



# Preserving Yesterday Enriches Tomorrow



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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MADISON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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P.O. Box 467, Madison, Virginia 22727

May 2008

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## **MAXINE WEAVER CRANE, AUTHOR OF ASK FOR NOTHING, TO SPEAK AT THE MAY 18<sup>TH</sup> MEETING**

Imagine leaving your child with complete strangers. Imagine complete strangers accepting care of your child. This actually occurred here in Madison County near the site of Duet in the mid eighteen hundreds.

Maxine Weaver Crane, author of Ask for Nothing, will speak at the Madison County Historical Society quarterly meeting on May 18<sup>th</sup> about this unique occurrence involving three Madison families: Alpha and Fountain Deal, Sarah and Rowland Yowell, and Viola and Charlie Weaver.

About 1846, a young mother traveling west with several children in a horse drawn wagon paused at the home of Fountain and Alpha Deal and before continuing her journey, asked the Deals if they could take her daughter, Frances, "off her hands." The Deals accepted the child with reservations because it was unusual that a mother would leave her child with strangers. The mother said there was a condition and it was that the child would always have to be in this house, even if it were sold because she might come back to get her. She told Frances, "Don't ask for nothing." Thus began the unique life of Frances Henderson, this young girl left

behind by her mother. She lived with the Deals, the Yowells and the Weavers and when she died at the age of 84 she was still waiting for the return of her mother.

Maxine Weaver Crane, the author, relates in the foreword of her book that after the death of her grandparents, Charles and Viola Weaver, she went to the public auction of their possessions and found the family Bible among some books to be sold. In it she discovered the deed to the house. The house stands on what is now Weaver Hollow Road in Madison County. The deed stated that whoever bought the home would also have to be responsible for the care of Frances Henderson. She was "never to leave the property." Thus began a thirty year search of family members' memories to discover as much information as possible about this unusual story which culminated in the writing of Ask for Nothing.

The meeting will take place at 2 p.m. Sunday, May 18 in the auditorium of the Madison County Administration building and will be followed by refreshments in the Kemper Residence next door.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Rosalind Coates, Bill Jones, David Jones, John and Nancy Knighting, and Ruth T. Penn joined the Society in the first quarter of 2008. We are

happy to have you with us and hope you have a rewarding membership experience



Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Riley

## **LIEUTENANT COLONEL JEFFREY RILEY SPEAKER AT FEBRUARY MEETING**

Lieutenant Colonel Riley, the Field Historian at the Marine Corps University is presently stationed at Quantico. His presentation topic was the role of the Marine Corps in the construction and maintenance of Camp Rapidan, President Hoover's retreat.

When President Hoover decided he needed a retreat he had three main requirements for it: (1) It should be above 2500 feet; (2) It should be within 100 miles of Washington, DC; and (3) It should have good fly fishing. The property in Madison County fit the bill.

Major Long and a detachment of Marines from Quantico began the task of building the camp. They did the site planning, construction of buildings and brought in both water and electricity. All this had to be done while maintaining the natural setting as much as possible as requested by Mrs. Hoover. The greatest challenge was the construction of a nine mile road from Criglersville to the camp. Seventy-five miles of riding and hiking trails were constructed. Fifty one tons of rock was hauled in for the fireplaces. The Marines constructed most of the furniture. An airfield was constructed on 60 acres in Criglersville and the government paid \$350/year for its use which

was mainly for air mail service. Approximately thirty buildings were constructed for a cost of \$12,000 all of which was paid by the Hoovers. Mrs. Hoover was listed as the architect of the project. Beyond this the Marines built a camp across the river for their own housing.

On May 18, 1929 the Hoovers spent their first night at Camp Rapidan. July 27, 1929 was the first mail delivery. From then on the mail was flown in twice daily. The Hoovers spent many days at the camp and entertained many guests. The most well-known was Ramsey MacDonald, the British Prime Minister who visited in October of 1929. A discussion of the reduction in the size of the world's naval fleets was discussed which led to the London Naval Conference.

