

Greene County Historical Society Newsletter



360 Main Street, PO Box 185, Stanardsville Virginia 22973

Year 2020, June

Volume 26 Issue 2



Nathanael Greene
Major General of the Continental Army
Born 1742--Died 1786

UP COMING EVENTS

We do actually have some events scheduled in the near-ish future!! We do hope that these will go ahead as planned; if we have to re-schedule, we'll be sure to let you know by email and in the press.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| September 4 th | GCHS Museum to re-open to visitors.
John Plashal presentation on abandoned Virginia. John is a businessman who travels the back roads in search of abandoned homes, churches and businesses to photograph. He has published a book, " <i>Beautifully Broken Virginia</i> ", gives tours of such locations as Belmead Plantation on the James, and sells puzzles of some of his photos. He will be sharing stories behind some of his photographs. |
| October 4 th | |
| November 11 th | Veterans Day Observances. |

NOMINATIONS

As you all know, our Annual Meeting was overtaken by the events of the Covid19 pandemic, and had to be cancelled. At that meeting we were to vote to fill one upcoming board position, that of Ellen Thurnau, whose first 3-year term was expiring. In order to fulfill the requirements of our Bylaws, we had notified our membership in the February newsletter of Ellen's willingness to stand for a second term. We received no opposition to her offer, or any alternative names of people offering to stand. Accordingly, Ellen will remain on the board for the upcoming three years. We are grateful to her for her service.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Members,

In these times of uncertainty, I hope everyone is staying safe and healthy. I'm pretty sure we are all in awe of this new normal, safer at home and social distancing . A year ago, I don't think any of us could have foreseen how our world would be changed to this extent. With prayers, hope, and sensible behavior we will make it out of this coronavirus pandemic and the justice and equality for all movement and hopefully have a better WORLD FOR ALL. The year 2020 will certainly be an unusual history making year. I urge you to keep a journal of the pandemic's impact on your community and daily life. The journals will be important for future generations.

As you know, because of the nation's situation, the Society Museum has been closed since the lockdown of Virginia in March. We hope to reopen September 4th-5th, with safety conditions planned out for the protection of everyone's health.

Membership dues and donations are the main source of income for the Society. Your 2020 dues were due in January. If you are up to date , we thank you. I finally received my Economic Impact Payment aka the stimulus check from the Federal Government. Since I'm really not in need of it, I will be donating it to the Society. Don't forget you can buy from our gift shop through our website. Also engraved bricks are available to purchase for the walkway.

I miss everyone and please stay safe!

As Always,

Joann Powell
President

IN MEMORIAM

We were very sorry to hear just after the last newsletter was sent out that Tim Roach, a member from Lynchburg, had died at the very young age of 56. Most of us here in Stanardsville did not know him well, but we were extremely grateful to him for stepping in early in 2018 to say that he would be the editor for a GCHS Magazine. So Volume 22, which we distributed last spring, was Tim's creation. He did a fine job and despite the distance, didn't hesitate to drive up from home to be at meetings. Our condolences go to his widow, Meg, and the rest of his family and friends.

ARTIFACT DONATIONS

We do have some interesting artifact donations to tell you about: from Whitt & Martha Ledford, a pair of school benches from the Lower Pocosin Mission School; from Jackie Pamerter, two envelopes postmarked in Ruckersville in 1895 & 1898, and two WWII-era Matchbook covers; and most recently, from Bill & Nora Sterling of Ruckersville, a silk spool wound with raw silk from the Silk Factory in Orange. We are grateful for all of these donations. Also, a thoughtful local resident brought some 19th century law books that her neighbor had been storing in her attic. The books had belonged to C. W. Murdaugh, Esq. (1853-1878), a noted attorney, judge and politician of Portsmouth VA. We could not accept them, since there was no local connection or provenance other than the attic, but we were able to pass on the information that the College of William and Mary has a large collection of Judge Murdaugh's papers in their Special Collections Research Center. Perhaps the books will find a home there.

