

Linda Beatty -GFWC Virginia Historian – 2024-26 – Shenandoah District

(Tidbits of information gleaned from annual reports, Virginia Clubwoman Magazines at GFWC Virginia Headquarters and 50th & 100th Anniversary books.)

Did you ladies know that the State of Virginia took 2 YEARS to finally join the GFWC making us the very last state in the USA to join? Sadly, the issue was segregation.

VFWC met in Staunton in 1912 for its 5th annual meeting when Mrs. W. W. King from Shenandoah area was State President. She is one of 5 state presidents from Shenandoah and this District has provided at least two state Junior Directors. In 2026 there are 8 general clubs and 3 Junior clubs for a total membership of 228.

Shenandoah is one of the five districts that has chartered a Past District President's Club.

In 1928, three clubs still in our federation were present for the 1st annual meeting of what is now Shenandoah Dist. **Buena Vista WC, Lexington WC and Covington WC**. In 1940, 3 Pioneer medals were awarded to members of Shenandoah District.

Soon after chartering **Buena Vista WC** got busy and by 1933 had helped charter the **Buena Vista JWC** with 25 members. Then in 1950 the two clubs joined forces and served a delicious dinner to the local firemen and their wives.

In 1958 all 8 Jr clubs supported GFWC's project "Stamps for Veterans"

The forerunner of our beloved Artmobile started with a club in Staunton reported by the 3rd Federation Pres Mrs. Fannie King when she wrote of that club: "It is ready to receive it. It is there now but in Oct if others call for it, we will have to give it up."

Later in 1958 the president of **Rockbridge WC** wrote in her annual report: Our club sponsored the Artmobile in Glasgow for 4 days and QUOTE "various members entertained the man in charge of the Artmobile"

In 1958 national attention was drawn to **Lexington WC** for being the 1st club in USA to enter the Community Achievement Contest. Then by 1960 it was reported that 90% of Shenandoah clubs had entered the contest. In 1924 that club served milk to under-nourished children. Later they added sandwiches and soup. Then when Federal aid was available, they served plate lunches. After 21 years of providing this service, the project became too large for the club to handle so they donated equipment valued at \$300 and their remaining bank balance of \$743.21 to the local school board.

Ashby WC a newer club (chartered in 1992) immediately in 1994 reported already having adopted a needy family, providing monthly baskets of food, providing a special meal for Thanksgiving and Christmas and making sure they had clothing and gifts at Christmas.

Waynesboro WC celebrated their 75th anniversary in Dec 1981 with a Christmas Ball and had a complete sell out netting over \$2400 for educational projects. But did you know that the club found it

necessary to dissolve during World War II, reorganizing in 1953 with 55 charter members and by 1964 had over 200 members! Someone in that club should have served as state membership chairman!

In 1972 the **Wayland WC** “loaned” the local school’s music dept \$200 to put on “Fiddler on the Roof” and it was such a huge success that they promptly repaid the loan from proceeds. The club then used the same \$200 for the choral group to purchase folding risers.

In 1949 **Staunton Juniors** raised funds to install “sterile lighting” in the 1st & 2nd grade class rooms which greatly reduced the rate of communicable diseases compared to other class rooms in the school

Remember when club members proudly wore their counted cross stitch name badges? Well, **Staunton-August JWC** was one of them. Soon after they organized, they voted the violet as their club flower. They also carried that flower into their newsletter, naming it “*The Violet Vine*”.

WC of Greene Co reported that in their 5th year of the Christmas gift project in conjunction with the local VFW they collected and wrapped over 350 gifts - so many more than they needed they had to find more children to give them to.

You’ve all heard that the Va Fed sent wedding gowns for Australian brides. You might not know that the effort was initiated by Miss Phyllis Pedigo, a charter member of **Covington JWC** who left a teaching job to enter the Red Cross field. During 1944-45 VFWC participated in a program spearheaded by Miss Pedigo that provided 16 gowns in Australia. A news article in a 1943 Harpers Bazaar lauded her efforts stating “It is impossible to believe that one American girl could so change the morale of an Army group”.

Covington WC received the state award in 1949 for selling war bonds.

Covington JWC provided vitamins for indigent children by buying them in bulk, bottling them and distributing through school nurses in 1958.

A pewter ink stand with feather pen graces our Headquarters, given by Shenandoah District.