse-drawn vehicles and automobiles. In contrast to the earlier programs, 4-H clubs had a significant presence. There were references to a Pig Club, a Bread and Cooking Club, a Sewing Club, and a Poultry Club. An expanded Agriculture Department featured a variety of farm animals and crops, including unfamiliar apple varieties such as King David, Mammoth Black Twig, and Ben Davis.

Delia Ray, author of *Ghost Girl*, wrote about President and Mrs. Hoover's connections with Madison County

Welcome New Members

Pat Fray--Madison, VA

Dave Ashley--Rochelle, VA

Debbie & Kevin Waugh--Madison, VA

Steve Grayson--Madison, VA

Paul Teeter--Albany, GA

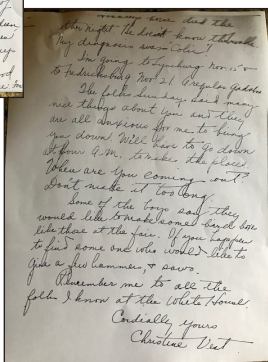
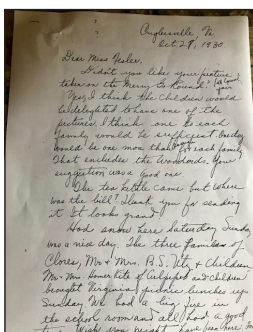
Thanks for your continuing support of the Society!

and the creation of the mountain school before Shenandoah National Park was formed. Ray included a chapter about a 1930 excursion to the local fair made by students with their teacher, Miss Christine Vest. Mrs. Hoover paid \$24.35 for the children to attend the fair. It was believed to be the first trip off the mountain for many of the students. In an October 20, 1931, letter to a Mrs. Butler, Miss Vest described how the children were seated on hay bales in the back of trucks and transported down the mountain to see "alligators, cowboys, ponies for the first time...." at the fair. Drinking red lemonade, chewing gum, and taking balloons home were special treats for the students.

The 1932 fair, under the management of E. O. Breeden, featured the public wedding of James Osborne Clore and Katherine Earle Gibbs on October 12th. Advertised as a George Washington Bi-Centennial event, Katherine wore a replica of Martha Washington's wedding dress. Decorations featured hemlock branches and mountain laurel brought from the Blue Ridge. Rev. C. K. Rhodes and Rev. R. Graham presided at the ceremony. The maid of honor was Amanda Hale and bridesmaids included Helen James, Anna Gibbs, Virginia Goodall, and Lucy Frances Clore. Marilyn Gibbs was ring bearer and best man was Raymond Clore. Mrs. Hoover was among the individuals and businesses who shared gifts with the bride and groom. Those attending the wedding paid 25 cents each and the large number of family members and local attendees helped make the wedding and the fair a big success!

According to information shared by Kelly Mallory of the Madison County Extension Office, there are no accounts of additional fairs until 1948—possibly because of the Depression and World War II. A 1949 fair program referenced the second annual fair held on Saturday, Sept. 24th at Madison County High School (now Waverly Yowell). There were two age defined categories for children as well as one for adults. Admission was 25 cents and special events included a movie, a football game, and a parade. There were more than 200 classes including work dresses, items made from feed bags, and salt rising bread. The most popular prize was a pint of mayonnaise with a pint of sandwich spread, but the best caramel cake earned a walnut chair for the winning cook! From 1951–1990, the "fair" was re-packaged as "Madison County Days" and students were encouraged to enter exhibits at the Culpeper Madison Rappahannock Farm Show held in Culpeper. Beginning in 1991, the "fair" became officially known as "The Madison County Fair," governed by a fair board and organized by committees. 4-H'ers were encouraged to participate.

The Madison County Fair is alive and well in 2019. Today's visitors to the fair can experience new and exciting performances as well as traditional exhibits and crafts that are deeply rooted in local history. The fair board, dedicated to showcasing the best of Madison County, plans what has become a four-day event in mid-July. Located on the Young Farmers' Grounds behind the high school, today's fair has evolved through the years and events such as the Demolition Derby have become new favorites. Among the many traditional activities not to be missed are horseshoe pitching, pie eating contests, mountain music, watermelon eating, and naming the best apple pie! This year's fair, "Homegrown Hospitality & Heritage at the Madison County Fair," also pays special homage to traditional crafts with demonstrations planned on quilting, basketry, and paper making.

