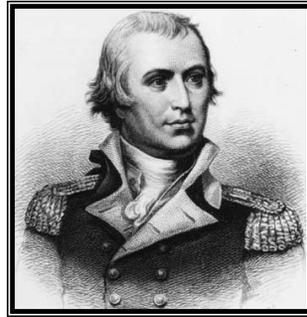


# Greene County Historical Society Newsletter



Year 2016, July

Vol. 22 Issue 2



*Nathanael Greene*

*Major General of the Continental Army*

*Born 1742--Died 1786*

## UP COMING EVENTS

What better place for Upcoming Events than Page 1, so that you can make a note of dates right away in your calendar.

Tuesday-  
Saturday  
August 9th-  
13<sup>th</sup>

**Greene County Fair** - As usual, the Society will have a booth open at the Fair all evenings. Come by to make your guess at our Mystery Object. There will be information available at our table about the Greene County Memorial for the Blue Ridge Heritage Project.

Saturday &  
Sunday  
September 24-  
25

**The Second Annual Clay Festival** will be held at the William Monroe Middle School gym. This event showcases wonderful contemporary adaptations of a historic craft, and is definitely worth a visit.

Month of  
October

**Quilt Show at the Rhodes Gallery** – A Centennial Quilt Tour of the National Parks has been traveling the country, stopping at our National Parks to celebrate 100 Years of the Park Service. It will be at the Dickey Ridge Visitor Center in the Shenandoah National Park during October. As part of this event, historic Stanardsville is hosting a Quilt Trail, with quilts on display at the Palette Art Gallery, United Bank, the Greene County Library and in the Rhodes Gallery at 360 Main Street; more quilts will be displayed at the county Visitor Center in Ruckersville. Look for further information nearer the event.

## **PRESIDENT'S LETTER**

Greetings on behalf of the Historical Society, I hope everyone is enjoying their summer, here in historic Greene County or wherever you may be. We are blessed to live in a wonderful county that is so beautiful, peaceful and filled with interesting history. As the Historical Society, we need to research, preserve and record this history. Let us know any way you would like to help with this important responsibility.

Our Annual Meeting was held at the Greene County Courthouse on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. The program presented by Jim Lawson covered one of the most well-known events to take place here. As a young boy, Jim became interested in Governor Alexander Spotswood and went on to make a lifetime's study of him. He entertained a full house with lots of information about the Virginia Colonial Governor, although of course a special focus was the journey of the Governor and his Knights of the Golden Horseshoe. This took them through the small hamlet that became Stanardsville, to Swift Run Gap and over into the valley to the west – the Shenandoah Valley. Three hundred years ago this trip led to the westward expansion in Virginia through land grants to those who had traveled with him. Greene County is part of one of those grants, and home to the 'Octonia Stone,' which marks one corner of the grant area.

The Society has been involved in many community activities recently, some of which are described elsewhere in these pages. As supporters of the Middle School National History Day effort, we provided judges and prizes for the March 'Parents Night' show, and gave \$500 to help defray expenses for the two teams that went to the National Competition in June. Members are serving on the steering committee for the Blue Ridge Heritage Greene County Memorial Project and we have donated \$500 to this community endeavor. The county's Youth Development Council's summer camp for young students has visited the museum complex for guided tours.

For the Fourth of July Celebration, Society members decorated Stanardsville with red, white and blue bunting and provided judges and prizes for the Parade. As usual the Old Jail was open after the Parade, with an exhibit of portraits of our Sheriffs as far back as we have pictures; the earliest is Joseph Smith, who was our law and order man from January 1869 through December 1903. The Parade Grand Marshals were two much-loved Greene County WWII veterans - Tom Hayes and Haywood Lawson. William Monroe High School student Samantha Brunelle rode with them in the Parade. She made history by being Greene's contribution to Team USA in the U17 World Basketball championships in Spain, where we beat China to take the Bronze medal. Parade prizewinners were as follows: First Place, Greene County Republican Committee; Second Place, Carolyn Lawson as Betsy Ross; Third Place, Hi-Horse Cloggers. Honorable Mentions went to the Youth Development Council and the Farmall Gang aka the Baugher family, riding vintage tractors.

