President’s Message
Archivist Column
In The Garden?
Building Series Featured
Mt. Jackson Holiday Tours
SCHS on Facebook
Books for Christmas Gifts
Historic Building Series
Barns Calendar Available
County Newspaper Archives
Muhlenberg Book Info
Library Archives Fair
Strasburg Ketchup Mystery
Upcoming Events

New Members
Vincent & Christine Ventimiglia, Jr.
Patricia D. Mason
Kay Fleming
Larry Hottle
Robert O. Pulse
Caroline Eaton
Nick Racey

Highlights in this Issue:

Old Historic Courthouse Key Returned
Sometimes the unexpected happens. Thanks to the generosity of Vera M. Piper, formerly of Winchester, an 18th C. key to our historic courthouse has been returned to its home. The key is nicely framed and is accompanied by a postcard showing the courthouse in the 1940s.

The key is hand-forged iron and 12” long. It is said to have been used at the courthouse from about the date of the building’s construction in 1795 until remodeling was done around 1940. The key was given to Isaac Monroe Hite, a craftsman who was responsible for the replacement of the courthouse door during the 20th C. remodeling. It eventually was in the possession of Hite’s sister, Sarah E. Hite Wiseman, Vera M. Piper’s grandmother. Ms. Piper and her cousins understood the significance of the key and we’re grateful to them for realizing it’s value to Shenandoah County and making such a generous gift.

To add to the story, the Woodstock Museum also has a key said to be original to the 1795 courthouse. That key and it’s lock, on display at the Museum, is much finer and more elaborate that the simple iron key SCHS now possesses. Both are early objects and may very well be original keys to the building, but to which doors? We don’t know how many doors the courthouse originally had. The front of the building had one door until a second was added in the early 20th Century. The only known view of the building from the rear is an 1864 sketch. In the drawing we see that there was no door at the south end of the building. The north end was obscured from view. Until the first addition was added in 1871, a sort of bay window structure was on the rear of the building, which is also seen in the 1864 drawing. We’ve speculated that that was where the judge’s chair was located and possibly where another door could have been. Another mystery about our historic courthouse!

We owe our thanks to Nick Powers, Curator of Collections at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley, for suggesting that the key should be at the historic courthouse instead of in the Museum’s collections. Ms. Piper was particularly happy that it has been returned to it’s roots. We hope that you will stop by the Historic Courthouse Visitor’s Center and Museum and see this important artifact.

Wreath Laying at Peter Muhlenberg Bust
On Tuesday, October 1, at 10:00 a.m., the Narrow Passage Chapter, DAR, will hold its annual wreath laying at the Bust of Peter Muhlenberg on Court Square in Woodstock marking the birth and death of the parson, Revolutionary War General, and statesman.

ATTENTION ARE YOUR DUES DUE??
The date beside the name on your mailing label is the month and year your membership is due. Thank you for staying current.

Mt. Jackson Museum Display
Now at Historic Courthouse Visitor Center
The Mt. Jackson Museum Exhibit Is On Display at the Historic Courthouse Visitor Center

An interesting collection of artifacts, from the Mt. Jackson Museum, is now on display at the Visitor Center in the Historic Shenandoah County Courthouse at 103 N. Main Street in Woodstock VA.

Among the many items featured are several original woodcarvings by the late historian and author, John Heatwole, and a calendar plate of years ago that was a gift of the local druggist, Marion Everly.

The Museum is located in the Mt. Jackson Town Hall/Visitor Center building at 5901 Main Street in Mt. Jackson, VA and it is open year round. They have a large collection of artifacts and rotate them from their storage on a regular basis. Many of the items on display for this exhibit are different from what they showcased in their Visitor Center exhibit several years ago.

The Historic Courthouse Visitor Center and Museum is open on Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM, year round. There is no admission fee.
The Shenandoah County Historical Society, Inc.
is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Pres.: Barbara Adamson
Vice-Pres: Janet Wagniere
Secretary: Ellen Markel
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Margie Hisey Tackett
Meg Trott
Susan Walls

Newsletter Editor:
Janet Wagniere

"Ella," Irwin Photo Co. of Edinburg, Virginia. Photographs from Album, 1870-1940, Truban Archives, Shenandoah County Library, Edinburg, Virginia.

ELLA
By
Irwin Photo Company?
(Information requested)

This cabinet card photograph shows a child in a gown seated in a photography studio. On the reverse is the label “Ella.” The front bears the name “Irwin Photo Co., Edinburg, VA.” It is part of a collection of images, mostly from the latter half of the 20th century, related to Shenandoah County that were originally housed in an album. The provenance of these items is unclear, but “Ella” is the only photograph bearing the Irwin Photo Company mark.

