

Shenandoah County Historical Society

P.O. Box 506 ✦ Edinburg VA 22824

Newsletter

Fall ✦ 2009

Inside this issue:

Lake's Atlas	2
Volunteer Opportunities	
Strasburg Museum Celebrates Black History	2
Mystery Photos	2 & 5
Volunteer Spotlight	3
Woodstock Museum President's Message	
History of Narrow Passage Tavern / Inn	4
Early Mortar	5
Upcoming Events	
New Shenandoah County Book; For Sale Items	6

Welcome: New Members

Doug & Suzanne Arthur
 Jim & Cynthia Morris
 Pat & Warren French
 Robert Whitson & Family
 W. Denman Zirkle
 Wayne Young
 Craig & Belinda Stevens
 Charles Middleton
 John B. Ricketts
 Don Albright
 Joan Anderson
 Ralph & Gloria Stickley
 Bill Melson & Judy McCarthy
 Frederick / Deborah Ritenour
 Elizabeth Strippy

Abolitionist George Rye revealed

Board Member, Nancy Stewart, will present a free lecture on a nineteenth century Republican leader, a judge, and a forgotten chapter of local history before and following the Civil War.

George Rye (1810-1890), a saddler who married Catherine Fravel, lived and worked in Edinburg and Woodstock. He was also close to Fetzer family members, but this lecture will not be on genealogy. It will reveal important currents not previously related by writers of Shenandoah County history.

Ms. Stewart will tell about Judge Rye's occupation and concerns, principally

from 1836 to 1890, and his quest for equal rights for all men. She will discuss his leadership in organizing the national Republican Party, his post Civil War role in Virginia government, his contributions to Shenandoah County and why his name is not familiar to us.

The program will be held in the St. Paul's Heritage Center (former UCC Church) at 106 S. High St., Edinburg, VA at 7:00 PM on November 10th

Refreshments will be served.

Parking is available in the Shentel lot across the street, off Saum's Way.

PROGRAM MEETING
 Tues., Nov. 10th
 7:00 P.M.
 St. Paul's Heritage Center
 Edinburg VA



Morrison Collection Video Production Nears Completion

Wayne Bronson is well known here in the County for his popular "Road Trip To History" video series which has been shown on Public Television and also on RDF-TV. All of the Towns in Shenandoah County, and many nearby Towns, have had programs telling their stories.

One of Mr. Bronson's current projects, we are happy to report, features

our own Morrison Collection of photographs which are mostly from Shenandoah County. John Adamson is assisting in the production of this video and many people have been interviewed to help tell the story of Morrison's photography and the Shenandoah County Historical Society's ongoing efforts to preserve his work.

More than 160 images,

many of which have never before been published, will be featured in the new video.

We are extremely grateful to Shentel for their sponsorship of this exciting project.

Look for this new episode of "Road Trip to History" in the next few months.



Photo #00024

Photos to be identified

SCHS to Publish Lake's Atlas with added pages from Gray's Atlas

The Lake's Atlas of Shenandoah & Page Counties, first published in 1885 has been out of print for years.

The Atlas contains detailed maps of each of the Magisterial Districts in the two Counties, and also of the individual Towns in those area.

In 1991, George Hammond, of Strasburg, published a reprint of the Atlas and added several pages. A reprint was under consideration a few years ago, but he unfortunately, passed away.

The SCHS has now taken on the task of reprinting the

popular Atlas, and will also add to it, several pages from the Gray's Atlas, which was published a few years before Lake's and contains slightly more detailed maps of many of the communities in Shenandoah County.

Bridgewater College has been very cooperative in providing us access to photograph the pages of the Gray's Atlas. SCHS member, Andy Thayer has been working with John Adamson in compiling this new publication.

The finished volume will be available in the coming months and should be a

popular addition to our growing collection of Books for Sale.

We hope to have the finished volume available before the end of the year. The price is projected to be \$20-25 and will make a great Christmas gift!



Photo #01022

Volunteer Opportunities & Committee Reports

If you visited the Shenandoah County Fair, the Edinburg Ole Time Festival, the Germanna Conference or the Shenandoah County Heritage Day, you saw SCHS members manning booths or tables to sell books and talk about our organization.