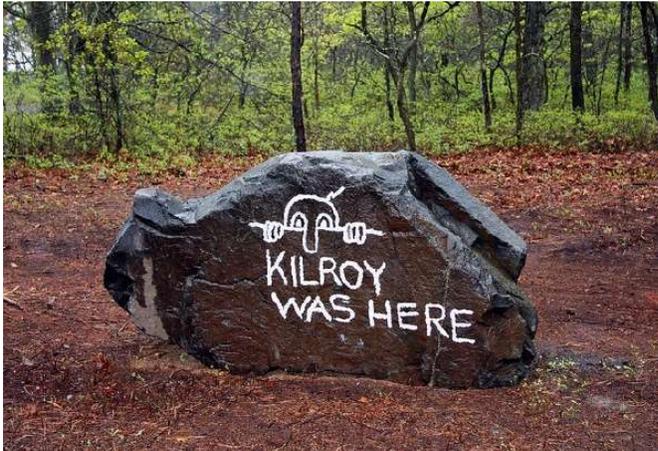
NEW MEMBERS

It is very pleasing that we are welcoming a number of new members of the historical Society since the last newsletter. These are: Tina Haney, Ruckersville; Sherman Shifflett, Louisa; Steven Philips, Arlington VA; and Suzanne Chesney of Michigan. In addition, Joseph T. Samuels of Charlottesville took out a Business Membership on behalf of Jos T. Samuels Realtors, of Charlottesville. We are also delighted that James Jinks of Dyke has become a Lifetime Member. Especially in these difficult times, we are grateful for the show of support from all these new and upgraded members, and will do our best to provide them with interesting material about the history of our county.

KILROY WAS HERE

Bill Steo, long time member of and contributor to the GCHS and this newsletter, sent me the following story a little while ago. It is well worth reading. Thank you Bill, and our thanks also go to the anonymous compiler of the story and the many photographs he or she included with the original.

Anybody 'of a certain age' knows the phrase '*Kilroy was here*'. They might tell you that it became current during WWII, and that it involves not only the words, but also a drawing of a funny little man's face

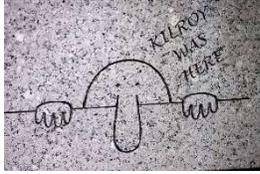


with a long nose. He is looking over a wall, with his hands on either side of his face. Now if you are not of a certain age, you might have no idea what I am talking about. But Kilroy is a familiar name to anyone born from the 1910s to about 1950. He is even engraved in stone in the National War Memorial in Washington, DC – back in a small alcove where very few people have seen it.

So, who was Kilroy? In 1946 the American Transit Association, through its radio program, "*Speak to America*," sponsored a nationwide contest to find the real Kilroy, offering a prize of an authentic trolley car to the person who could prove himself to be the genuine article. Almost 40 men stepped forward to make that claim, but only James Kilroy from Halifax, Massachusetts, had evidence of his identity.

Kilroy was a 46-year old shipyard worker during the war. He worked as a checker at the Fore River Shipyard in Quincy, and his job was to go around and check on the number of rivets completed. Riveters were on piecework and got paid by the rivet. He would count a block of rivets and put a check mark in semi-waxed lumber chalk, so the rivets wouldn't be counted twice. When Kilroy went off duty, the riveters would erase the mark. Later on, an off-shift inspector would come through and count the rivets a second time, resulting in double pay for the riveters.

One day Kilroy's boss called him into his office. The foreman was upset about all the wages being paid to riveters, and asked him to investigate. It was then he realized what had been going on. The tight spaces he had to crawl in to check the rivets didn't lend themselves to lugging around a paint can and brush, so Kilroy decided to stick with the waxy chalk. He continued to put his check mark on each job he inspected, but added 'KILROY WAS HERE' in king-sized letters next to the check,



and eventually added the sketch of the chap with the long nose peering over the fence, which became part of the Kilroy message.

Once he did that, the riveters stopped trying to wipe away his marks. Ordinarily the rivets and chalk marks would have been covered up with paint. With the war on, however, ships were leaving the Quincy Yard so fast that there wasn't time to paint them. As a result, Kilroy's inspection "trademark" was seen by thousands of servicemen who boarded the troopships the yard produced. His message apparently rang a bell with the servicemen, because they picked it up and spread it all over Europe and the South Pacific. Before war's end, "Kilroy" had been here, there, and everywhere on the long hauls to Berlin and Tokyo. To the troops outbound in those ships, however, he was a complete mystery; all they knew for sure was that someone named Kilroy had been there first. As a joke, U.S. servicemen began placing the graffiti wherever they landed, claiming it was already there when they arrived.

Kilroy became the U.S. super-GI who had always "already been" wherever GIs went. It became a challenge to place the logo in the most unlikely places - it is said to be atop Mount Everest, the Statue of Liberty, on the underside of the Arc de Triomphe, and even scrawled in the dust on the moon.