After construction the main job of the Marines was to guard the perimeter. The Corps still does this today at Camp David. When Franklin Delano Roosevelt became president he found the terrain to be too rugged and the camp was no longer used as a presidential retreat. The government and Boy Scouts continued to use it as late as the Carter Administration. The camp became part of Shenandoah National Park in July of 1939 and is now interpreted by the Park with ranger-led visits to the camp provided during the Park's open season.

## **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

The Annual Membership Meeting of the Madison County Historical Society was held on Sunday, February 17, 2008. Nominating committee chair Carole Milks presented the following slate of nominees to serve 3-year terms on the Board of Directors beginning immediately: Bill Scholten, Beppy White, Sandy Stowe, and Emily Williams. There were no further nominations from the floor and the proposed slate was approved by voice vote of the membership.

After the program a quorum of the Board of Directors approved the following slate of officers for 2008:

Jane Volchansky, co-president  
Bill Scholten, co-president and treasurer  
Penn Bowers, vice-president  
Maury Hanson, recording secretary  
Carole Milks, corresponding secretary



## GERMANNA TOUR TO MADISON FRIDAY, JULY 18, 2008

Each year the Germanna Foundation holds its three-day reunion with Germanna descendants coming back to the Virginia homeland. The first day of the reunion is devoted to touring various places in Madison County, with lunch at the Hebron Lutheran Church.

Madisonians with Germanna roots are strongly encouraged to meet and greet these Germanna cousins.

Museum volunteers and Historical Society members will again be needed to serve as hostesses and docents in various places.

A new feature this year will be transporting guests to the exact property site of their ancestors where these are inaccessible to the large tour bus. We already have several requests for this so we are trying to accommodate this need.

Lunch will be provided for volunteers assigned to a station. Other Madisonians may also join us for lunch.

Call Emily Williams (540-825-7503) for more information.

### KEMPER SPRING TEA



Pam Krause serves tea to guests

The spring fund raising tea on March 26 was a resounding success! Ten volunteers prepared and served the luncheon to a near-capacity group of guests. In addition to funds from attendees, contributions and sales of tea swelled the coffers to nearly \$800.

The Historical Society Board is grateful to Anne Hughes, Pam Krause, Maryvonne Longley, Genevieve McLearen, Kay Reiss, Heidi Sage, Jill Schreiner and Betty Lynn Yowell as well as Mary and Bob Haught, tea coordinators, for the generous contributions of their time, talents and ingredients for the delicious meal.

September 24 is the tentative date for our fall tea. Watch the summer newsletter for an announcement about when you may begin making reservations. Plan to join your neighbors at this popular community event, where you can have an enjoyable dining experience while supporting future renovations at the Kemper.



The Tea Ladies

Front Row: Heidi Sage, Maryvonne Longley, Genevieve McLearen, Anne Hughes, Mary Haught, Back Row: Pam Krause, Betty Lynne Yowell, Kay Reiss

### ARCADE MUSEUM



Lacy's Store at Oak Park

One of the new exhibits at the Arcade features the old Lacy Store at Oak Park. The original

store was built about 1890 by E.W. 'Ed' Lacy (Maxwell Lacy Jr.'s grandfather) and his brother W. B. 'Bell' Lacy. Most of the items on display are typical of those sold in the old store. The photo is of the interior. The Post Office moved into this store in 1928 with Roy Fry as Post Master until 1934. Ed Lacy had become a Post Master in 1914 but evidently worked in the other store in Oak Park.

The store burned down in 1935 but was soon rebuilt in the same spot by Ed and his son Maxwell Sr. (who became the Post Master in 1940). The present store is owned and run by Maxwell Jr. We appreciate his generosity in allowing us to exhibit so many interesting items from the old store.

## FROM THE ARCADE MUSEUM

Our readers came forth with much information on Dr. Andrew Grinnan and his relatives after publication of last quarter's newsletter about the gift of letters addressed to him. The letters were given in memory of Cathy Jo Rectenbaugh by her father. Cathy Jo was a collector and, after her death, her father felt that the letters should be returned to Madison. One of the letters to Dr. Grinnan was from his brother R. A. (Robert Alexander) Grinnan. The other letter was from his sister, D. M. (Daniella Morton) Grinnan and not his brother as indicated in the last newsletter. The writer regrets the error.