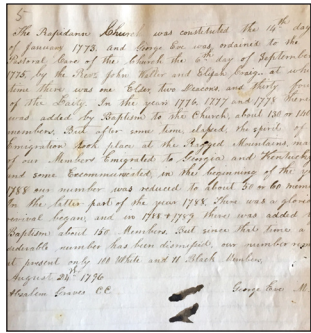


Rapidan Baptist Church—a Pioneering Congregation

By

Kelly Gentry

Rapidan Baptist Church in Wolfstown was officially constituted on January 4, 1773, as Rapid Ann, from the Rapidan river which in turn was named after Queen Anne of England. Original records, which remain beautifully restored, state the congregation consisted of 37 members: one elder, 2 deacons and 34 lay members. At the time of the church's formation, Wolfstown was truly an undeveloped area, quite the opposite of the rolling hills and farm land of the present day. The land was rugged, with dense forestation, and dangers befell many from disease, predatory animals and Indians. Prior to the Revolutionary War, one had to formally petition the County Court of Spotsylvania to gain permission for clearing a road.



Several petitions were successfully made from 1729 through the early 1770s enabling a link among Wolfstown, the Conway River (Greene), Liberty Mills (Somerset), Graves Mill and the "Island", and Hebron Church on the Robinson River. These newly cleared roads led to Wolfstown's becoming known as the "Thoroughfare" area. As such the need for a "meeting house" came to be.



Truly courageous men and women from the leadership at Blue Run Church, in Somerset, and Baptist missionaries formed the church. Elijah Craig was the minister of Blue Run at the time and an avid missionary. He was the first to preach from the pulpit, although not the first minister. (George Eve was the first minister from 1775–1796).

Elijah Craig's preachings can be traced to 1766 in the Somerset area. He was jailed for preaching and spent time in the Orange Jail and a month in the Culpeper Jail, all before preaching at Rapidan Baptist. His perseverance and god-filled spirit and calling to share God's word continued with the formation of Rapid Ann. After its founding, he was hauled from the pulpit again and served time in the Culpeper jail. Several original congregation members were committed to the same jail for matters of simply praying at another member's home. As this period was pre- Revolutionary War and well before the passage of Virginia's 1786 Act for Establishing Religious Freedom, our ancestors were still subjects of King George and The Church of England. Both preachers and congregants also ran afoul of the local churchwardens, as all Virginians were legally required to tithe to the Anglican Church and attend Anglican worship at least once a month. Early Baptists were routinely subject to both verbal and physical abuse. Congregations of the 1750s through Revolutionary War period gathered at their own risk. Religious persecution was the standard of the day.



As America's population grew, so did the need for other churches within Madison County. From Rapidan, Beth Car was established in 1823, Liberty 1832 and Graves Chapel in 1886. In the past two hundred and forty-six years, Rapidan has had a total of 29 ministers, consisting of 28 men and 1 woman. Still today generational family members from the original congregation serve on committees at Rapidan and regularly attend church.



In 1806, the heirs of Joel Early gave the land where the church currently stands to the congregation. As can best be determined from the records, the church has always stood on the present location. The exact history on the number of buildings on this church property is unknown. Early records show that the "house" was used as a schoolhouse from 1794 to 1800 and led by Mr. Porter. He taught children from the congregation, as was a common practice for churches of the day. Sunday school was unknown in the early churches of all denominations. The first reference to a Sunday school in this church was in 1882. At the February business meeting of 1882, Mr. O. Carpenter and Mr. Thad Nicol were appointed to conduct a Sunday school and hold a prayer meeting every second Sunday.



An additional historical note is that the church and its members established themselves as being opposed to slavery and petitioned lawmakers to abolish it before the Civil War. Some congregational members did own slaves; however, black members were part of this congregation well into the late 1870s as noted in the

church record. As of 1870, there were 43 black members. Everyone was welcomed and received into the church. (Rock Hall was established in November 1874). Given Rapidan's proximity to the Capital of the Confederacy in Richmond, this was surely progressive thought for this period in American history.

In 1800 the church was fully repaired and in 1878 the old church was auctioned for \$51.00 as it had deteriorated beyond repair. Mr. Strother Dawson won the contractor's bid to build a new church for \$357.00. Church records since that time note that a bell tower was added. The bell still rings every Sunday promptly at 10 am. Around 1912, shutters were repaired and glass windows installed. Between 1948 and 1950, the church's two front entrances were renovated to form one unified entrance (see photos of doors). New classrooms to the rear of the church and brick veneering of the exterior were also added. In 1963, three additional classrooms, a kitchen and fellowship hall, and two bathrooms were constructed with a gift from Mr. Grover C. Miley and dedicated to the memory of his wife, Mrs. Nora Miley and her twin sister, Mrs. Nannie Blankenbaker.



