

Preserving Yesterday Enriches Tomorrow



Madison County
Historical Society

www.madisonvahistoricalsociety.org

August 2023

"TAKE ME BACK TO THE MOUNTAINS I CALL HOME"

On Sunday September 10, 2023, the Madison County Historical Society invites the public to visit the Memorial and the Mountain Museum in Criglersville dedicated to the memory of those families who lived in our local mountains before they became a portion of the Shenandoah National Park.

In 2012 Jim Lillard was involved with the Blue Ridge Heritage Project which was projecting a plan to memorialize these displaced mountain folk. Through his hard work and with the sponsorship of the MCHS a permanent memorial was constructed and dedicated on November 8th, 2015. Soon thereafter the idea emerged for obtaining the use of the small cottage at the Criglersville school for the purpose of making it a museum to commemorate the families of Madison removed from the mountains. Primarily through the efforts of MCHS president Max Lacy and with the help of other dedicated MCHS members

(not named here but who will receive their reward in heaven) this project became a reality and continues to grow. It is open to the public every Sunday from 1:00 to 4:00 PM or by appointment.



Photo Courtesy Kenneth Yowell



Clyde Jenkins

The MCHS has had two consecutive September open houses at the Mountain Museum highlighting skills of the mountain people. On this Sunday September 10, from noon to five we want to take you "back to the mountains those mountain people called home" with visits to the permanent Memorial and the growing Museum and demonstrations of many of the skills which those people possessed such as basket making, fiber art, making soap, spinning and weaving, quilt making, butter churning, and cross cut sawing. This year we eagerly await the visit of a Model A Ford car. Plan to listen to some Blue Grass music (yes, those people played music, generally banjo and fiddle), look for a mountain person roaming around and watch for other surprises.

Please join us at the Memorial and Mountain Museum in Criglersville on Sunday September 10th from noon to five as we Take You Back to the Mountains These People Called Home.

A Note From The President

Newsletter time again. I will try to highlight some of our activities. We conducted a walking tour in conjunction with the Fourth Grade at Waverly Yowell School in late May. Six classes of 4th graders, their teachers, some parents, and Madison County Schools Assistant Superintendent Cathy Jones walked to the Courthouse and back to school. The tour was well received by all. Compliments go to our county employees for doing an outstanding job of explaining things to the students. Thanks also go to our elected officials for their excellent help in carrying out this project. And of course, we do not want to exclude our own volunteers; they always do a fine job on these types of projects. See the article on page three for more details.

Mountain Skills Day is planned for September 10, 2023, from Noon until 5 PM at the Mountain Museum in Criglersville. The article on page one of this issues explains in detail what will be taking place.

Kevin Morgan has been doing a lot of hiking and interviewing in Shenandoah National Park for his upcoming project (SNP52) about the families that were displaced to form SNP. The goal of this project is threefold: produce content that educates visitors about the park, provide supporting "How To" videos for the Hiking Challenge Trails, and share the stories of Shenandoah National Park. Quite a few people have already been interviewed at the Mountain Museum as part of this project, and he will be interviewing others as he moves forward. Bits and pieces are now on U-Tube if you wish to see some examples of his work. Mr. Morgan is hoping to have the project published sometime during 2024.

Another local project is finished! The new book, *Shadows of the Blue Ridge Graves Mountain Farm and Lodges and the Graves Family* by Jimmy Graves is now available for purchase at Graves Mountain Lodge and Graves Market and Deli in Syria.

Finally, please visit our museums and encourage your friends and neighbors to do so as well. Normal hours at the Madison Museum at Kemper are 10 AM until 2 PM on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. The Mountain Museum at Criglersville is open on Sundays from 1 PM until 4 PM. Special times can be arranged by calling 540-395-5119. If no answer, leave a message and someone will return your call to make arrangements for your visit. We have lots of items in our gift shops at both Museums if you are looking for a gift that encourages learning about our history.

