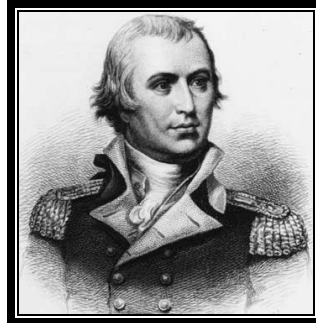


Greene County Historical Society Newsletter



Year 2010

Vol. 16 Issue 1



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

GCHS Events

Annual GCHS Dinner will be held at the Rosebrook Inn, 1026 Rosebrook Rd. Stanardsville, VA on March 21, 2010 at 4 PM. \$27 per person; menu not available at press time.

Annual GCHS Meeting at the Court House Stanardsville, VA on April 25, 2010 at 4 PM.

Membership dues should be paid now. If you have already paid, thank you for your support.

Newsletter record keeping

From this issue forward each printing of the Newsletter will be designated with the year of printing (at present 2010), the volume # and the issue #. This is a return to the format formerly used some years ago on previous Newsletters which last ended with the Volume 16 Issue 1. In a given year the volume number remains the same but each new copy within that year will be given a sequential issue number. There are generally three issues of the Newsletter per year.

GCHS Web Site

Members and non-members are encouraged to visit the GCHS web site at <http://greenehistory.org> to view our site's updates. To do so go to "News" at the left of the home page then click on "Updates". A very big thank you goes to our volunteer Web Master Ron Mosher for his work on the web site.

President's Message

Greetings to all. As I write this we are once more in a snow and sunshine scene, surely one that brings back memories to older members of when such weather was more commonplace. If you have family photos of earlier winter weather in Greene, we would love to have copies of them to add to our growing photo collection.

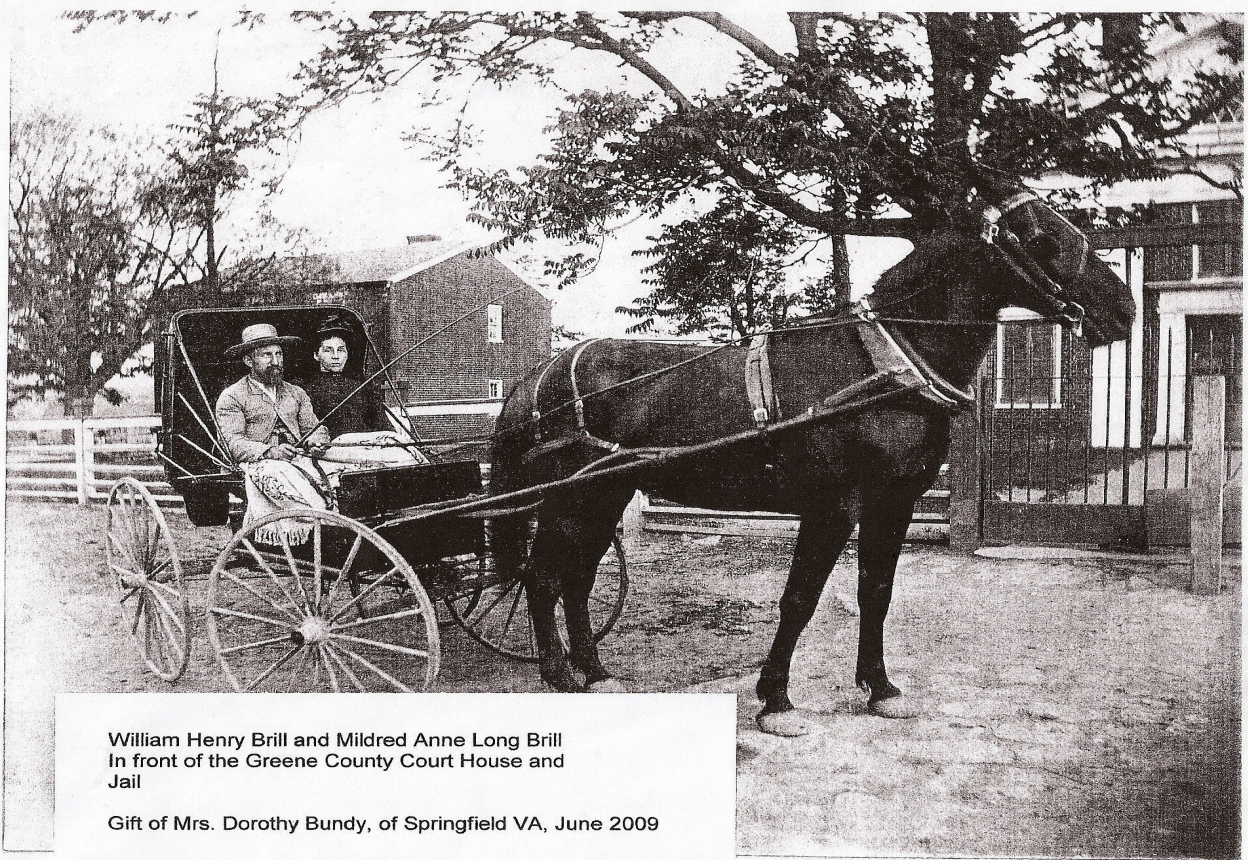
This is a momentous letter for me because, thanks to the generosity of one South River family, this Society is on the verge of great change. On December 7th last year, Society member Linwood A. Rhodes passed away in Alexandria, leaving his wife Barbara, sister Ethyle Cole Giuseppe and cousin Bobby Rhodes. You may remember Ethyle's 1936 High School Salutatorian letter, which we published in an earlier newsletter. Linwood remembered it, and decided to help the Society to help the County by leaving us a substantial bequest – a large portion of the proceeds of the sale of his South River farm. He was a keen hunter and fisherman from boyhood, as well as an avid gardener and grower of orchids, and asks only that we make available a room in which to display his wildlife and outdoors collection, and a meeting room for public use. In a serendipitous occurrence, Piedmont Virginia Community College and Fried Companies, who are anxious to bring classroom space to Greene, were in talks regarding the 2nd floor of the Library/JABA building – but without needing the whole space. A small committee of this Society is now in talks with PVCC/Fried representative Ken Lawson and the County Administration to see if we can become the 2nd tenant of the upper floor. Wow!!!! While no formal agreements have yet been made, and of course recognizing that this will take quite some time to come to fruition, all I can say is – watch this space. As you can imagine, my wish list for what we could do keeps me awake at night. We would appreciate your thoughts and suggestions and we will keep you informed as developments take place.

