

Preserving Yesterday Enriches Tomorrow



Madison County
Historical Society

www.madisonvahistoricalsociety.org

November 2022

Betty Mallory Talks Cooking!

The speaker for the November 20th Madison County Historical Society quarterly meeting will be Betty Jane Utz Mallory. The subject of her presentation will be her cookbook "To Be Blessed" which is a "Lifetime Collection of Her favorite Recipes from Family and Friends."

Betty is a lifetime resident of Madison County. A 1962 graduate of Madison County High School, she has worked as legal secretary for the Commonwealth's Attorney in Madison, begun a catering business which has grown over 25 years and is now retired from the Madison County Public Schools System. One of her lifetime dreams was to write her very own cookbook and upon retirement from the Madison County Schools system the dream began to happen and "To Be Blessed" was born.

In her cookbook she has included stories of living on a farm most of her life. In her words, "We planted, harvested, and preserved most of our food, raised chickens, hogs, and beef, cut firewood for heat, and made many items from the cotton bags that the chicken feed came in. Some of the stories are of butchering hogs, making apple butter, gigging for frogs, just to name a few. There are ten categories in the book and I have been told that the recipes range from caviar to hog's feet." The book has been beautifully illustrated by Pat Lattin who will be in attendance with Betty.



In the program Betty wishes to share her early life on a farm, carrying on family traditions, and many years of collecting recipes. Whether you were born on a farm, have lived on a farm or have been a city dweller, this will be an entertaining and informative program.

The meeting will be held in the Madison County Administrative building auditorium on November 20, 2022, at 2pm. Everyone is invited to attend.

SCENES FROM SKILLS DAY ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2022



A Note From The President

Probably the most important thing that has happened since the last newsletter is the donating of the Graves Mill Park to the Madison County Historical Society by the founder and builder of the park (Doug Graves). It is a great addition for us, and we would like to invite everyone to stop for a visit in downtown Graves Mill. It is open year-round and there is no admission charge to visit. See photos across top of page 1.

The Mountain Museum porch enclosure is almost finished on the outside, thanks to the efforts of Darren and Morgan McKinney. We hope to have this new room completed when the Museum opens for a new season in March 2023.

Many thanks to the Mountain Skills folks for their demonstrations on Sept. 11th. The weather held off and there was a big and enthusiastic crowd to watch their work. Many folks visited inside the museum as well; 60+ people signed the guest book.



Thanks also go to the "TEA" team for another outstanding fundraiser for us. They never fail to do wonders.

The Board thanks Ed Berry for organizing a great volunteer party for the people who keep this organization running. The really nice atmosphere at Blue Quartz Winery and Shotwell Hollow Brewery made it a perfect place to have such a party.

Penn Bowers has a good program planned for Nov. 20 in the County Auditorium at 2PM. Read his article on page 1 to learn who and what is planned.

Finally, don't forget to stop by our museum gift shop in search of holiday gifts. We will be open regular hours through Dec. 16, 2022, at Madison Museum at Kemper and through Dec. 18, 2022, at the Mountain Museum at Criglersville.

Thanks for your support
Max Lacy, President
Madison County Historical Society

TEA REPORT

Supporters of the Kemper Teas again made the September Drive By event a success. We are grateful that friends who have supported the Society by attending indoor teas have remained loyal even as circumstances change and we adapt to those changes for the comfort and safety of all concerned.



The Spring Tea is planned for March 29, 2023. Closer to that time we will evaluate health considerations and decide whether it will be held inside the Kemper Residence or again have a Drive By format. The Tea Team looks forward to planning a menu, preparing food, and seeing friends and supporters of the Society in the spring.

Membership Report

We welcomed the following new members during this quarter:

Joanna Donnell--Littleton, CO
Stuart & Karen White--Madison, VA
Jeanne Bragg & William Payne--Madison, VA
Carolyn Smith--Madison, VA
Lorrie & Jonathan Noggle--Glen Allen, VA
Elizabeth Kloker--Ruckersville, VA
Dominique Kosteluc--Ruckersville, VA
Margaret & Don Daniel--Madison, VA

Renewal letters for 2023 will be mailed in December. Please watch your mailbox and return the form with your payment and notation of any changes in your information. Getting the form back is a big help in keeping our membership file up to date.

From the Editor....

Not much prose from me this time. Go directly to page three and read about GWCRHS. Kathleen Hoffman has researched and written a beautiful piece about a high school that stayed in business for a mere twenty years. Thanks to Kathleen, and thanks to all who made Carver the special place it is.