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

Membership Report

The Society is pleased to welcome the following new members this quarter:

Anne & Eddie Dean-- Aroda, VA

Darryle R Crump--Orange, VA

Fern Hamilton--Culpeper, VA

Sandra Moody--Mtn. City, TN

Cindy May--Amherst, VA

David Caprara--Fredericksburg, VA

From the Editor....

In this issue, we welcome Cindy Taylor to our writing team. I first saw her byline in the Madison County Eagle when she wrote about African American soldiers. When I mentioned the article to several people, their response was "I don't take the Eagle any longer." This reply got me wondering how local news will be communicated now and preserved for the future. I don't have a solution for that, but I did decide to ask Cindy to adapt her article for us! She agreed. Somehow one article developed into the two you will see in this issue. Cindy is a Madison County Historical Society member who also serves on the board of the Madison County African American Historical Society. She is active with the NAACP and serves on the boards of the Piedmont Race Amity Project and the Madison County Library. She is also on the council for the stewardship of the historic Graves Chapel next door to the Graves Mill Park owned by our organization.

You members have the option of receiving your newsletter on paper via the US Postal Service or electronically; it is your choice. I admit that the Society saves money when we don't have to print and mail. However, so long as your dues money keeps coming in, we promise to send paper copies of this newsletter to members who request them. We also welcome your input for future issues. My experience is that great ideas for articles are easy to come by, but identifying people to draft those articles is another story. Volunteer authors are always welcome! Contact me anyway you can!!