Attempts to identify Ella have proven to be unsuccessful. While there are several people in the Edinburg area and Shenandoah County that could be Ella based on their age, no contextual evidence exists that would allow us to conclusively prove who she is. What we do know is, based on the existence of this photograph, she came from a family with some means and one that valued the ability to capture and preserve an image of their child.

Information on the Irwin Photograph Company is also lacking. This is the only photograph in the archives collection that is labeled by that company. While this proves they would have taken and produced photographs in Edinburg during the latter half of the 19th and/or earlier part of the 20th centuries, where they were located and who managed the business is unknown.

You can view Ella and other local photographs at the Truban Archives, open Monday-Friday, 10-5:30PM.

One of the things that strikes me with every issue of the SCHS newsletter, is the number of new members, and Life members, that are regularly added to our list of supporters. Our board members and other volunteers work hard in many different ways. Whether it’s manning the Historic Courthouse Visitor’s Center and Museum, or working on projects such as barn documentation, the weather vane project, Morrison Photo Collection, church histories, Preservation Awards Committee, our newsletter, serving as treasurer, or bringing goodies to our quarterly program meetings, we all do our part. Make no mistake, those of us who volunteer appreciate the support of all our members, and the interest and support our growing membership indicates.

Of note here is the passing of former SCHS member, Mickie Helsley, on November 14, 2018. Mickie was very influential in my early involvement with SCHS. It began in earnest in 2001 when the Morrison Photo Collection project took off. At that time I helped in getting the project off the ground with Mickie, the late Nancye Bowman and others. What an education I received! Mickie was a member of the founding board of SCHS in 1985. She and her husband, Bruce, operated an antiques shop in Tom’s Brook for many years and their home in Woodstock was full of lovely furniture and other items purchased here in the Valley. Mickie was a native of Alabama. She returned there after Bruce’s death in 2000 to be near family.

Another sad piece of news is the passing on September 16, 2019 of Virginia Hinkins Cadden of Strasburg. “Gin” was a strong historic preservation supporter and SCHS Life member. She was a primary driving force behind the founding of the Strasburg Museum and the creation of the Strasburg Historic District, and always a stalwart supporter of the Strasburg Community Library. She was also an author, having written several children’s books and The Story of Strasburg on the occasion of the town’s bicentennial in 1961. “Gin” lived at Spengler Hall in Strasburg with her son, Sean, and his family, a historic home that was built in 1820 by her great, great, great grandfather, Anthony Spengler. “Gin” was a beloved and generous person whose presence is missed.
It’s a regular occurrence when researching ancestors that hard-to-find or conflicting “facts” arise. This normal state of affairs led Shenandoah County residents Nonna Good and Susan Walls on a rewarding journey that took them to a very special garden.

When they met as members of the Narrow Passage Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, Nonna and Susan discovered they were related through brothers from Culpeper County who served during the Revolutionary War, Jacob Tanner and Christopher Tanner Jr. respectively. Both were listed in Class #73 of the Culpeper Classes, the method that county used to provide the requisite number of recruits for the Continental Army and militia. Jacob was the draftee to the Continental Army from Class #73. Christopher remained in the militia. Conflicting information about Jacob’s service and fate needed to be unraveled. Regarding Christopher, Susan and Nonna knew only that he died at Yorktown. What happened to them and where did their journeys end? The cousins set out to get the answers.

The primary evidence regarding the fate of Christopher surfaced in the file of his wife Margaret’s request for a widow’s pension. The file included two oaths given in 1795 by soldiers with firsthand knowledge, William Taylor and Joseph Eddins. Christopher was called to do a tour of duty from the county of Culpeper and marched accordingly to the siege at Yorktown in 1781. As he neared the town, he became very ill and Joseph Eddins was appointed to nurse him which he did until all hope of Christopher’s recovery was gone. Eddins then left him but was informed that Tanner died that same night. Having taken ill so near Yorktown, Christopher would have been sent directly to the American military hospital located at the Governor’s Palace in Williamsburg.

More problematic was the conflicting information about Jacob Tanner. In the Germanna records, he was reported to have died in Culpeper County in 1782. Yet it was his wife, Dorothy, who paid the 1782 personal property tax indicating that Jacob was already deceased. But when and where did he die? He served under Capt.-Lt. David Kirkpatrick in the Sappers and Miners during the Yorktown Campaign and participated in the storming of Redoubt 10 on October 14, 1781, under the leadership of Lt. Col. Alexander Hamilton. The job of the Sappers and Miners was to clear the way for the attacking forces so they were the first in. Ten minutes later, the Redoubt was in American hands but Jacob Tanner had been wounded. As protocol dictated, he would have been treated at the field hospital then transferred to the American base hospital as Christopher in Williamsburg. There is a record at the Library of Virginia which states Jacob died immediately after the siege of York. The siege at Yorktown officially ended in the afternoon of October 19, 1781. Since Jacob died immediately following that date, we can give his death date as October 20, 1781. The families of the Tanner brothers did not have the resources or connections to have their dead returned home for burial. So what became of these patriots? The evidence pointed to Williamsburg.