As the war went on, the legend grew. Underwater demolition teams routinely sneaked ashore on Japanese-held islands in the Pacific to map the terrain for coming invasions by U.S. troops (and thus, presumably, were the first GIs there). On one occasion, however, they reported seeing enemy troops painting over the Kilroy logo! In 1945, an outhouse was built for the exclusive use of Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill at the Potsdam conference. Its first occupant was Stalin, who emerged and asked his aide (in Russian) - *"Who is Kilroy?"*

To help prove his authenticity in 1946, James Kilroy brought along officials from the shipyard and some of the riveters. He won the trolley car, which he gave to his nine children as a Christmas gift and set it up as a playhouse in the Kilroy yard in Halifax, Massachusetts.

The legend continues. Kilroy's name and face are still being added to buildings and machinery to this day. There is much to be found on the web about Kilroy and his legend, including the stories of some of the Kilroy wannabees who are also now part of American mythology. The website <http://www.kilroywashere.org/001-Pages/01-0KilroyLegends.html> will give you some clues as to his enduring popularity and show you some of his more recent appearances.

FINANCIAL DONATIONS

Many of our members are kind enough to either add on a donation to their membership dues, or just plain send us a donation check. We are grateful to every one of you for your membership commitment, however large or small, and for other financial donations you are gracious enough to send our way. Greene County Historical Society can only survive with your generosity!! Our thanks go to: Barbara Brecht, Frances Walker, and Gary & Karen Lowe, of Stanardsville; Trish & David Crowe, Hood VA; Butch Davies, and Linwood & Marlene Imlay, Culpeper; Peggy McLean, Charlottesville; Frank & Bernice Walker of Orange; and by no means least, our President, Joann Powell of Stanardsville, with her very generous donation of her Stimulus Check.

OUR COLLECTIONS

We are always pleased when people reach out to us to ask about our collections. Not long ago, we received an email from Luis Vasquez, a graduate student researcher in the Institute For Contemporary Art at VCU in Richmond, sent on behalf of artist Carolina Caycedo. He asked whether we had any utility bonds, the kind of bond issued to fund construction of Railroads, sewage facilities, and so on. It so happens that we do. The Rockingham Turnpike Company was formed in the 1850s to improve the road from Gordonsville to the Shenandoah Valley, passing through Stanardsville and over the Swift Run Gap. It was publicly traded, and we have a \$1.00 and a 50 Cent promissory note, with which money was raised for the project. I had never paid much attention to the detailed artwork, which is most attractive. We look forward to seeing the finished Commonwealth Project installation at VCU in the fall.



*Rockingham Turnpike Company \$1.00 promissory note.
2007.11.02*

AN EARLIER DONATION FROM THE DEANE FAMILY

The late Dookie Deane was a long time member of the GCHS, as was his late wife Phyllis. Not long after Phyllis's death last year, Mrs. Ginger Deane, their daughter, gave us a beautiful hand made early round oak table and a set of cane-bottomed chairs. Here is the story of how Dookie acquired the table.

Ginger was with Dookie the day he purchased this table. Here is the story: "One Saturday we went out to the brush to see an older black lady. This table was on her porch. It had a wash tub on top of it and had turned gray with water and time. Dad noticed it and tried to buy it. He offered \$20, then \$40, then \$50, and then \$60.

The lady said "I can't sell you that table. Where would I put my wash tub?"



It was the early 1960s and \$60 was a lot of money. But I don't think she would have sold it for \$100.

So Dad asked if she would be home after lunch. She said she would because she didn't drive and, besides, she had nowhere to go. We left and went straight to Mr. Sullivan's used furniture store and purchased a dinette set, table and chairs for \$25. Then we had lunch. After lunch we back to her house. Dad told her he would give her the dinette set and \$20 in exchange for her table. Her reply was: "Mr. Deane, you take that table and chairs and put it in my kitchen and put the table from the kitchen on the porch, then take the table from the porch and put it on your truck." It wasn't until we got it home that we realized what a nice table we had purchased. It is hand pegged, and most likely late 19th century."

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Three requests for information have come our way. You can respond to Rachel or John via the GCHS email address – info@greenehistory.org. We will pass on any messages.

- In the ongoing research being conducted by UVa regarding the enslaved community that worked for the University of Virginia or for its benefactors, Shelley Murphy is still seeking to hear from descendants of enslaved laborers who helped to build UVa. If you had enslaved ancestors living in central Virginia (1818-1900) contact enslavedlaborersuva@gmail.com
- Rachel Bitler asks: I am a great-granddaughter of the noted artist JOHN JAMES PORTER of Culpeper County, who painted portraits and landscapes in the mid to late 19th century. For years I have photographed all of his paintings that I could find, first for my own pleasure, later as a legacy for my two grandsons. Do you or any of your members know of any of his works that are in your locale?
- John Thomas asks: Looking for pictures of the pool room that was in Stanardsville. I played in it when I was young, I am writing a book on the history of pool halls in Virginia. I have over 250 but pictures are the hardest thing to find. I have at least 30 photos. Thanks for any info.

