

Greene County Historical Society Newsletter



Fall/Winter 2007



Nathanael Greene
Major General of the Continental Army
Born 5/27/1742--Died 6/19/1786

Request

GCHS members are reminded to pay your dues promptly by **January 20th** each year which will help us maintain our available operating funds. Thank you for your support and assistance.

GCHS web site

We do have a website but it is not up and running. We have a volunteer, Harvey Ellinger, 'waiting in the wings' as the webmaster to make it happen but, because of other GCHS commitments there is no one on your Board of Directors who can take on the task of doing the staff work - collecting the material needed and other various bits of information, getting it approved by the Board (by email or phone) and working with Harvey to get the site up and running as well as making sure it is up to date. If anyone would like to help the GCHS with this job please contact me, Jackie Pamerter, at or 434-985-1409 or jpamerter@GreeneHistory.org

Historical Queries

The Greene County Historical Society is seeking information concerning the "Old Jail" in Stanardsville. If you have any information concerning its construction or any old photographs please send them along to the GCHS address or contact Newsletter editor, Bill Steo at 434-985-1409 or WSteo@GreeneHistory.org.

A MESSAGE FROM THE GCHS PRESIDENT

Greetings to all. Once again, a lot has been happening. We have finally finished the renovations at the Museum. In the main room on the ground floor we have: new bookshelves, ceiling tiles, ceiling lights, and a freshly shampooed carpet. The ground floor foyer and bathroom have new flooring, as does the whole upstairs; we have painted throughout. Though I admit I am likely to be biased, I think it looks beautiful. So, we are almost ready to open for business! We are enlisting the help of a professional in the display field, a curator at the National Building Museum in Washington DC, who will suggest the best ways to use our admittedly limited space. With space limitations in mind we will also decide on window treatments since those three feet thick walls can provide great display space in the window wells. We plan to have a Grand Opening in mid-December, watch for a postcard in the mail from us, as well as for articles in the local news media.

More exciting news - now that the basic renovation is complete, we finally have the space to suit a wonderful acquisition, one that was brought home to Greene County and the Greene County Historical Society early in October. In March 2006, the Virginia Museum of Fine Art informed us that they were de-accessioning an *'early Virginia corner cupboard'* (see photo on next page), made between 1770 and 1790 at 'the old Rucker place' near Ruckersville. This piece had been a gift to VMFA in 1967, from Mrs. Eva Rucker Davidson, of Ruckersville, *'in memory of Peter Rucker (d. 1743), Colonial Planter of Orange County, Virginia, and his wife Elizabeth Fielding (d. 1750).'* The VMFA Board of Trustees was prepared to give this piece to us, if we could provide something from our collection in trade. We offered them one of the woven coverlets from our collection, which they accepted – but we did not want to bring this piece of furniture here until we were ready. So, on October 1st, through the generosity of the Blue Ridge Movers, a division of E. A. Clore, furniture makers in Madison, the corner cupboard came home. It is a beautiful piece of furniture, with an extensive provenance that makes fascinating reading. We are enormously grateful to Beth O'Leary, of VMFA, without whose support we would not have this treasure.

Finally I am proud to tell you about a current program that we are running in conjunction with the Greene County Library. October is Virginia's Archaeology month, and the Society has developed a display for the Library using some of our Native American collection pieces, (see photos on next page). It includes the first public display of some of the artifacts from the Columbia Gas Transmission Line Project that were donated to us by Charlie Dean of Stafford VA. We are also co-sponsoring a lecture by noted local archaeologist Carole Nash, of JMU's Department of Integrated Science and Technology. The lecture, entitled **"The Embrace of the High Hills: The History of Native Americans in Greene County,"** will take place on October 25th, 7:00 pm in the library meeting room. Go to <http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/arch_NET/ArchMoCalendar_2007.htm> and <<http://www.jmrl.org/br-greene.htm>> to find more details, including library opening hours. I hope to see many of you at the lecture.

As I have said so often before, we need volunteers. Now that we will soon be able to open on a regular basis, please get in touch with me and tell me you will volunteer to be a docent, for perhaps 2 or 3 hours once a month. Enthusiasm for the history of Greene County is the only prerequisite.