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.
- For feedback and letters to the editor, our addresses are: madhistory467newsletter@gmail.com and PO Box 467, Madison, VA 22727.

~~~Judy Mahanes



# The Fourth Grade Comes to Town

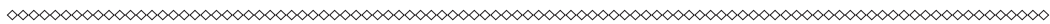
On May 22, 2023, the Historical Society sponsored the second annual Walking Tour of Madison for the Waverly Yowell fourth graders. Six groups of students with their teachers and chaperones left school in fifteen-minute intervals. The first stop on this year's tour was the county administration building at 414 N Main Street. Each class gathered in the BOS auditorium where County Administrator Jonathon Weakley gave an overview of Madison County government. They were then greeted by County Registrar Lauren Eanes and officials in the finance office. The tour proceeded through the back yard of the Kemper Residence to the Library Lawn and on to the Arcade in the center of town. They were greeted by Sheriff Weaver outside of Beasley Park before going to the War Memorial lawn for several presentations. With Sheriff's Deputies stopping traffic, the students safely crossed Main Street to the Courthouse and Clerk's Office complex. After this final stop, they crossed back across Main Street to return to school in time for lunch!

Teacher Brittany Shifflett worked with Historical Society President Max Lacy to organize the morning. The Society offers thanks to the eight teachers and three or four parent chaperones who accompanied the 108 students. We were particularly excited to note that Assistant Superintendent of Schools Cathy Jones did the entire route with one of the groups. The event would not have succeeded without the help of many people; we list them here:

Historical Society members: Penn Bowers, Martha Breeden, Nan Coppedge, Dennis Coppedge, Joe Goodall, Gary Jones (on behalf of the library), Frances Lacy, Max Lacy, Judy Mahanes, Fay Utz, and Beppy White

Officials: Administrator Jonathon Weakley, Registrar Lauren Eanes and her staff, the Finance Office employees, Sheriff Erik Weaver and many deputies, Clare Lillard for the Cooperative Extension Service, representatives of the Department of Social Services, Commonwealth's Attorney Clarissa Berry, Circuit Court Clerk Leeta Louk and employees at the Clerk's Office and Courthouse.

The weather was beautiful for this busy, but very worthwhile, morning!



## Fall Tea is Approaching

Participants have endorsed the recent practice of picking up a lovely bag filled with goodies--prepared and donated by our team of volunteers--and enjoying the treats



and tea with friends in the comfort of home. On Wednesday, September 27, 2023, volunteers will again offer attractive bags filled with the ingredients for your personal Tea Party. We have heard that some serve the savories and sweets at a table fully decked out with china and linens. Others seem to enjoy a more casual atmosphere, but they still have the advantage

of a light luncheon with no work in the kitchen...while supporting the Madison County Historical Society.

Please mark your calendars to pick up your tea essentials at the Kemper Museum entrance on September 27, between 11:30 and noon. Your requested donation remains unchanged...\$30 for each serving. Call Mary Haught at 540-547-3503 or email her at [maryhaught@hughes.net](mailto:maryhaught@hughes.net) to make your reservations.

We appreciate your support of the Society and look forward to seeing you on September 27th!

## Germanna Visits

A busload of Germanna descendants and friends visited the Madison Museum at Kemper and the Mountain Museum at Criglersville on Friday, July 14, 2023. Earlier in the day, the tour explored significant Germanna related sites in Culpeper and Fauquier counties. Between our museums, they went to Hebron Lutheran Church which was founded by Germans as they were coming to Virginia in 1717.

Mary Blow, Susan Theiler, Jean Busboso, and Beppy White greeted the visitors at Kemper. Judy Mahanes and Max Lacy were there, too, before dashing off to Criglersville to get the AC units going full blast. An added "treat" for the visitors in town was getting to experience the Kemper Residence shrouded in plastic for painting. We thank county officials for calling off the painters on the 14th while these special visitors were there.

Germanna folks were back in Madison on Sunday, July 16th, to attend worship at Hebron church, hear a lecture about shape note music notation and early American instruments, and enjoy an indoor picnic lunch that featured desserts provided by Hebron members. Other events during the Germanna reunion week-end included a banquet at Lake of the Woods, lectures on Saturday, a German dinner under the tent during the rain at Salubria, and opportunities to visit archeological sites.



# African American Soldiers Honored

By

Cindy Taylor

Over the past ten years, local historian Zann Nelson has extensively researched the service of more than 300 African American soldiers in the Piedmont region who fought for the United States in the Civil War. Her diligent work surfaced documentation on 71 Black veterans from Madison County, along with 250 additional soldiers from Culpeper, Orange, and Rappahannock counties.

These soldiers were recently honored at a moving remembrance event hosted by Nelson's organizations, Right the Record and History Quest. Held at the George Washington Carver Regional High School in Culpeper on May 20, the event commemorated the 321 soldiers, with each man's name read aloud in a solemn ceremony.

Speakers at the event included Pastor Frank D. Lewis, president of the Carver Alumni Association; Master Sgt. Ludwell Brown (Ret); Keith Price, Commander of the Culpeper VFW Post; and USN Capt. Ed Gantt (Ret). The Culpeper VFW Color Guard provided a presentation of full military honors including flags donated by Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger that had been flown over the U.S. Capitol in honor of the veterans.