Andrew, Robert and Daniella were the children of Daniel Grinnan, Jr., b. 1771. The following is an excerpt from "Virginia Genealogies" by Rev. Horace Edwin Hayden concerning Daniel Grinnan, Jr.

"He left his home in Mitchell's Station, Culpeper Co., VA, about 1792 and went to Fredericksburg, Virginia. He became a clerk for James Somerville, a merchant from Glasgow, Scotland, who had settled in Fredericksburg 40-50 years before that time, and had become wealthy. Mr. Somerville died about 1798 leaving Mr. Grinnan his executor, and giving him 1,000 pounds of money and a mourning breast pin. Mr. Grinnan succeeded in Mr. Somerville's large business, and having been appointed agent for the collection, under Jay's treaty, of the debts due in Virginia to many extensive Scotch and

English firms prior to the Revolution, he met the Commission of the British Government appointed to ascertain these debts in 1798, at Philadelphia, in order to settle the true amounts due—the British claimants being only allowed to collect half of their debts from the American debtors, the British Government undertaking to pay the other half. The British merchants referred to, had stores in various parts of Virginia. The mass of account books and papers was immense. The task of settlement was a tedious one and occupied several months. At the close of his labors, he received the warm thanks of the Commission, as he did afterwards of the merchants, for the clearness and accuracy with which he had stated the numerous and complicated accounts under consideration. The signing of the Jay's Treaty, giving British merchants authority to collect a moiety of their debts from Americans, after the great losses incident to the war, made General Washington very unpopular in some parts of Virginia.

About the year 1800, Mr. Grinnan formed a co-partnership with John Mundell, of Scotch origin, of Fredericksburg, and George Murray, of Norfolk, Virginia. They formed under the name of Murray, Grinnan, and Mundell. They had counting houses and warehouses both in Fredericksburg and Norfolk. They conducted a large foreign and domestic trade (shipping trade) for a number of years. They were agents for the Argentine Confederation in their war with Spain, for the sale of prizes and furnishing supplies. Their action in this matter gave rise to a suit with the Spanish minister, which attracted a great deal of attention at that day, and in which the minister was defeated, and the sale of prizes allowed. Mr. Grinnan, though living in Fredericksburg, spent a great deal of time on his various estates, being fond of agricultural pursuits."

There are two interesting ties to Madison County. The wife of Daniel Grinnan, Jr., was Helen Buchan Glassell who was born in 1785 at Torthorwald in the Hebron Valley of Madison County. The farm, now owned by Mrs. Margaret Bosserman, is still called Torthorwald. The other connection is that flour from the Graves Mill Grist Mill was shipped to Fredericksburg to Murray, Grinnan and Mundell.

We thank Doug Graves, “Shack” Shackelford and Susan Theiler for giving so much information on the Grinnan family.

## CEMETERY PROJECT



Fieldstones marking graves

Work continues on identifying old graveyards in Madison County.

Twice this spring, Doug Graves has taken volunteers out in the field to locate grave sites that were documented by Earl Estes, Jr. in the Graves Mill area back in the 1980's. Photos and GPS readings were taken for each one. Some graves are marked with an engraved stone and others with fieldstones up on a hill over looking the valley and mountains



Grave marker from old cemetery

We are still looking for these old graveyards so if you know of one and are not sure if it has been surveyed, please call Sandy Stowe at 948-6689 or the Arcade at 948-5488.



## 2008 ORNAMENT

The crossroads of Rochelle is the 2008 Ornament. Cost will be \$11.00. Previous ornaments (Courthouse-2002, Kemper Residence-2003, Arcade-2004, Hebron Lutheran Church-2005, Piedmont Episcopal Church-2006, and Chestnut Grove Baptist Church-2007) are also available and may be purchased at the Arcade.