Now, coming down from the stratosphere - as usual at this time of year, I have a few dates to remind you of; but the first of these is a library program, not one of our own. On Saturday March 20th, beginning at 4pm, the Greene County Library in Stanardsville is holding a 'Festival of the Book' program (the only location outside Charlottesville/Albemarle to do so) that will mark the 75th Anniversary of the making of the Shenandoah National Park. Katy Powell, a Madison County native and professor at Virginia Tech, will talk about '*Answer at Once*,' her edited collection of letters written by families who were displaced from their homes when the Park was formed. Katy's first book on the Park is *The Anguish of Displacement*. Our annual spring dinner is the following day, March 21st, at the Rosebrook Inn; details are elsewhere in the newsletter. And our Annual Meeting is on April 25th, at the Court house, at 4pm. We are also planning to commemorate the founding of the Park.

I hope to see many of you at one or all of these events,

Jackie Pamenter

Mystery of the Gate --- Reported by Bill Steo



William Henry Brill and Mildred Anne Long Brill
In front of the Greene County Court House and
Jail

Gift of Mrs. Dorothy Bundy, of Springfield VA, June 2009

Over the years the Greene County Court House and the County Clerk's office have undergone various changes, some planned and some not, (Note the fire of 1979). At some point during these restorations, reconstructions and repairs a section of gate, apparently from the front of the Courthouse grounds was kept possibly for "Historical purposes" and was stored in the basement of the County Clerk's office.

Many years ago in Greene County as well as other rural areas it was important to erect fences and gates not so much to keep domestic animals "in" as today but rather to keep them fenced out. These animals would graze freely around the open spaces, so the Court House and its grounds would have been fenced and gated to be protected from roaming herds.

Marie Durrer, the present County Clerk, recently brought to the attention of Eugene Powell and myself that a gate was stored in the basement and had asked if we knew anything about it which we did not. It was during one of Eugene's "Volunteer sessions" at the Museum that he noticed an undated photograph on display that was given to the GCHS by Dorothy Bundy of Springfield, VA in June 2009. A gate is shown in the background just under the horse's head which has a striking similarity to the gate in question. (Continued on next page)

Mystery of the gate continued;

Upon closer examination of the gate in the Brill photo and the stored gate, we determined that it may not be the exact same one but it is constructed in the same manner and might have been used as a gate in front of the Old Jail/Museum building or in front of the Clerk's office which is not seen in the photo.

If anyone knows the precise former location of the gate or has old photographs of the Court House and surroundings please, contact the GCHS so we can record the information for the historical record.



Gate stored in the basement of the County Clerk's Office.