The usual reminders:

- Past issues of this newsletter may be accessed at www.madisonvahistoricalsociety.org.
- Print subscribers can go to the same site to enlarge photographs and see the newsletter in full color.
- We welcome feedback and letters to the editor. Our addresses are madhistory467newsletter@gmail.com for electronic submissions and PO Box 467, Madison, VA 22727 for paper.

~~~Judy Mahanes



# George Washington Carver Regional High School

By

Kathleen Hoffman

When the George Washington Carver Regional High School for African-American students opened on Oct. 1, 1948, it was the cooperative venture of Madison, Culpeper, Orange and Rappahannock counties. The students who first inhabited its halls welcomed the experience of mingling with each other, and were perhaps a bit overwhelmed by the building. The H-shaped structure had 24 rooms, including a library and classrooms, a workshop and home economics department, and perhaps most exciting, an auditorium/gymnasium that would seat about 600. Some of these youngsters had spent their educational lives in one-room schools that didn't even have running water.



*Photo courtesy of Kathleen Hoffman*

But what most of the fledgling high school students really didn't experience, then or earlier, was surprise. This wonderful new opportunity was the result not of a sudden decision by the authorities to do something to make their education more comprehensive, but the outcome of years of community effort; effort by parents, community leaders, Parent-Teacher Associations, and black church congregations. Funds had been raised through various methods, including a drama club that charged admission to their periodic plays; local governments had been prodded; even legal action had been floated as a possibility. The Wayland-Blue Ridge Baptist Association was included in the list of active backers.

African-Americans in Virginia had lobbied for educational improvement for years. In Carver's region, Culpeper and Orange counties offered very limited secondary programs, mostly in their training schools, while Madison and Rappahannock did not have education for black students beyond seventh grade.

Happily, Madison was not a complete wasteland for its high school age students, though. People did what they could. High school subjects were taught at Madison Training School by Mrs. Virgelia Price and by Mrs. Emma Davis at Radiant Colored School, according to remembrances by retired Judge Edward Berry of Madison. These were people who made the extra effort to offer a boost to students who wanted and of course needed the education. These youngsters often ended up as success stories, reflecting well on their teachers and the county officials who helped make courses available.

Sisters Jane and Charlotte Carpenter, who attended Carver and are now officers in the George Washington Carver Alumni Association (GWCAA) 4-County Museum just inside the front door of the school building, remember that students who wanted to go to school beyond 7th grade often went north to live with relatives so they could attend high school. One went as far as New York; and it was common to go to Washington, D.C. Other destinations were Bluefield, Virginia and West Virginia, Manassas and probably Amelia and Prince Edward counties.

Wherever someone had a connection with a nearby black high school with availability, parents who wanted the best for their children reached out. The life and career limits for a child who only got as far as seventh grade were obvious.



*Photo courtesy of Kathleen Hoffman*

But parents were not pleased with the extra expense, or with having someone else act as temporary guardians and perhaps homework assistants for their children. The law, of course, said that education under segregation had to be "separate but equal." It was not. Older black students in Madison had attended Madison Training School on Thrift Road, and starting in 1944 the county contracted with Culpeper County Schools to send up to 45 high school students to Culpeper Training School. Again, there were limited educational offerings, tending toward ways to make a living.

Education was a big deal in the Carpenter home. The sisters, who had older brothers, spent their elementary years in the Scrabble School, and moved from Rappahannock to Culpeper while attending Carver. With their parents, "there was never any conversation around what you could NOT do," Jane, now Jane Pollard, recalls. And the parents were willing to do their part and push for the high school.