Once again I encourage everyone to visit the museum complex at 360 Main Street (Fridays and Saturdays, 10 till 3). Plan enough time to take in all of the exhibits – one recent visitor (from New York) came in asking for 'the 45 minute tour' – that wasn't long enough for what is in the house, let alone the outbuildings and Rhodes Gallery! So bring family members and out of town visitors – there is a wealth of history on display for all to enjoy.

Have a blessed summer,

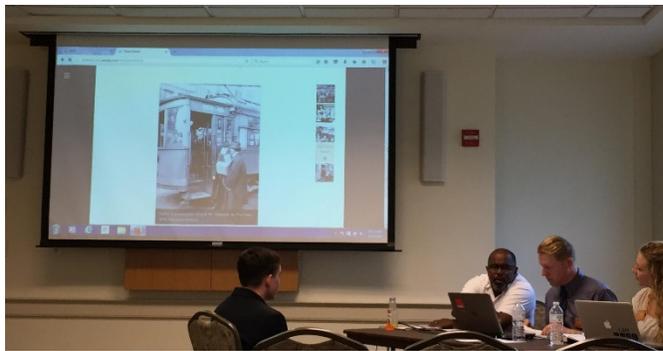
Joann Powell

## GOINGS ON

**National History Day:** William Monroe Students made a brave showing at the National History Day Finals in June in College Park, MD. Of the thirteen students who competed at the state level in Petersburg at Virginia State University in April, Trevor Myers and the duo of Kerah Fisher and Emma Dean placed first, enough to take them to the finals. Although our students did not come away with any prizes this year, their projects went up against those from across the country, Department of Defense schools and US territories.



*Who Said Women Can't Be Doctors?*



*Trevor Myers answering questions about his website*

Kerah and Emma presented their group performance about Elizabeth Blackwell, the first US female doctor, called *Who Said Women Can't Be Doctors?* Trevor's entry was an individual website about the Spanish flu of 1918 called *The Wrath of the Spanish Lady: An Encounter with the Most Virulent Virus Known to Modern Man.* See Trevor's website at <http://46948404.nhd.weebly.com>, at least until September. Bravo to all the students who put in all the work it takes to prepare their entries (we highlight another project on Page 8). We look forward to next year's showing. The 2017 theme is "Taking A Stand."

**Our Genealogical Research Seminar** on April 16<sup>th</sup> – was very well attended, with 22 people learning a great deal from the presentation by the Central Virginia Genealogical Association (CVGA), and with lots of interaction between attendees. It seems to be an event that we should schedule again.

**MAKE A LITTLE MONEY** for the Society by Spending Money: Use '**Amazon Smile**' if you order merchandise from Amazon to donate a small amount to the Greene County Historical Society each time you buy. This does not add any additional expense to your purchase, but helps to support our programs and activities for the community. Sign up at <http://smile.Amazon.com> and choose Greene County Historical Society from the list you will see.

## COMBINING NATURE AND HISTORY: MONARCH BUTTERFLY WAY STATION

Monarch butterflies depend on finding milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) to feed on as they travel to and from Mexico, and milkweed is becoming increasingly harder for them to find. We have teamed up with the members of the Spotswood Trail Garden Club, who have installed a butterfly garden at 360 Main Street. The Club members will maintain the garden, which as it becomes established will attract not just monarchs but other nectar-loving species. It will make a great addition to our landscape, and we thank the Garden Club for asking us to participate in this important undertaking.

## **BE A VOLUNTEER!**

There are many opportunities for volunteers to help, from museum-minding to gardening to website activities – to, of course, newsletter editor. Please email us at [info@greenehistory.org](mailto:info@greenehistory.org) or call and leave a message (434)-985-1834 if you'd like to help. Below are some of these opportunities.

### **STILL WANTED: NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

I'd love to hand my editorial blue pencil (if you are under 40, I can explain what that is) over to another editor of this newsletter. As we said last time, the newsletter is the primary communication vehicle of the Society. If you are interested in taking over what is a very interesting job, please contact us. See the last issue for a job description.

Jackie Pamerter – Temporary Editor

### **NO NIGHTS AT THE MUSEUM**

Have you seen the movie where Ben Stiller plays a security guard at a museum and everything comes alive after dark? That doesn't happen at 360 Main Street, but with a little imagination, you can make things seem to come alive. That's where it helps to have a guide.