A mere four years after restoration work began in Colonial Williamsburg, its Department of Research and Records investigated a report titled, Burial Ground in the Palace, now known as Governor’s Palace Historical Report, Block 20. In 1930, a cemetery was found in the garden on the Governor’s Palace grounds. The Palace was used as the American military hospital during the Yorktown Campaign. From items found there and the condition of skeletal remains, Colonial Williamsburg determined it to be a Revolutionary War cemetery, though, to date, no documents have been found that name the patients at that American military hospital located at the Palace, or those buried in the cemetery.

On December 19th, 2018, Susan and Nonna met with Matthew Webster, Director of the Grainger Department of Architectural Preservation and Research, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. The purpose was to present their research and the preponderance of evidence as to why they believe that their Revolutionary War patriots are buried in the cemetery in the Governor’s Palace garden. Mr. Webster was impressed with the research and assured them that copies of the research papers would be placed in the Foundation’s archives. The 1930 excavation predated the discovery of DNA so, possibly, there will never be hard evidence. But, based on the documentation Susan and Nonna presented, Mr. Webster agreed that the brothers were likely interred in the cemetery.

In the garden at the Governor’s Palace in Colonial Williamsburg, there are four gates from which to view a serene enclosure wreathed in hedges and trees. It is the resting place of 156 men and two women who died during the Revolutionary War. A marble locator imbedded in a brick wall along the garden path tells their story.

In The Garden ??
By Susan Walls

Program Meeting
Tuesday, Nov. 12th - 7:00 PM
St. Paul’s Heritage Center
106 S. High Street, Edinburg, VA
Program:
Historic Buildings of Shenandoah County
By John Adamson

Building Series to be Featured
It has been more than seven years since I began writing about old buildings in Shenandoah County for the SCHS newsletter. These quarterly articles have taken me to some far corners of our county, allowed me to see wonderful historic buildings, and connected me with some very nice people. I thought it would be fun to look back at these adventures and maybe share some of my photos which were not included in the published articles.

I am pleased to present a pictorial review of the buildings I have featured and share some of my thoughts about these treasures of Shenandoah County history. Please join me for a trip through time and architecture. Refreshments afterward.

Discover the Treasures of Mt. Jackson VA

The Shenandoah County Holiday Homes Tour moves to Mount Jackson this year, where six festively decorated homes and an historic church will be open for visitors. The tour is scheduled for Friday, December 13, from 5-8 pm, and Saturday, December 14, from 10 am to 3 pm. Proceeds will benefit Search, which offers a residential home for challenged adults, the Union Church and the Shenandoah Valley Cultural Heritage Museum. Tickets are $20 for both days and will be on sale beginning November 1 at various locations in Mount Jackson, Woodstock, and the Edinburg Mill. Info: facebook.com/edinburgmillmuseum

Visit SCHS on Facebook
By Dennis Atwood

Want to access additional information about Shenandoah County history in an interactive environment? Then visit our Facebook page: facebook.com/SCHSVA or simply click on the Facebook icon at the bottom of our website main page. On our Facebook page you will find event announcements, videos like the May 8th, 2018 announcement by Preservation Virginia that our Historic Barns Program is included in their 2018 Ten most endangered historic places, postings by our Shenandoah County Library Archivist, Zach Hotell, plus comments and other information from folks like you.

Books make wonderful Christmas gifts. All books on the SCHS Book List can be purchased at the Historic Courthouse Visitor Center, open every Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 11 am to 4 pm.

SCHS COMPLETE BOOK LIST
Is available on web site: www.SCHS1795.com
At 322 S. Main Street sits an attractive house in a style properly called “Country Victorian”. This is the home of Spring Hollow Antiques and the residence of Barbara and Sam Kesser. Though I have often been drawn to the house by the fine selection of regional antiques, it was the house itself that attracted me for my latest visit. This house is a nice example of 3rd quarter 19th century town architecture which Barbara and Sam graciously allowed me to explore and write about.