After a fair amount of prodding, organization began, in a time when local governments and school boards were facing a lot of educational needs because of the neglect of construction and repairs during the Depression and World War II. Actually, as far back as 1939, three Madison parents, John Jentons, Dan Washington and J. Clyde Garnett, appeared before the school board to advocate for establishing an accredited high school for black students in Madison. The result was discussions held with neighboring counties about a regional school. Several years later, in September of 1945, Madison school superintendent A. Waverly Yowell asked the Assistant Superintendent of Negro Education in Virginia, A.G. Richardson, to make a presentation to the school board about what the state was doing to improve the education of black students.



*US 15, Culpeper County*

But it wasn't until October 8, 1946, that a group called the "Control Board" for the proposed school met in the Culpeper School Board office. Members were E.B. Clore for Madison, John G. Carpenter, Fred Huffman, and Dr. C.E. Johnson. Also present were the superintendents for five counties including Greene, which was involved early but dropped out after concluding that commuting to Jackson P. Burley High School in Charlottesville was more feasible. They were D.N. Davidson, Yowell (superintendent at that time for both Madison and Greene), Quincy D. Gasque and Paul Hounshell. Hounshell, the Culpeper superintendent, was made the executive officer.

The boards of supervisors of all four counties requested an allocation of funds from the governor of Virginia, then William C. Tuck. The grant came, and with it apparently the conclusion that the regional high school was the way to go financially and in keeping with the law. An early decision was made to locate the school in Culpeper County, on 11.15 acres of land on Route 15 toward Orange, to be purchased from Noah Price, an African-American farmer, at \$175 an acre.

The school boards requested county funding, in amounts determined by the percentage of black students from each locale participating. When the dust had settled and the contract let, the (still preliminary) amounts were Culpeper - \$152,000; Orange - \$139,800; Madison - \$63,480; and Rappahannock \$44,720, according to the Virginia Star, then the weekly newspaper for Culpeper. A state literary loan of \$10,000 at two percent interest was added into the funding. Architects Eubank and Caldwell were chosen.

On September 4, 1947, Madison's Board of Supervisors approved \$7,935 to begin the new school construction, according to the Madison Eagle. The Eagle article added that "When completed this will be the most modern and up-to-date Negro high school in this section of the state. This size school will make possible a comprehensive offering which could not be provided by any one of the four counties separately." With some pride, the article noted that "This school may well set a pattern for the state in the development of comprehensive Negro schools in divisions where the population is too small for a county high school."

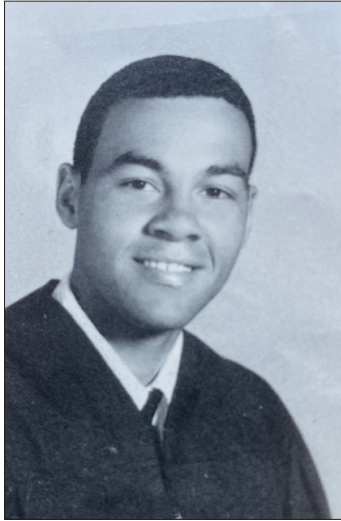
There had been a glitch or two along the way. An August 21 story in the *Star* declared that the Carver construction bids had been found too high. The low bid of \$349,444 was not accepted. The regional board had to get the approval of each of the four counties before it could proceed with the more expensive than expected plan. Approvals were forthcoming pretty quickly, though, even while Culpeper was embroiled in a major public uprising over the cost of its own planned new high school for white students.



*Jane Pollard (L) & Charlotte Carpenter  
Photo courtesy of Kathleen Hoffman*

But in early September, it was announced that the school boards and boards of supervisors of the four counties in special meetings had approved acceptance of the low bid of \$349,444 by the Goodes Construction Company of Charlotte, N.C.

The *Star* listed other costs as land surveys, \$1,950; architects' fees, \$18,000; equipment for the building, \$26,500; and water supply arrangements, \$4,000. The State Board of Education and the governor appropriated \$75,000 from the vocational fund for the construction and equipment of the vocational training part of the project.



*Alton Robinson*

Construction of the school actually began on Nov. 1, 1947. It was planned for 450 students and had space for the impressive menu of classes that had been discussed not only locally but in state and national settings. There would also be room on the acreage for outdoor sports, since teams were to be established.

But the pace of construction was uneven, and when schools for whites in the four counties opened the next year, on Sept. 9, 1948, the beginning of schools for African-Americans was delayed because Carver had not been completed. But according to the September 23 *Eagle*, Yowell announced that Carver would open on Oct. 1. "All high school students in the eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh grades will apply for enrollment on Oct. 1." (High school in Virginia did not then have a 12th grade.)

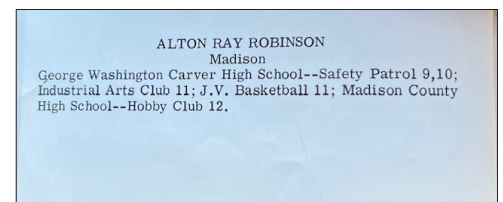