Portrait of Judge Hay from Arcade Collection

## JUDGE HAY'S RECOLLECTIONS (Chapter II continued)

We then had two courts, the Circuit Court which held its sessions on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of April and the 20<sup>th</sup> day of September of each year. Judge Henry Shackelford of Culpeper was the judge of the Circuit Court. He had been a very able

judge, but when I first knew him in 1879, age had diminished his faculties, and he was almost totally blind. It was necessary in all chancery cases for the attorneys to read the record to him. He died soon after I came to the bar in 1880, I think, and was succeeded by Judge Daniel A. Grimsley. The circuit was then composed of the counties of Albemarle, Culpeper, Green, Madison, Orange, Goochland and Fluvanna.

The County Court met on the fourth Thursday of each month, and had quite a large jurisdiction, both in criminal and civil cases. Judge Wyatt S. Beazley of Green County was the judge, the district consisting of Madison and Green Counties. Judge Beazley was not a finished lawyer, but he was honest and upright, and discharged the duties of his office with fidelity. He was, when I first knew him on the bench a man in late middle life, and had been the judge of one court since its inception under the Constitution adopted after the war. He lived but a short time after 1879, and died I think in the latter part of 1881. He was succeeded by Judge N.W. Crisler.

The following gentlemen were the members of the local bar in 1879; General James L. Kemper, who had been a major general in the Confederate Army, and one of those who participated in Pickett's charge at Gettysburg, and was left on the field for dead, but recovered and lived to be Governor of Virginia, his term having expired in 1877; Colonel F.H. Hill, who had been Clerk of the Courts of the county before and during the war, and to whose foresight and vigilance was due the fact that the records in the Clerk's office were not destroyed, as so many others were, during the Civil War; Captain Thos. J. Humphreys, who has been heretofore mentioned; Mr. Theophilus Smoot, who had been in the Confederate Army as a lieutenant in the Madison Cavalry; Mr. G.W.M. Simms, a native of Green County, who only stayed in the county a few years; and Mr. Lloyd Wilkinson, a native of Maryland, who sometime in 1880 went to Culpeper and from there to Maryland where he had a distinguished career.

The ministers of the gospel who lived in the town were Rev. F.W. Lewis, pastor of the Baptist Church, he also had charge of Good Hope, F.T., and one other church in the county; Rev. Thomas F. Grimsley, a Baptist minister, who

served churches outside of the town, he was the son of Rev. Barnett Grimsley, so well known as an eloquent and successful Baptist preacher. The Episcopal Church was then served by Rev. W.B. Lee of Rapidan, who held services once a week. The Presbyterian Church was then in charge of Rev. T.P. Epse, who I think lived at the home of Mrs. Bettie Thrift, which was about two miles from the Courthouse.

Dr. John W. Taylor was the dean of the doctors of the county, and whose reputation as a diagnostician extended beyond the bounds of his county. He was true to the type of those country doctors, who were not only physicians to the body, but were friends in all times of distress, whether physical, mental or financial. He had the unbounded confidence and love of his patients, and the profound respect of the people of the county. Dr. Hiram W. Gordon was the brother-in-law of Dr. Taylor, and was at one time his partner. He was a gentle soul, and was ready to respond to any call made upon him. He did not live in the town, but his house was on the Blue Ridge Turnpike, about a quarter of a mile from Edmund Jefferson's shop. Dr. John T. Harrison had been a gallant confederate soldier, joining the army when very young. After the war he studied medicine and practiced at Madison; his office was where Miss Minnie Crisler's bungalow now is. He was a hard student and was well equipped for the practice of his profession. Dr. Walker Jones was, in 1879, quite an old man, and had given up active practice, he had a drug store, but gave most of his time to his garden and orchards. Dr. H.L. Rankin was the only dentist.

The merchants were W.J. Cave & Co.; Larkin E. Jackson; William E. Banks; Jacob Lewit, with whom Philip Bottigheimer; and Goldback.

George W. Smith conducted a wheel right shop, and John W. Collins was a house carpenter, both of these had been soldiers in the Confederate Army.

John Jack, Minor Jackson and Edmund Jefferson were the blacksmiths of the town, while Frank Weaver and William Price were shoemakers.

### CHAPTER III

In 1970, the post office was in the old storehouse, on the site of which the bank now stands. Mr. John M. Krider was the postmaster.