We try to have a visible presence wherever we think it is appropriate, and volunteers are needed to help us continue this outreach to the community.

In addition, our work with the Morrison Photo Collection continues, as it has for these past eight years, and we continue to have jobs for volunteers to help with this ongoing project.

Our Newsletter needs help for gathering of newsworthy articles.

The Quarterly Program Meetings and the Annual Dinner meeting can use help in finding interesting subjects for programs and preparing for

the events.

Our programs and events need to be promoted and the community made aware of what we are doing.

Genealogical research becomes more and more popular and our requests for help continues. Members skilled in this type of research are particularly in demand.

Increasing our Membership is an ongoing project and everyone can help in this area.

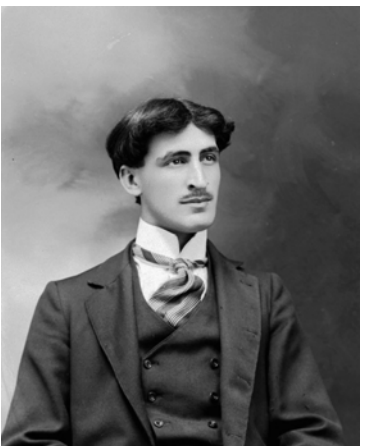


Photo #00019

Strasburg Museum celebrates Black History

On Saturday, Oct. 3rd, the Strasburg Museum conducted a celebration of Black History in the Strasburg area. More than 80 people attended the commemoration of the Queen Street and Sunset Hill schools, which were the schools attended by black students in the Strasburg area before integration in 1965.

Marquetta Mitchell, a graduate of Sunset Hill school, described her experiences. Also speaking, was

Dr. Keith Rowland, Superintendent of Shenandoah County Public Schools, Stanley Dellinger, Principal of Strasburg High School in 1965, and Coach Glen Proctor, Strasburg's Hall of Fame football Coach who had just joined the faculty of Strasburg High School in 1965.

A lot has changed for the better since those days long ago.

The Strasburg Museum

will house a permanent display of photographs and other memorabilia from the Queen Street & Sunset Hill schools.



The Strasburg Museum has also announced plans to replace its' old, leaking roof as soon as it closes for the season on Nov. 1, 2009. The SCHS was pleased to contribute \$250 to this much needed project.

Volunteer Spotlight: Harry & JoAnne Lockhart

If you have taken the time to look through any of the 39 volumes of Morrison photos now on the shelves at the County Library, you will have thumbed through 9 years of work by the Lockharts. They have worked, tirelessly, along with others, on this project ever since they retired and moved here permanently in 2000.

Prior to that, they lived in California, where Harry was an Air Traffic Controller, for 20 years, in the Los Angeles, CA area. While there, they also owned a vacation condo at Bryce Resort, where they visited several times a year, for extended periods over 15 years.

Throughout their 52-year marriage, both Lockharts have had an avid interest in genealogy. JoAnne can trace her ancestry back to the 1400's in Denmark. Harry's interest began when he was given a school assignment to ask his parents about their family history. That was when he learned that his Grandfather had been in the Cavalry during the Civil War from the Tazwell, VA area.

Their continuing Civil War interest and research brought about a chance meeting with the SCHS's Coiner Rosen, who got them involved with researching names for Our Soldier's Cemetery in Mt. Jackson, even while they

were still living in California.

Harry has served 2 terms on the SCHS Board and they both continue to work several days a week on the Morrison collection. They have good job security, as there are still almost 10,000 more photos to process.

JoAnne is the SCHS's official handwriting expert. She has a sharp eye for deciphering written material and is called upon often when others are stumped while doing their research. In her spare time, she gardens and collects cookbooks.

We appreciate the valuable contribution they make to this and other SCHS projects.



The Lockharts

News from Woodstock Museum

The Woodstock Museum recently celebrated it's 40th Anniversary with a celebration that took place on the lawns of the Marshall House and the Wickham House - both part of the Museum complex.

Both of the Museum houses continue to be open for visits, Thursday - Saturday through the month of October, from 12 Noon to 4:00 P.M.