There would be a workshop for faculty at the school September 27 - 30. The faculty for that first year were principal Harvey Freshmon; Mrs. Stella Freshmon and Mrs. Fannie Staff, home economics; Overton Johnson, agriculture; Howard Perry, shop; Mr. Hiawatha Smith, librarian; Mrs. Viola P. Blair and Mrs. Jackson M. Brown, English; Mrs. Carrie Michie, Spanish and math; Mr. Frederick Hawkins, history; Miss Ceola Green, history; Mrs. Irene Perkins, math; Mr. Arthur Morton, math; Miss Alease Smith, science; Miss Ruth Goodin, French; Mrs. Dorothy Porter, music; Mr. Frederick Black, science; and Miss Vivian Green, English. For some years, a few of the teachers lived in an apartment building added especially for them, adjoining the school, since affordable housing was scarce.

Plans had been completed for transportation. Yowell announced that driver O. C. Price would run his bus by way of Brightwood, Leon, Clarkson, and White's Shop (in Culpeper County) to the Carver school. Isaiah Tolliver was to extend his route from Radiant on 230 and go on Route 15 to the school. So George Washington Carver Regional High School opened its doors on Friday, Oct. 1, 1948, to 452 students and approximately 20 teachers. Madison and Rappahannock had smaller numbers of students attending than the two larger counties.

On opening day, according to the *Star*, pupils were conducted to the auditorium to be welcomed by their new principal. "In his welcoming address," the *Star* reported, principal Freshmon (who was the principal all through the school's operation until the last year, and is remembered fondly in the museum.) In his talk, the newspaper noted, he "reminded the students that the new school building, so beautifully equipped, was now their own. He emphasized that in the care which they exercised to keep the building beautiful they were preserving their own property." African-Americans had indeed taken ownership - at first it was planned to name the school Cedar Mountain, for the location, but the firm choice of those whose children would attend was George Washington Carver. The widely revered Carver, born into an enslaved family, was an agricultural scientist and very prolific inventor who promoted crops other than cotton for the long-term health of the land.

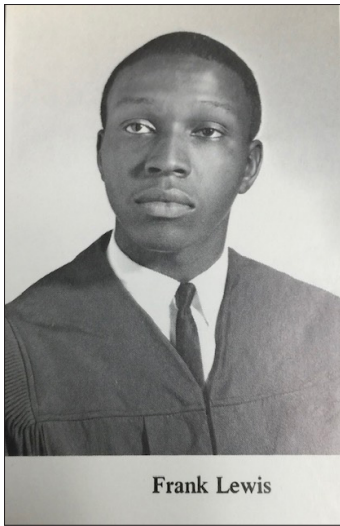
Finally, the dedication was held, at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 23. The program began with the first two verses of "America," featuring the choral group of the Manassas Industrial School as well as from the new school. The brand-new Carver band also played.

The main address was by Dr. J.N. Ellison, president of Virginia Union University. Another speaker was Charlie Coleman, a black man who had been a leader in advocating for educational advances like the construction of Carver - the title of his talk was "A Layman's Impression." Indicating the importance of the event, State Superintendent of Public Instruction G. Tyler



*Alton Robinson, MCHS '66*





Frank Lewis

Frank Lewis, MCHS '68  
Photo courtesy of Les Daniel,  
GWCAA

Miller as well as the president of the State Board of Education, Black Newton, also spoke.

Winding up the well-attended event were tours of the building by the public.

So George Washington Carver Regional High School began with fanfare, and as far as some former students were concerned it more than lived up to its billing. Soon, it began producing graduates who did well for themselves and their communities. The first yearbook, for the Class of 1949, noted that "this school has better facilities, more teachers and more students, and we rejoice." The yearbook also noted that the class had "the honor of being the first fruits from Carver and have been so honored to lay the foundation of future graduating classes."

Rev. Frank Lewis, the veteran pastor of Antioch Baptist Church in the town of Madison, attended Carver, but began not quite soon enough to complete his high school career and graduate there. After integration, the school operated for a year but then the busing provided from outside of Culpeper was stopped. "I went there for four years, 8th grade to 11th," Lewis said, but then transferred to Madison High for his senior year. "I wanted to graduate from there but the timing didn't work." A few Culpeper students continued at Carver to graduate in 1968.

He found the Carver experience memorable, and good preparation for going on to Germanna Community College. "People came together from different counties gladly because so many had had to go to Washington to school." There were drawbacks - Lewis grew up at Uno, and the commute was bad. "It was dark when we left home and dark when we got back" because the bus he rode had to go as far as Twyman's Mill to pick up passengers. He knew people from all four counties in ways that students hadn't before.

Rev. Lewis, who is chair of the GWCAA and also on the museum committee, said the association recognized the remaining members of the first class, 1949, a few years ago, but since the recognition some graduates have died and there is almost no one left.