Mr. W.E. Banks was the contractor for carrying the mail, which in those days, came from Gordonsville. The mail was daily, except Sunday, and was due to leave Madison about six o'clock in the morning, and to arrive at Madison from Gordonsville about six o'clock in the evening. Of it was very late in getting to Madison, especially in the winter and early spring. It was sometimes carried in a large old fashioned stage, sometimes in a two horse light spring wagon and sometimes in a buggy. Passengers for the railroad rode in these conveyances; if they did not have horses and vehicles of their own. The trip was a rough one, at least in these days we would consider it so, but then we thought nothing of it. While Orange was nearer by five miles than Gordonsville yet people from Madison always took the train at Gordonsville; also people from Madison, Criglersville, Wolfstown and Graves Mill, and their respective neighborhoods did all their hauling to Gordonsville. Gordonsville was their market town. The reason for this was the Blue Ridge Turnpike, which beginning at Gordonsville ended at New Market in the Shenandoah Valley, crossing the Blue Ridge above Criglersville, and passing through Liberty Mills, Rochelle, Madison and Criglersville. It was a better road than the Orange Road, notwithstanding the fact that it was almost destroyed during the war, and since that time had not been kept up very well by the county after it was turned over to it. Still it was the better road, and people preferred to travel it. It illustrated the fact that the better road will always attract travelers and traffic, for it was not until the building of the present highway from Madison to Orange, that Orange became the market for Madison, and the point of departure for people who travel on the railroad. In 1879 the Southern Railway had not built its line from Orange to Charlottesville. The only post offices between Gordonsville and Madison were Liberty Mills and Rochelle (Jack Shop) there was no Uno, no Pratts.

Most people in traveling around the county rode horse back, some had buggies, but there were few carriages. Lamps in which coal oil was burned, were the means of furnishing light, although in many households candles were still used. Wood was the only fuel, and open fire places were more often used than stoves for

heating the living and bed rooms. There were better things to eat than there are now, or maybe in looking back I exaggerate the good things we then had, for there was never anywhere a more hospitable people than those of Madison and to the friend or stranger they always gave of their best. In those days, you did not hesitate to drop in to dinner or supper or to spend the night without notice, notice was not necessary to find a hearty welcome, and the best which the house could offer in the way of refreshment, and comfort for the night. Then too was the time when the apple brandy decanter sat on almost every sideboard and the effects there from were not unwholesome as they are today. The people of the county were not excessive drinkers; a drunkard was the exception and not the rule. It is true that the barrooms at Madison were on court days, the source of a good deal of disorder and that finally for that reason license was refused. The town was not incorporated then and there was no police protection or supervision. Afterwards the town was incorporated, and a history of that short lived regime might be interesting. But generally speaking, and apart from public days, there was no more law abiding community in the state.

#### CHAPTER IV

The habits and customs of the people of the town were more or less interesting. For instance, every afternoon in summer a good many of the men, including R.B. Thomas, E.J. Cave, W.E. Banks, William Bledsoe and Larkin E. Jackson, who were elderly, and G.H. Taylor, W.S. Taylor, and Hiram J. Carpenter, who lived out of town, met in the courthouse yard, and played marbles. Hiram Carpenter was the crack player while M.W.E. Banks was the most enthusiastic; these games were greatly enjoyed by the players, as well as the lookers on who gathered to see the fun. Then, too, chess was played, backgammon and checkers, all these games had their votaries. I say nothing of some card games, which it is said, were carried on, but not in so public a manner. The favorite card games were poker and seven up, the latter game, I am told, was very interesting with seven players each putting up a dollar, the winner of the game taking the stakes. There was not much visiting among the men, the reason being,



I think, that they saw each other every day, and talked over the matter which interested them





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.

Membership is for one year with renewals due on the anniversary date of membership. 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	\$20
Partner	\$100 to \$249	Single	\$10
Friend	\$50 to \$99	Student	\$5

Membership applications are available at the Arcade and the Kemper Residence. For more information call the Society Office at 540-948-5488 and leave your name, telephone number, and address. We will send you a membership application or return your call to answer your questions.



Historical Society  
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