The Walking Tours of Historic Woodstock are scheduled

for the Saturdays of Oct 17 and Oct 24. The tours start at 1:30 PM and the cost is \$10.00 per person. Tickets may be obtained at Dorothy Brown's Fine Things - 139 S. Main St. in Woodstock. You can call them at (540) 459-7467 for more information.

Be sure to visit the Museum and see the dress on display that was worn by Mary Magruder Laughlin in the late

1890's. It can be seen in the Marshall House Museum's North Gallery, adjacent to other items from the Magruder family of Woodstock. The garment is on loan to the Museum by one of its members, Ann Margaret Grabill Marshall.

The Museum's web site is also worthy of a visit:

www.thewoodstockmuseum.org or you will find a link to their web site on the SCHS web site.

Message from The President

What a busy and eventful summer we've had. I begin this by announcing the resignation of longtime board member Elizabeth Sollenberger, who has served us well since 2002. Thank you, Liz, for your dedication and sound advice. The board is currently conducting a search for Liz's replacement and welcomes suggestions and interested individuals.

We also have had a change at the helm of our quarterly newsletter. Patrick

Murphy, who has worked hard this past year, has stepped down. We thank you, Pat, for your important contribution. Board member and Secretary Janet Wagniere has agreed to take over as editor. Thank you, Janet.

Other SCHS members have been out and about in the community. Robert Frye was welcomed at the Germanna Conference in Culpeper Co. where many attendees showed great

interest in history on this side of the Blue Ridge. Phyllis Wright collected 32 Morrison photo IDs at the Hottel Keller reunion! Our crew enjoyed meeting and greeting many at the Shenandoah County Fair (thank you to SC Tourism for sharing booth space). And we had a wonderful weekend at the Edinburg Ole Time Festival. Our new location, on Main Street, was excellent, along with the beautiful weather, and resulted in good book sales.

This Newsletter can be sent to you electronically and will save postage.

Notify us at:
schs.va@gmail.com

*The Shenandoah County
Historical Society, Inc.*

is a
501(c)3 non-profit
organization.

President: Barbara Adamson

Vice-President: Robert Frye

Secretary: Janet Wagniere

Treasurer: Diane Ferguson

Board Members:

John Adamson

Nancye Bowman

Connie Broy

Nancy Stewart

Meg Trott

Jeanne Walton

Kent Womack

History of Narrow Passage Tavern (now Inn at Narrow Passage)

When historic and legendary property changes hands people comment on it and in so doing, one bit of information is added to another, and immediately stories about the property are recalled and it becomes a conversation piece. Such a property, 2 ½ miles south of Woodstock fell into that category this week, when the old Narrow Passage Tavern was sold by J. Shields and Hettie S. Chapman to E.L. Booth of Vienna and Kenneth Bowman of Edinburg.

This large fourteen room tavern built early in the 19th century, faces Route 11 and is located on the high bank just east of the highway at the Narrow Passage bridge.

This tavern was a stop over for stage coaches and wagons that travelled up and down the valley before and after the Civil war. Our history books are filled with the great and successful campaigns of Stonewall Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley and this old tavern played its part, because it was here that Jackson had his headquarters. He camped his troops across the road and kept watch on them from a second story window in the tavern.

This main building, (others having been torn down) is con-

structed of logs and in conversation with Mr. Chapman it was learned that every timber and every log that went into this structure was hand hewn. The old time mantels built around the many fireplaces emphasize the period in history the tavern was built. The NVD reporter stood in the same room, on the same spot Jackson stood while keeping watch on his troops, and it gave him a revered feeling that he was standing in a most holy and consecrated place.

There is an old graveyard in back of the tavern. P. Stover was buried here in 1850 and his wife, Susan Ann Ruddle Stover was buried here in 1851. Susan was the daughter of Isaac Ruddle. Hunter B. Chapman, the father of Shields Chapman, while a passenger agent for the Southern Railway at Woodstock, sold tickets to Narrow Passage Tavern for 10¢ each. In the early 1890s Daisy McGinnis operated a school at the tavern. One of her pupils was Frank Brumbach, one of the most noted orator-lawyers in the history of Shenandoah County. Among others that attended the school were Mr. Brumbach's brothers and Ruth Bemis.