Best wishes,

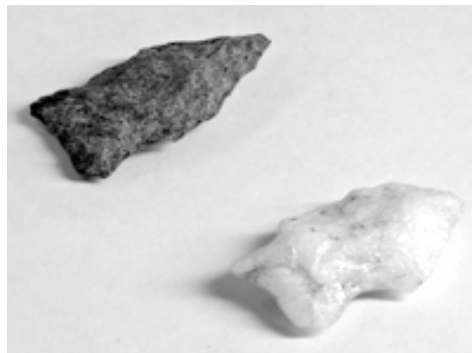
Jackie Pamerter, 434-985-1409



Rucker corner cupboard circa 1780



Effigy pot



Projectile Points



Stone Ax Head

The GCHS has in its book collection photo copies of the 1940 through 1947 William Monroe High School annuals. Once the Museum is opened anyone wishing to look through these books or any other reference books on our shelves are welcomed to do so.

Below is the "*Class Prophecy*" reprinted as written from the 1947 WMHS Annual. The Prophecy was written by Mary Sims for the sixteen seniors comprising the class of 1947.

The last evening when the sun was sinking slowly in the west, and I with nothing better to do than walk in the rose garden, suddenly found my sight caught by a magnificent white rose. On closer inspection I noted its unusual beauty and thought as I looked -- too pretty for this world it must be a mysterious creation.

Music came from nowhere, I touched it very gently but that too was rough, for a petal dropped and floated to the ground. Imagine my surprise when I picked it up and saw traced on its velvety surface, "Class of 1947".

Being only human I touched the magnificent rose and another petal floated down. I hastily scanned its perfumed surface and read, "Don't touch the rose again until May 30, 1947."

With awe I touched the rose and a petal gracefully drops into my hand and this is what the petal says.

Raymond Powell is to be an architect who will build the Monroe High School of the Future.

I pull another petal and I see Natalie Slaughter pulling and curling and patting hair into place as a beautician, somewhere above the Mason and Dixon Line.

This petal informs me that Carl Powell, Jr. is progressing rapidly as the manager of the exclusive Hotel Quinque, in New York.

Lucille Shifflett in South America, where she is teaching a group of Brazilian admirers how to Jitterbug.

C.C. Jennings Jr. has landed in Africa, where he is starting a filling station, since there is no room left in America for one.

This one tells me that Evelyn Snow is in New York modeling the latest styles in evening dresses for her boss, John Robert Powers.

Mable (sic) Powell is manager of the new, Ladies Ready-to-Wear Department Store, in Dallas, Texas.

Randolph Dean, in Hollywood, where he is starring in the current hit, "Love at First Sight," with Margaret O'Brien as his leading lady.

This petal says that Arlene Breeden is enjoying her life as a housewife, living on the border line that separates Canada from the United States.

Mary Ann Berry is making the girls hit those goals at William and Mary college, where she is the new basketball coach.

This magnificent petal informs me that Nancy Via is married and lives by the sea, so that she can watch her "Shipp" as he comes in.

Henry Shelton, examining (sic) his neighbor's horse, which he believes to be very ill, but really only has a toothache.

Peggy Breeden, quite a success as the charming little hostess at Carl Powell's exclusive hotel in New York.

This last velvety petal tells me that Dorothy Deane has an almost perfect English class here at Monroe High School, where she has recently replaced Mrs. Stephens as head of the English Department.

Mary Sims

Artifact donations

Correction --- the post card of the Rt. 29 Truck Stop mentioned in the last Newsletter was donated by Roger Powell.

Book Donation

Sharon K. Towler Steo --- *Ancestors and Descendants of Nathaniel Davis Towler* reference book, 169 pages.

New Members ---- Jerry Worley and family -- Stanardsville, VA

From Lucille Fray's Scrapbook:

In our December 2006 newsletter, I mentioned that member Wendy Mathias of Chesapeake had volunteered to index the pages of this enormous scrapbook. Wendy has labored diligently, and I cannot thank her enough for all the hard work she has put into this endeavor. Much of the information she has compiled consists of obituaries, and these alone will be invaluable to researchers. Wendy has noticed some odd coincidences, such as these facts from an obituary: Sisters Pauline and Elizabeth Cherry married and they became ... Pauline Royalty and Elizabeth Queen.

Another snippet: #308 in folder 3 – An article by Mozelle Brown about traveling from Greene to Harrisonburg by going to Elkton to catch the C&W train – otherwise known as the "Cuss & Wait" or "Crooked & Weedy."

Once the indexing is done, the scrapbook pages will be available at the Museum, viewable as .jpg files, together with Wendy's comprehensive index. I can't wait. JP.

Thank you

The GCHS would like to thank the following businesses that were hired to help complete the last phase of our renovation:

- Ken Chapman --- Electrical work
- The Ceiling and Floor Shop, Inc. --- Ceiling work
- D & D Flooring --- Floor covering and installation
- Hank Williams LLC. --- Interior Painting
- Sav-on Carpet Cleaning --- Carpet cleaned