In 2018, a community playground was gifted by several members of the church and an expanded kitchen/fellowship hall was constructed to augment the 1963 fellowship hall. During the early phases of this project, Deacon Brad Gentry found remnants and parts of a gas chandelier in an outdoor property shed. The chandelier had hung in the church from the early 1870s until the 1950s. This beautiful piece of history was reassembled and electrified and now hangs proudly in the new addition. Throughout the history of the church, many members and families have given generously to the church through gifts of lighting, repairs, railings, sidewalks and furniture, to name just a few. Continuing the legacy of the original members remains a beacon for this church as she looks toward the middle of the twenty-first century and beyond.



Fall Luncheon Tea Planned for September 25

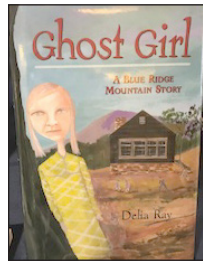
In the midst of summer, it seems like fall is a long way off, but it will be here soon. Plans are underway for the next luncheon tea scheduled for 12:30 p.m. on September 25. Our chefs are testing recipes so we can soon finalize the menu. As usual, there will be some new items along with the popular ones that have become familiar. You'll just have to join us to find out what will be new! We promise you will feel your \$28 donation to the historical society is a good investment.

Get together a group and enjoy a pleasant time together or come as a single and meet new friends. We can easily accommodate groups of four or six. To reserve your seat, call 540-547-4398, and leave a message with your name, telephone number and the number of reservations you are requesting. You will receive a call back to confirm your reservation. If you prefer, reserve by email to maryhaught@hughes.net. If the past is any indication, the limited spaces will fill rather quickly, so don't delay. We are grateful to the Madison Museum staff for making it possible to again offer ground floor accessible seating for the tea. Those spaces are limited and will be filled on a first request basis.

Gift jars of the popular tea served at these events will be available for sale, so be thinking of friends you can treat to a container of Kemper Tea for Christmas or other gift occasions. Or, you might want a supply for yourself.

We look forward to another successful tea to provide funds for the Madison County Historical Society. As always, all expenses for preparing the food are donated by the chefs, so your entire \$28 is a donation to the Society.

We hope to see you at 12:30 on Wednesday, September 25 at the Kemper Residence, 412 North Main Street in Madison!

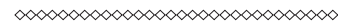


GHOST GIRL PRESENTATION

7th grade students at Wetsel Middle School read the book *Ghost Girl* as part of their English curriculum. Mike Hale found out that the teachers really

wanted to have someone come to the classes and talk first-hand about the history portrayed in the book. We reached out to Jim Lillard, who willingly joined Mike Hale and Max Lacy for a visit to the school to present a program for the students. Jim and Max talked about what went on in the mountain during that era. Jim also showed numerous slides, including one showing a photograph of the real Ghost Girl. Another showed Lou (Mrs. Herbert) Hoover talking to the class at the Hoover School which she was responsible for building.

The six 7th grade classes at Wetsel came two classes at a time, so we did the program three times. The presentation was well received by the students, and we were very glad for the opportunity to visit the school and give each student a copy of our brochure to take home with them. We received a very nice thank you note from the teachers involved.

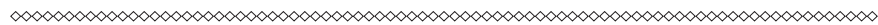


BRHP

The dedication of Greene County's Blue Ridge Heritage Project Memorial was held on Saturday, July 6, 2019. The rock chimney is located in Stanardsville, VA, near the County Office Buildings. The eight counties which surround the Shenandoah

National Park are participating in this project. Names of the displaced families are listed on the chimneys. Surrounding the chimney in Stanardsville are kiosk panels with pictures of the churches, schools, and homes that tell the story of "living on the mountain".

Warren Breeden and his grandson Bryce Breeden of Madison, VA represented their Breeden family at the dedication.