People standing on the large front porch of this noted tavern at noon on the 6th day of March 1876, heard and witnessed the worst train disaster in the history of the county.

From an article in the NVD by W.O. (Web) Riley in 1961, & given to us by Maxine Burkholder. The Inn (originally built in the 18th C.) is now owned by Ellen & Ed Markel, who purchased the property in the early 180's from the Williams Family.

As it is told, the Southern, "a puffin' an' a 'blowin'", loaded with passengers and cattle, and headed for Woodstock, rolled onto the 114 ft. high wooden trestle which spans Narrow Passage Creek and in full view of the tavern guests, went crashing into the ravine below.

The story of this disaster is pieced together this way. The engine and some of the cars had cleared the middle (125ft.) span of the bridge, when it sagged, shook, vibrated and then loose, dropping passengers, cars, cattle and all into the gorge below and dragging the steam train engine down on top of the unholy mess. Mr. Chapman has a picture of this scene he would be glad to show any one interested. It shows the horror of the sight witnessed by the survivors and emergency helpers. Dead and dying are scattered, both human and animal.

Eleven people were killed and seven injured, some having jumped from the front cars just before the plunge, thereby saving their lives. Along those killed were: W.A. Wightman, Edinburg; Chas. L. Noel and Reuben A. Mamman, Shenandoah County Stock dealers; T. Jefferson, Winchester; a Mr. Olantz, Winchester and Jacob Chapman, brakeman, brother of H.B. Chapman and an uncle of Shields Chapman, from Woodstock.

Among those injured were: P.M.S. Bird of Mt. Jackson; Julius Sibert of New Market and Jacob Haun, grandfather of Jacob Haun, Woodstock.

Back to the tavern. The ownership of it in the early days is fragmentary, however an L.H. McGinnis sold it to the late E.D. Newman of Woodstock and the Chapmans bought it from his heirs. The new owners are now renovating and painting with nothing definite in mind for its future use. Mr. Booth said when queried about the place, "We hope to find treasures and valuables hidden in the walls, even a Stonewall Jackson sword, for it is sure costing a lot of money to bring the old place back to life."



The Inn at Narrow Passage as it looks today.

Check out our web site:

www.shenandoahcountyhistoricalsociety.org

Early Mortar

From a ca. 1990 program given by Bill Wine about early construction methods

Question: What was used to chink log buildings?

Answer: Lime. I talked to an old gentlemen who died in 1978 at age 92... they used white oak clay(1) – yellowish clay from the area, mixed with lime. I found what I thought was white oak clay and added about one third lime clay and mixed it. It was not only used for chinking but for mortar in stonework. And some mixtures were better than others.

Look at old foundations today and use a pocket knife to test the mortar. If it is firm, it was a good mix, if powdery, it apparently wasn't mixed correctly. In building early stone or brick houses, often times the mason would come in and personally mix the mortar himself. Then it

was put in what was called a slime pit. It's slaked lime (2) and clay mixed...

Mr. Rosenberger, who gave me the information on white oak clay, told me that when his great-grandfather had his stone house built (about 1820), he got rather angry at the stone mason. The mason came out, mixed the mortar, then buried it in the slime pit, then didn't show up for three or four months. The great-grandfather was quite worried because his family was living in a pioneer cabin that was in bad shape. They had collected all the stone from the mountain to build the new house, but there was no stonemason (and people today think they have problems with contractors). The stonemason finally came out and built the house. The reason he had waited so long was that mortar and clay must have what is known as

an absorption period where it absorbs the ground moisture and to keep it from shrinking. If they used the mortar too early, it would shrink too quickly and crack and the walls would become weak. I'm sure many poorly laid walls are not here with us today. You will find mortar in old homes a dull brownish cream tinged with yellow. This is true throughout Frederick and Shenandoah Counties. I've found this mortar to be about the same anywhere in the Shenandoah Valley. I feel like it was a mixture that was known by everyone in those days.

- (1) Name given to the yellowish colored clays found along the mountain ridges.
- (2) Lime processed by firing in kilns, and hydrated in slime pits



Photo #00854

DO YOU KNOW US?