Tax records indicate that the portion of the house seen from Main Street was built by Daniel Burner in 1871. This addition is 40 feet long by 20 feet deep. But, like many old Valley houses there are older portions of the structure not easily seen. 1830 property tax records list a modest house, owned by Mary Horn on Lot 68. This older frame house, measuring 31 feet by 24 feet is now the rear section of the residence. The pretty 1871 front is a period two-over-two structure. The rear portion has been much modified, and is of an unknown date, but certainly earlier than 1830. Barbara uses the hall and two of the front rooms for her antiques business while the rest of the house is now living quarters. Useful outbuildings on the property include a garage, storage and a workshop.

When Daniel Burner built the 1871 addition, he added nice features including generous entry and second floor halls and a wide stairway with low-rise steps and a long gracefully curved walnut banister. Mantles in the two downstairs rooms reflect the bold Victorian style popular in the period. Original doors are built with through tenons and served by cast hinges showing decorative finials on their tops and bottoms. The floors are nice yellow pine. It is easy to miss these details when shopping for antiques, but I like to think of the house itself as the biggest antique — though this one is not for sale.

Like many older buildings, this house has a varied history and includes changes and upgrades to meet the needs of its owners. The front porch is not original to 1871 and displays scrollwork typical of the very early 20th century. The rear of the house containing the kitchen and living spaces have been extensively modified including the replacement of the original chimney and enclosure of a two level porch. Modern mechanical systems fill the modest cellar, but still visible are some of the hand hewn floor joists of the pre-1830 house.

Before it became Spring Hollow Antiques in 1985, the house was the home of Iron Gate Antiques (operated by Anne Waterman Pelot from 1977 to 1985). In the 1960s and 1970s it was the home of Jack and Frances Anne Sullivan who purchased the house in bad condition at auction. Other history of the house has been preserved by Barbara recording the stories told by visitors and shoppers as they stopped by during the last 33 years.

The house served as a boarding house for many years starting with the Burners as early as the 1890s. In the 1920s and 1930s, it was known as “Bachelor House” operated by Dora Sibert and her daughter Wilmetta. Dora cooked on a wood burning stove long since replaced. In the 1940s it was the home of Mr. Funk, who owned a grocery store in Woodstock. After serving as a private residence, the house again became a boarding house into the 1960s. The downstairs parlor served as a common room with a large coal burning stove and a piano. Clara Golliday Clem and her husband Mr. Clem, who was blind, owned the house and took in boarders. After Mr. Clem passed away, a boarder returning home heard the piano being played, but when she looked in the room, there was no one there.

Such are the stories of an old house. With their many changes, many owners, many visitors and many memories these old buildings enrich our Shenandoah County. I am forever grateful to live here and to have the opportunity to explore and write about the worthy old buildings found here.
Archives Fair at County Library

Celebrate archives and archivists who preserve the history of the Shenandoah Valley at an Archives Fair on Friday, October 11th. Held from 10:00AM -- Noon at the Shenandoah County Library, in Edinburg, VA. This event will feature local, regional, and academic repositories that maintain collections related to the history of the Shenandoah Valley and its people. Students, genealogists, historians, and the public are invited to bring questions about research and where to find primary documents related to the historic Shenandoah Valley. Visitors will have the opportunity to learn about these many sites and meet their staff at this free, open house style, event. 540-984-8400

From the Shenandoah County Library Newspapers Archive

By Dennis Atwood

NEW BOOKS

ON THE CELEBRATED
Shenandoah Valley of Virginia

SHENANDOAH VALLEY

The Fighting Parson of the American Revolution

by Edward W. Hocker

One of the first things said we heard when we began the survey of our historic barns was “you should do a calendar”. So we did! The 2020 calendar is now available. Our county’s historic barns compose a unique collection of scenic and historic icons. The hardest part of creating the calendar was choosing only 14 barns out of the 240 surveyed. The ones selected comprise a nice blend of forms, ages and sizes from all around the county. The images are very high quality and will not be found anywhere else.

These calendars celebrate the agricultural history of our great county. Hurry and get yours soon as the quantity is very limited. Only $10 (plus $2 shipping).

Calendars are on sale at the historic courthouse in Woodstock (Thurs - Sat, 11 to 4) You may also order them from the book list through the SCHS website: schs1795.com.