Artifact and Book Donations

William L. Steo and Sharon K. Steo

1. *Foxfire 2* --- Eliot Wigginton
2. *Foxfire 3* --- Eliot Wigginton
3. *Lee and Grant - The Virginia Campaigns 1864-1865* --- William A. Frassanito
4. *Our Finest Hour* --- *Life Magazine*
5. *Echoes of Glory - Arms and Equipment of the Confederacy* --- Time-Life Books
6. *Echoes of Glory - Arms and Equipment of the Union* --- Time-Life Books

New Members

Charlene Cole Franks – Colonial Beach, VA
Robert & Frances Culbertson – Stanardsville, VA
Bob & Joanne Burkholder – Ruckersville, VA
Margaret Ramsey – St. George, VA
Trish Crowe – Hood, VA
Winston Wayne Shiflet – Harrisonburg, VA
Max L. “Vic” Vickery – Ruckersville, VA

Monetary Donations

Melvin C. Morris – Sodus, NY
F. Claiborne & Carolyn S. Johnston, Jr. – Richmond, VA

Memories of the March Post Office, By Winston Shiflet

“Here is the building that housed the March Post Office as it looks today. It sits on the corner of Routes 810 and 612. I lived in this dwelling from birth to about 8 years old. The uses over the years besides the Post Office included Ed Morris's store, a doctor's office (there was an X-Ray machine in the kitchen), filling station as well as family home.



The door on the far left was an outside only accessible room that my mother used to store her canned goods. One afternoon us kids chased a bear cub we saw up the lane towards Clyde Knight's house. Later that evening the mama bear came calling. Smelling mama's canned goods, she broke down the door and managed to break most of the jars. Hearing the glass breaking after seeing the bear on the porch my Dad grabbed the only weapon in the house he had, a leather covered blackjack (a police issue club) and raced into the front of the house fearing that she had come through the bathroom window. For a scary moment it was hilarious! Years later I used to ask my Dad how did he plan to kill the bear with such a weapon, have it laugh itself to death? The lane to the right led up to Clyde Knight's house. His wife Elsie was the cook at Dyke School where he was a teacher and the principal of the school. Us kids would fight over who got the chance to carry their newspaper up the lane to be rewarded with an ice cream bar that Miss Elsie always had in stock. Directly across the field in front of this house was Hoover Shiflet's farm. There we would walk to get fresh eggs and milk. To the left of this building as you are looking at the photo was Carroll Vernon's house. E.Y. Vernon, Carroll's father, was I believe the local undertaker - we used to play in the back of our house and there were coffins stored there. What kids will play with?



The Carroll Vernon House

(Continued on next page)

March Post Office continued;

In my time the road (Route 612, [*Now named March Road, Ed.*]) was unpaved and a series of two foot high posts were planted in a semi circle around the front of the yard, which is almost nonexistent now. Many walnut throwing and cap gun battles took place in the yard to the left as you are looking. My Mom (Lucille Mary Roston Shiflet) and my Dad (Lloyd Brown Shiflet) were raising four kids in that tiny dwelling. The kids were Joyce Elaine, Lloyd Asberry (L.A.), Janice Maxine and myself (Winston Wayne). Just out the road to the left as you are looking was my grandmother's house (Bessie Edna Breeden Shiflet, a.k.a. MaBessie). She married my grandfather (Asberry Shiflet). We later moved just down the road from my grandmother on a 3 acre plot given to my Dad.

By this time MaBessie was getting up in age and I always kept a close eye on her. During the summer I would stay with her pretty much full time. When I was outside at home I would check for her signal that meant she needed something or she was in trouble. We had a plan that if she needed me she would hang a white dishtowel in her storm door. If I saw the signal I came running.

Our house still stands but a little different than when we lived there. A large addition has been built on the back and a swimming pool now stands in the back yard where the hand pump once was. There was never running water inside the house when we lived there. Behind the house down the path was a privy that my Dad, my brother and I built. Living high! It had a nice window and a shingled roof! The only heat source in the house was what we called a tin heater. It was a very small wood burning stove that had to be replaced every year or two – it was made of very thin sheet metal. My brother and I had bunk beds, but would double up in the winter to stay warm. I remember many a winter morning looking out the window and seeing nothing but a kaleidoscope of frozen vapor. You grabbed you clothes in the morning and headed to the kitchen where the tin heater was. Hopefully you weren't the first to get up or you froze while you started the fire if it had gone out overnight. When we had problems with our well, us boys would carry five gallon buckets of water from my aunt's house further down the road.

My mom and dad always struggled financially, we never had much. My mother was always my guardian angel. No matter what, she made Christmas and birthdays something special for each of us. It's funny in a way. My sisters no longer desire to come to Greene County - I guess because of painful memories they had here. I still love the area and even the reminders that still exist of a time in my life that was difficult but at the same time lay foundations of who I am to this day.”

What's in a name?

Below is a partial list of “Old Names of Occupations and Their Meaning” by Dan Burrows as referenced from the web site; www.wisevahistoricalsoc.org .

Name	Occupation
Bailie	Bailiff
Brewster	Beer manufacturer
Chandler	Dealer or trader; One who makes or sells candles; retailer of groceries
Clark	Clerk
Cohen	Priest
Collier	Coal miner
Crocker	Potter
Faulkner	Falconer
Fletcher	One who makes bows and arrows
Monger	Seller of goods (ale, fish)
Tanner	One who tans (cures) animal hides into leather
Webster	Operator of looms
Wright	Workman, especially a construction worker