Jimmy and Alma Frye of Criglersville both went to Carver, and Alma agrees that it was with some regret that people transferred back to their own counties - but the commute really was prohibitive. Still, even with the long bus ride, "I enjoyed it," she remembers. But she was proud when her brother, Alton Robinson, became the first black student to graduate from MCHS.



Museum photo courtesy of  
Kathleen Hoffman



Museum photo courtesy of  
Kathleen Hoffman

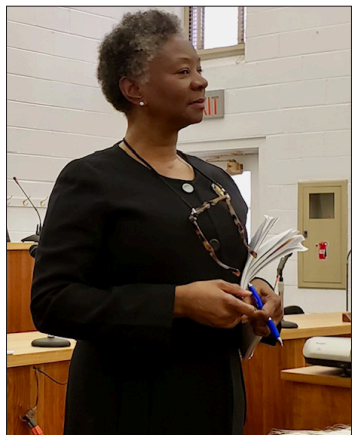
She added that "a lot of people couldn't believe how many counties went to one school, but we got along fine." Everyone sympathized with those from Rappahannock County, who had a particularly lengthy trip.

Alma Frye was at Carver from 1960 to 1963 and returned later to get her General Education Diploma. She was a very popular and respected school bus driver for some time, and then became a Certified Nursing Assistant. Jimmy graduated and then went to Germanna.

A student who went to Carver all five years was Doris Turner, who lived in Orange but has been a familiar face in Madison, including quite a while with the Literacy Council of Madison County. Going to Carver was a shock - she had never been on a school bus before, and had to walk about a mile from her home to catch hers. She was only 13 or 14, and the teachers at the regional school quickly became like parents to her.

Turner had lived an isolated life as a child, in a household where laundry was still done on a washboard, and she was expected to help with it. She recalls refusing to talk when she started school. A huge marker for her was graduating from high school, in 1960, the first of her family to do so.

Other surprises were the loud bells and the change of classes – plus having to learn a locker combination! She was a majorette, and happily recalls an excellent band, and good football teams. The classes and activities “bonded us,” she says, and she made lifelong friends among the regional mix of teens. One other strong memory was of some stiff discipline from the school when a cousin was teaching her to smoke cigarettes at Carver; the worst part was that a suspension kept her from seeing her friends and teachers for a while.



*Terry Miller, Museum Curator*

The Carpenter sisters also found the atmosphere friendly but not exactly light-hearted. The students were there to get an education, they recall. Their three older brothers all graduated from GWC, and their three cousins were part of the first graduating class. Jane went there but transferred to Culpeper for her senior year. After college, she taught 6th grade in Culpeper for 31 years. Carver alumni became teachers, coaches, business people and of course parents interested in education. After marrying, Doris Turner was with the school system in Orange for 25 years and worked for social services. She also received further education at Germanna.

Then, in 1954, came the Supreme Court decision in the Kansas case *Brown v. Board of Education*, which established that segregation of children in schools was not “separate but equal” and would have to end. It took a while for states to act “with all deliberate speed,” as they were ordered to do, and desegregate schools. Carver last operated in 1968, and its students returned to their home counties to continue their education in their newly-integrated high schools. Pearl Hines Lynch was the principal at Carver for the last year, 1967 – 68.

Since, Culpeper County has invested more than \$1 million in purchasing, renovating and improving the structure in its new guise as the Carver Center. A plan completed in 2015 was continuing in 2022, with more educational and vocational uses for the property being added. The Culpeper extension office had begun the move to establish its operations in a large segment of the building, and other educational offerings ranged from welding to technology. The alumni group has a well-designed and well-researched museum in the room that was the library. The museum, curated by historian Terry Miller of Suffolk, has plans for marking the school’s 75th anniversary in the coming year.

Efforts were underway in 2022 to restore the façade so that the original name of the facility will be displayed. The past was a proud one, but apparently the future will be pretty remarkable too.



*Photo courtesy of Les Daniel, GWCAA*

Visit [www.carver4cm.org](http://www.carver4cm.org) for more information about the museum and [www.gwcaa.org](http://www.gwcaa.org) to reach the Alumni Association.

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### Address 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.madisonvahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.madisonvahistoricalsociety.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](mailto:madisonvahistory@gmail.com).

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