HISTORY IN THE MAKING – THE CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC AS OF MARCH 24TH 2020

The following was written on March 24th 2020, 9 days after we had our Annual Dinner, when 40 of us enjoyed lovely views from Lydia Mountain Lodge, delicious food and wine, great conversation and an interesting talk by Gary Forrest about his experiences at the Rapidan Camp and on the Appalachian Trail. Much has changed since then, but as so much more is changing as I write, it seemed appropriate to write down some current history.

On the 15th, we were praised for continuing to have the gathering - and criticized for not cancelling it. Governor Northam had banned gatherings of more than 50 people, but we were below that limit. During the following week, our board decided to close the museum. Yesterday [the 23rd] the Governor closed all schools for this school year, banned gatherings of more than 10 people, closed non-essential businesses, including libraries, gyms and barber shops, and urged us all to stay indoors. Many people now must work from home, schools are working out how to provide the school lunches that are so necessary for many schoolchildren, and furloughed contractors at places like NGIC in Albemarle are doing grocery shopping for the homebound. As the over-70 crowd have less ability to combat the Covid-19 virus, we hope that grocery stores in this area will soon follow the example of others and institute a 'seniors-only' hour at the beginning of their work day so that we can shop with less likelihood of being infected by an asymptomatic carrier. Both fish and flour are hard to come by in grocery stores, and I won't even mention toilet rolls. The Internet is flooded with toilet roll hoarding jokes – and given that nothing goes away on the Internet, perhaps we will be able to look at them forever! What a horrible thought!

As this issue goes to press, Virginia plans to enter Phase 3 next week, with much more ability to gather, and go to gyms and stores. For the record, as of the 20th of June, Greene County has escaped lightly, with only 48 cases and, sadly, one death.

Jackie Pamerter

BUSINESS CORNER

Once again, thanks to our business members for their support: Our newest Business member is Jos. T. Samuels Inc., the Charlottesville Realty company run by Joe Samuels (www.jtsamuels.com). Other business members include: Stanardsville Shopping Plaza, home to Greene County's only laundromat, (next to Mountain Gas), and many other businesses, and owned by members Frank and Betty Ruppert; The Cottages at Chesley Creek Farm in Dyke (www.chesleycreekfarm.com), owner Chuck Swinney; Armstrong and Associates International (www.armstrongassoc.com) of Stanardsville, President Shari Bedker; the Farm at South River, owners Judy and Cliff Braun; the Roy Wheeler Realty Company, Ruckersville branch (www.RoyWheeler.com); Performance Signs of Ruckersville, owners Robbie & Katherine Morris; United Bank, Stanardsville Main Street Branch, Manager Donna Harlow (www.bankwithunited.com); Rappahannock Electric Cooperative (www.myrec.coop); Charlottesville Sam's Club (www.samsclub.com), and The Greene Hills Club on Route 230 (www.GreeneHillsClub.com), PGA Professional and Senior Manager Mike Moyers. We are grateful to all of these businesses for their support, and encourage members to use their services.

Business supporters are acknowledged in all newsletters; receive a 10% discount on rental of the Rhodes Gallery for business events; are able to purchase a brick for our walkway at a discount; and receive a certificate acknowledging their support to display in their place of business. We look forward to welcoming many business members from within the County and beyond.

Greene County Historical Society Membership Form

If you have paid your 2020 dues - and most of you have - thank you!! Your support is much appreciated. If not, or you are not a member and would like to join, please use the form below.

Please complete this form and mail it with your check to us at PO Box 185, Stanardsville VA 22973, or bring it by the museum at 360 Main Street any Friday or Saturday, between 10 am and 3 pm once we reopen. You may also renew online from the Membership page of our website. Membership dues, and additional gifts, are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Please check one of the following: This is a new membership This is a renewal

NAME _____ DATE _____

STREET _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

E-MAIL _____

E-MAIL NEWSLETTER? YES NO TELEPHONE _____

INDIVIDUAL \$15.00 FAMILY \$20.00 SPOTSWOOD SOCIETY \$50.00

BUSINESS: \$100.00 NATHANAEL GREENE SOCIETY \$200.00 LIFETIME \$500.00

ADDITIONAL GIFT - \$____

Open Fridays and Saturdays 10-3, and by appointment. Call 434-985-1834

www.greenehistory.org

www.facebook.com/greenehistoryva

The Greene County Historical Society

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