*Reading the Names  
Photograph Courtesy Cindy Taylor*



*The James Family  
Photograph Courtesy Luke Christopher*

"This public commemoration has finally recognized and memorialized the African American men from our region who fought for the United States during the American Civil War," states Nelson. "We hope to raise awareness and advance the conversation about the service of these men." Nelson continues her work today as she researches the living descendants of the veterans.

Each of the four counties had at least one descendant of one of the veterans at the event to represent their families and the county. Ken James and several family members were recognized as descendants of their ancestor, Pvt. Benjamin James. In her research, Nelson learned that Pvt. James was born in 1838 in Madison County. His occupation upon enlistment in 1863 was cited as "laborer." He served in the 2nd United States Colored Infantry Company G, after which census records indicate that he returned to Madison County and lived in the area for the rest of his life along with his family.

Mesha Jones, president of the Madison County African American Historical Association, was among the speakers who read the names of the Madison soldiers, along with Charles Landgraf, Ren LeValley, and Paul Williams. An exhibit of the Madison County soldiers' names and the flag presented to the county will be on display in the near future at the historic Odd Fellows Lodge located at 700 S. Main Street in Madison.

Partnering organizations included the Culpeper Branch of the NAACP, also representing Madison and Rappahannock counties; the Piedmont Race Amity Project; the Madison County African American Historical Association; the Carver Alumni Association; and the Carver 4-County Museum.

Zann has another event planned for September in Madison. On September 28, she will take part in Revalation Vineyards' "Sip and Learn" series, leading a program entitled "Madison Men of Color in the Civil War." The event, which is free and open to the public, begins at 6 pm. It will be filmed before a live audience and will include a question-and-answer session. All are welcome.



*Culpeper VFW Color Guard honored the veterans.  
Photograph Courtesy Cindy Taylor*



# MCAAHA: Reaching Out to the Community

By  
Cindy Taylor

The Madison County African American Historical Association (MCAAHA) was established in 2006 under the direction of Madison native Nancy Garnett Williams. Many years of research followed, as Williams worked closely with the local library and circuit court to collect data and documents dating to the 1700s, including wills, marriage licenses, deeds, chancery filings, and other historical material. Interns from James Madison University, Smith College, and Virginia Commonwealth University assisted in the research.

Williams helped oversee the establishment of a collection of files to assist local families in their genealogical searches. Through the years, she also collected artifacts, photos, publications, and other memorabilia connected to local African American history. These included items related to the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, founded in Madison County in 1880; and late 19th- and early 20th-century letters, papers, receipts, tools and equipment belonging to Mrs. Ellen Stewart, one of the successful entrepreneurs of Madame C.J. Walker's hair products.

With the proper care of these artifacts in mind, Williams collaborated with the University of Virginia's Special Collections Library to archive many of the items from the Odd Fellows collection. She also created a special display now on exhibit in the Madison County Historical Society Museum in the Kemper Residence.

Williams' stewardship efforts have extended to buildings in Madison County that are central to the community's African American Heritage. Notable among these are the early 20th-century Odd Fellows Lodge, located at 700 S. Main Street, and the former Red Rooster Juke Joint in the Elly neighborhood. Work has taken place in recent years to restore these properties, and the lodge now hosts meetings of the MCAAHA and has several items on display.

"The lodge organization was an important part of Madison's late 19th and early 20th-century history," says Williams. "Members of the lodge hosted meetings and events, and did much to support African American families in our community. The Red Rooster Juke Joint was a lively gathering spot for many people in Madison, with great food and musicians performing for crowds of dancers. My Uncle William (Buster) Garnett was the proprietor."

Today, the MCAAHA is entering another phase of activity, with a new board in place and plans for more programs and community outreach, including the development of new exhibits and events. Work is also underway on a new website. Mesha Jones serves as president, working closely with board members Dorren Brown, Pat Frye, Lois Goodall, Ray Goodall, Charley Landgraf, Rev. Frank Lewis, Zann Nelson, Carlotta Smith, Cindy Taylor, Nancy Garnett Williams, and Paul Williams.

The board has recently approved a mission for the non-profit organization, which states: "The MCAAHA's mission is to honor and preserve the rich history and stories of African Americans in Madison County, Virginia, and promote opportunities for all to appreciate African Americans' vital role throughout history. We believe that a deeper understanding will be achieved through education, research, and community engagement; and that an appreciation for our collective American history is essential to building a more inclusive and equitable community for all."