SCHS Web Site:
www.SCHS1795.com

New Addition to
SCHS Book List

The Fighting Parson of the American Revolution

by Edward W. Hocker

A biography of General Peter Muhlenberg, Lutheran clergyman, military chief, and political leader. In a new foreword by John Huffman he reminds us that throughout Christian history, Godly men have seen the need to take up arms to defend their homes and families. Edward Hocker has done an honorable job of presenting an accurate picture of a genuine hero, while at the same time not creating an ideological myth of a hero with no flaws. First published in 1936. 5”x7” Hardcover. Price: $26 Members: $25

Now Available - By Popular Demand

HISTORIC BARNS
OF SHENANDOAH COUNTY, VA

One of the oldest barns in Shenandoah County, built in 1792, is the home barn of the Brill family. The barn is located in Woodstock. The building is a four-bay Pennsylvania Dutch bank barn with a cupola and a loft. It has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1976. The barn is open to the public and is a popular destination for tourists. It is located at 514 Stony Creek Drive, Woodstock, VA 22664.

Solve a Ketchup Mystery with the Strasburg Heritage Association

The Ketchup Contest: Solving the Recipe Mystery of the Virginia Restaurant, the hang-out of generations of Strasburg residents. Come taste the contest of over ten different recipes, each believed to be the original and very unique ketchup made and served by the Brill family. Share memorabilia of the restaurant and try some fries made the Virginia Restaurant way. Judges will be former customers of the restaurant who remember the taste of the famous ketchup.

The event takes place on Sunday, October 27th, 2-4 pm at St. Paul Lutheran Church, W. Washington St., Strasburg. Hosted by Strasburg Heritage Association. Free and open to the public. Join us for fellowship and refreshments.
Upcoming Events

Friday, Oct. 11th - 10 am to 12 pm -
Fridays at the Front: “Apparently Countless Squadrons” - The Battle of Tom’s Brook. Car caravan tour of sites related to the October 9, 1864, all-cavalry battle that ranged from the Back Road to the Valley Turnpike, and featured a clash between former West Point classmates Union Gen. George Custer and Confederate Tom. Thomas Rosser. Confederate cavalry, enraged by “The Burning,” had advanced beyond their infantry support, leaving them vulnerable when Union Gen. Philip H. Sheridan famously ordered his own horsemen to “whip the rebel cavalry or get whipped.” Tour led by historian Bill Miller, author of Decision at Tom’s Brook, and SVBF CEO Keven Walker. Registration required: 540-740-4545.

Sat. & Sun., Oct. 19th & 20th - 9 - 4
155th Anniversary of the Battle of Cedar Creek will be commemorated at Belle Grove Plantation the with two days of Civil War music, civilian and military living history, house tours, National Park Service programs, and an exhibit of weapons and replica flags. Activities on the grounds are free. Exhibits and events in the Manor House are $5 for 13 and older, free for 12 and younger and Belle Grove and National Trust for Historic Preservation members. Please park in the field and enter through the Beverley B. Shoemaker Welcome Center (in the 1918 Barn).

Reenactment Information: Contact Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation at 540-869-2064 or www.ccbf.us These tickets are sold separately.

Antique Appraisals at Belle Grove Plantation. Expert appraiser, Sandra Perry will be available for verbal evaluations of antiques and heirlooms. She has a wide range of items including textiles, furniture, documents, Shenandoah Valley and Civil War artifacts. Appraisals are $10 for one item and three for $25. Since appraisals will be conducted on a first-come, first-served basis, we ask that you limit it to three-items per person. Appraisals will take place on Saturday, November 2, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. & 1 -4 p.m. and Sunday, November 3, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. in the first floor meeting room of the Beverley B. Shoemaker Welcome Center, which is fully handicapped accessible. If you have a large item, please come in to register before bringing it inside. 336 Belle Grove Rd., Middletown, VA 22645 For more information, call: 540-869-2028

Saturday, Nov. 9th from 10 am to 6 pm -
Inalienable Rights and Enslaved Blacks Crafting a Life in the Shenandoah Valley. Belle Grove Plantation will be open free of charge and feature speakers and special Guests from The Slave Dwelling Project and Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park. For Info, call: 540-869-2028

Thursday, November 21st at 7:00 PM -
Civil War Medicine presented by Jake Wynn, Director of Interpretation, National Museum of Civil War Medicine, Frederick MD. The Civil War came at a time when there were very few advancements in terms of medicine and the treatment of injuries and ailments. As a result, this created problems when it came to saving the lives of soldiers. When it came to the death of Civil War soldiers, illness was twice as likely to be the culprit versus an injury sustained in battle. This program addresses some of the challenges that faced medicine during the Civil War. The program will be at the New Market Town Hall, 9418 John Sevier Rd., sponsored by New Market Historical Society.

Saturday, December 14th - 10 am - 4 pm -
Strasburg Holiday Heritage Homes Tour hosted by Strasburg Heritage Assoc. Five homes in downtown Strasburg will be visited. Info: www.strasburgvaheritage.org Tickets are $10.

MORE EVENTS ON WEB SITE