These are two of the thousands of unidentified photos in the Morrison Collection that the SCHS is currently processing. If you recognize any of these people, please contact the SCHS (984-7842) or fill out an ID form at the Shenandoah Room in the County Library .



Photo #00527

Upcoming Events of Interest

Tuesday, Oct. 27 - 6:00 PM

Civil War Pot Luck Dinner - Listen to Civil War love letters and enjoy a pot luck dinner sponsored by the County Library. Dinner will be at the St. Paul's Heritage Center (former UCC Church) at 106 S.High St. in Edinburg. Reserve your space with Jean Martin, at 540-984-8200.

Friday, Nov. 6 - 7:00 PM

Valley Furniture and Material Culture, 1790-1810 - at Belle Grove Plantation in Middletown, VA. Illustrated talk by Dr.

David Powers. Reservations are required - 540-869-2028 www.bellegrove.org

Saturday, Nov. 7

Collecting Historic Strasburg Pottery at Belle Grove Plantation. A Champagne Breakfast at 8:30 AM, exhibit opening and panel discussion. \$30 & \$25, Reserve at: 540-869-2028.

Antiques Appraisal Fair & Traditional Crafts Days, 10-4 At Belle Grove. Sat/Sun.

Small fee for appraisals and admission to crafts. SCHS will have a table. For info, check web site.

Thursday, Nov. 19 - 7:00 PM

Learn to Identify Types and Dates of Old Photos - Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society program at the Folk Art & Heritage Center in Dayton, VA. Jeffrey Ruggles, Virginia Historical Society Curator, from Richmond, will speak. For more information, call 540-879-2616. Directions on web site: www.heritagecenter.com/ events.

Saturday, Dec. 12 - 10-3 PM

Strasburg Heritage Homes Tour. Call 465-5570 for more details.

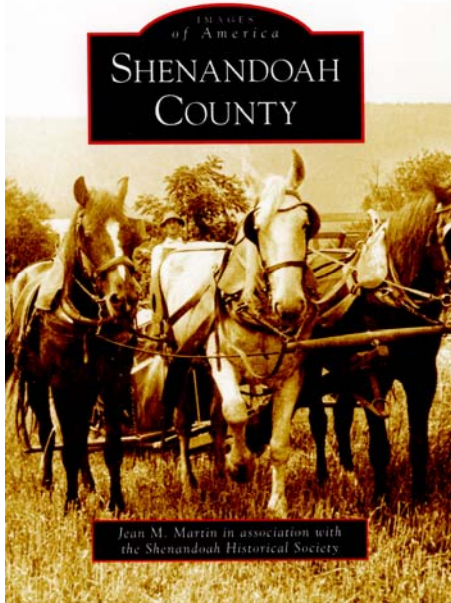
Check your Newsletter Mailing Label for the date your Membership dues are due.



Shenandoah County Historical Society, Inc.

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Edinburg VA 22824

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CONSIDER THE SCHS BOOK
LIST WHEN SELECTING YOUR
HOLIDAY GIFTS

Images of America: Shenandoah County

The Images of America, published by Arcadia Publishing, is a series of books that celebrates the history of neighborhoods, towns and cities across the United States..

Jean Martin, Archivist at the Shenandoah County Library, in association with the Shenandoah County Historical Society has just finished a volume about Shenandoah County. She has featured almost 200 photographs from individuals, local museums and the county library to supplement the Historical Society's collection of glass-plate negatives by Hugh Morrison, the local photographer whose work spans from 1898 to 1950, and others.

Images of America: Shenandoah County focuses on the people who have made this valley a comfortable place to raise families and communities that pray together, work along side each other, and enjoy life surrounded by the mountains. The images show the strengths and the creativity of those who have lived on the farms and in the diverse villages around the valley.

We hope the book will be available for purchase during the upcoming holiday season.



FOR SALE

[Check our book list]

"The Burning", a DVD based on the book by John Heatwole, and produced by the Edinburg Heritage Foundation.

"History of Shenandoah County" by John Wayland. Available in hardback and also on a (searchable) CD.

"A Pictorial History of Shenandoah County: Fifty Years through the Lens of Hugh Morrison, Jr." - 206 photos with text by John Adamson.