Long-term plans include continued research, special programs and events such as lectures and panel discussions, curriculum development, articles, walking tours, historical markers, public art, and other initiatives. The organization also hopes to work in partnership with other local and state organizations, and to seek grant funding for special projects.

The MCAAHA will host a table at historian Zann Nelson's September 28th event, "Madison Men of Color in the Civil War," part of Revalation Vineyard's "Sip and Learn" series. The free event begins at 6 pm.

"We believe that sharing the true, collective history of our Madison community enlightens and enriches us all," says President Mesha Jones. "It inspires us and brings us closer together. We are excited to share more about our local African American history."



Nancy Williams and Lois Goodall  
Photograph Courtesy Cindy Taylor



The Odd Fellows Lodge  
has a fresh coat of paint.  
Photograph Courtesy Cindy Taylor



The Red Rooster in 2023  
Photograph Courtesy Cindy Taylor

# Carver is Back!



In the November 2022 issue of this newsletter, Kathleen Hoffman discussed the George Washington Carver Regional High School: its inception, funding, construction, opening in 1948, operation, and closing in 1968. The school, located on US 15 between Culpeper and Orange, offered a full secondary school program to African-American students from Culpeper, Madison, Orange, and Rappahannock Counties during its twenty-year life. After full integration of the local school systems allowed students to attend school in their home counties, the building housed vocational and technical training for students within the region. During this period, "Piedmont Vocational School" was carved in the façade over the front door of the school in place of the original name.



Alumni and other friends of Carver School have long wanted to restore its original name. The project took on new urgency this year during the Carver community's celebration of the 75th anniversary of the opening of the school. The building is now property of Culpeper County, the campus has been renamed "The Carver Center" and become the home of several agencies,

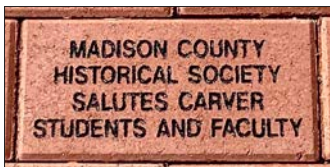


and "George Washington Carver Regional High School" is once again carved on the façade. The restoration work was completed in May 2023. Congratulations and thanks to all who worked to make this happen!

The Carver anniversary celebration concludes with the 75th Jubilee Gala on Saturday, October 21, 2023, at 5:00 pm at Germanna Community College's Daniel Technology Center in Culpeper. To buy tickets (\$75 each), contact Marlene Ware at (540) 825-1371 or Alton Robinson at 703-209-4515. Folks can mail payments to GWCRRHSA, Inc, 9432 James Madison Hwy, #102, Rapidan, VA, 22733-1762. You may also go to [www.gwcrhsaa.org](http://www.gwcrhsaa.org) or [www.carver4cm.org](http://www.carver4cm.org) to make online purchases. (A 3% service fee is applied to all electronic payments.)

## Bricks

One feature of the Carver Campus open to everyone all the time is the brick walkway that extends from the front driveway to the Carver Center sign. The bricks closest to the building honor educators who worked at Carver. Others recognize alumni, friends, and activities of the school along with other aspects of the history of the era. The Madison County Historical Society sponsored the two bricks shown here. They were placed just to the left of the sign when you are facing the highway. Stop by the school to read the bricks and reflect on the history recorded on the walkway.



## From the Past

On August 17, 1929, some 10,000 Madisonians and friends gathered at the Fairgrounds (now Hoover Ridge) to honor President Herbert Hoover as he thanked the county for its hospitality. Facilities for Hoover's summer White House had just been constructed within what is now Shenandoah National Park.

## From the More Recent Past

The Hoover entourage came back! The "President" now bears a strong resemblance to John J. "Butch" Davies. State legislator Emily Couric seems to be riding along in Lou Hoover's seat. We ask your help in identifying the driver and front seat passenger in the photograph here.



Photograph Courtesy John J. Davies



# Open House at Kemper

The May 2023 Madison County Historical Society quarterly program was an Open House at the Society's Museum in the Kemper Residence. The emphasis was on the display of artifacts and photos from the old Odd Fellows Lodge building sitting at 700 South Main Street in Madison. This old building was purchased in 2003 by Nancy Garnett Williams, a native of Madison with a keen interest in the preservation of African-American historical



memorabilia. The articles on display in the Museum are on loan from Nancy through the end of the year and she was present to discuss the items.

The history of the Odd Fellows movement and how eleven African-American men began a chartered chapter here in Madison in 1880 is presented in the May 2023 MCHS Newsletter. Powerfully connected to the community, Odd Fellows stepped in as a brotherhood to help out widows, orphans and the sick, supporting children, paying for funerals when needed and even providing insurance to black people. The lodge was a social fellowship, community organization center and support group all in one.

The slave/servant cabin, the Kemper/McMullen Law Office, and the entire Kemper Residence were also on display for the Open House. If you couldn't make it on May 21st, please know you are welcome anytime during the Museum's regular hours of 10:00 am to 2:00 pm every Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.



*Nancy Garnett Williams & Curator Jennie Hill Robinson at the Open House*



*Broyles Quilt on display at the Museum at Kemper*



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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.