Colonial Dames Visit Madison

Members of the Blue Ridge Committee of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the Commonwealth of Virginia paid a visit to the Kemper Residence and Madison County Historical Society's Museum on June 13 following a lecture and quarterly meeting in the Madison County Administration Building. The thirty-four ladies, mostly from the Charlottesville area, were greeted by Max Lacy and Judy Mahanes prior to their tour of the Residence which was staffed by MCHS volunteers and board members. The visitors thoroughly enjoyed the tour; most had never visited historic Main Street Madison. The Colonial Dames actively promote our national heritage through historic preservation, patriotic service and educational projects. Members are descendants of ancestors who rendered service to our country prior to July 5, 1776. Society Volunteers thoroughly enjoyed visiting with these ladies!

Nash's Presentation at May Meeting

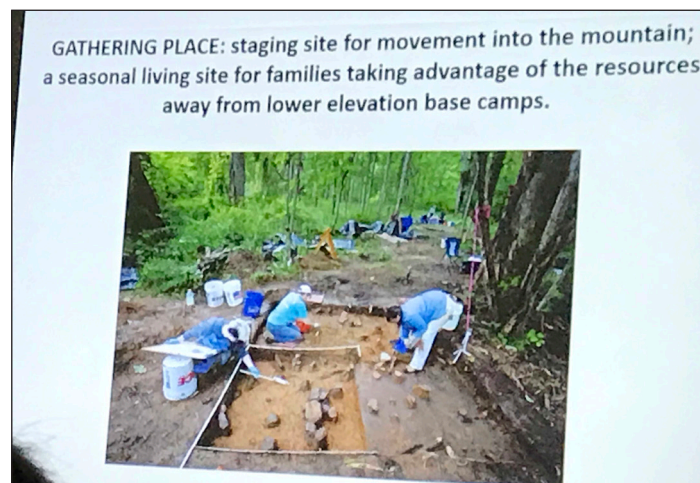
Our speaker for the May 19th Madison County Historical Society quarterly meeting was a familiar and favorite individual, Dr. Carole Nash. Dr. Nash is Associate Professor in the Department of Integrated Science and Technology and the Oliver Senior Endowed Professor in the College of Integrated Science and Technology at James Madison University. The topic of her presentation was "Gathering Places: Native American Sites in the Blue Ridge."

Madison Archeological Project (MAP) is part of a 20-year project of the Park Service. Eleven tribes have been recognized in Virginia and researchers are working on the Monacan tribe. Mountain archaeology is very difficult and they have created a data base to document findings all over Madison County. The latest findings in the Old Rag area are at Nethers. The focus is on stream hollows as gathering places for those moving from the Blue Ridge into the Piedmont. Lasers have been used to sense bare earth without trees. The flows are not only water but debris. Because the area is so popular (Old Rag is one of 25 best hikes in the Country says National Geographic), more parking space was needed at the base of Old Rag. It was necessary to study the archaeology at two sites before creating the lot. Stone walls were found, along with old roads and Native American artifacts starting 12,000 years ago. The sites were very popular seasonally and peaked about 5,000 years ago probably because of the development of the oak, hickory and chestnut forest.

The People: Hunters and Gatherers (Foragers). They were not farmers but moved around in groups, sharing. Waterfalls were sacred so there were gathering places near them where one finds offerings of pottery, tools, etc. Larger camps were found on or around the Hughes River. People would move up into the mountains when the weather heated up. Old Rag trail and Rt 600 were Indian trails. They moved from the Piedmont through the Blue Ridge and into the Shenandoah Valley and back. Artifacts show paths (flakes of rock and tools). The tools reflect work done by women (pestles and scrapers) and by men (hunting tools). The women made baskets from the bark of yellow poplars.

Challenges at the site: The site has been disturbed through the years by stratigraphy and soil deflation: layers collapse and artifacts on top fall to the base making them difficult to date, possibly because of logging. Removal loosens the soil and rain washes the soil away and exposes artifacts. For these reasons, the proposed location of the parking lot is not considered a significant site.

After this most interesting presentation, many questions were asked. Dr. Nash answered all with an ease reflecting her extremely broad breadth of knowledge.



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Return Service Requested



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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 and donations, major sources of income for the Society, are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. Membership application forms are available at the Museum and on-line at www.madisonvahistoricalociety.org. (Click "About Us" and scroll down the page.) Memberships run for one calendar year and include the following categories:

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

For more information about any of our activities, call the Society Office at 540-395-5119. Leave a message if no one answers so we may return your call. Our email address is madisonvahistory@gmail.com.

Our physical address is 412 N Main Street in the town of Madison.