We never know who might drop in when we are at the museum. Maybe Evangeline Cleage will stop by and tell us about her fashion career, which started in the 1950s, or William Burley may stop by for a look at his family tree because he is interested in learning whether his ancestors were slaves, and if so, who owned them.

They are our neighbors, they are interested in history and that is why we are here!

Persons looking for family history can research for themselves, but may need a little help getting started. That's where our Museum Minders come in. How does someone access our Greene County Family Tree—or submit an addition. What types of resources are available in the library? I once had a very excited visitor discover a picture of his grandfather in our newspaper article collection. There are so many books, back issues of our magazine and enough photographs to occupy anyone for hours.

Visitors love to spend time looking at our displays of items donated to the museum and shopping for books and gifts in the museum shop. We are only open on Fridays and Saturdays from 10:00 to 3:00—no nights—and shifts are only 2 ½ hours! None of this can happen without our Museum Minders.

They are a great bunch but we are always interested in finding more volunteers. We will be holding training on Saturday, August 6<sup>th</sup> at 3:00. If you are interested in finding out more about our Museum Minder's program, please call the GCHS and leave a message. 434-985-1834.

### **BRICK WALKWAY PURCHASES**

The response to our Buy-A-Brick campaign continues, but it will be a while before the walkway is finished!! You can still buy a brick to memorialize your family – or another. Pick up a form at 360 Main Street or go online to [www.greenehistory.org](http://www.greenehistory.org) and download one. Brick purchasers not previously acknowledged include: Ann McMains, Kevin Frazier, Gary Forrest and, most recently, Peg McLean.

### **FINANCIAL DONATIONS**

We have received other financial donations too. We are most grateful to Larkin & Charles Dudley of Blacksburg; Trish & David Crowe of Hood; Malou Dichtel, Jimmy & Betty Morris, and Bert & Barbara Nye of Stanardsville; Jay Johnston of Richmond; Lloyd Vaught of Hughson CA; Glennis Neuhauser of Melbourne FL. Our Donation Jar has yielded \$65 so far this year to the coffers. Elsewhere we acknowledge our first two business members, and so since Chuck Swinney's Chesley

Creek Cottages was our first business member, we acknowledge his membership check from earlier this year as a donation. We thank you all.

Now that we are firmly established at 360 Main Street, we have folded our 'House Maintenance Fund' into our main banking system. We thank all of you who have in the past donated to that Fund; the money has been put to good use and is much appreciated!

### **ARTIFACT DONATIONS**

Donations include several genealogies, from: Franklin Robinson, the Naylor family; Kevin Frazier, the Frazier family; Sharon Arbour, the Miller, Rhodes and Poindexter families; Mieko and Warren Rucker, the Rucker family. As well, Kevin gave us 'Bacon's Rebels', names and residence of the 1676 rebellious colonists; we purchased an additional Virginia genealogy source/resources book; and Linda Gardner Crandall gave us the J. W. & Mollie Herndon Anderson Family Bible, with notes. Other donations include the following, from: Janie Lott, a copy of Elkton photographer Hobby Robinson's book of local portraits entitled 'Bless Them All' and a William Monroe High School History, 1925-1984, both previously the property of her mother, the late Helen Gibbs; Barbara Ballard, a franking stamp from the Post Office at March VA and an 1881 B.B. Parrott tax receipt; MaryLou Mundy, several small bottles and toys; VHS, a (long-awaited) CD of the scans that Greene County provided to the CW150 Sesquicentennial project (visit <http://www.virginiamemory.com/collections/cw150/> to see the whole collection); Travis Oliver, a set of locally sent postcards from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the promise of more to come; Margaret Curran, early photographs, some with identification; Ron Mosher, the 1994 edition of Virginia Historic Markers; Margaret Thomas Buccholz, a 1931 article from 'The Churchman'- Dr. Mayo of BRIS'; Joe & Ginny Thompson, some little Native American dolls, small bottles and a button collection; Gail Unterman, 'Otonia Grant' by Randolph Grimes; Jackie Pamenter, an 1891 letter from John Chapman, attorney. We thank you all.

We are also extremely grateful to Phyllis Deane, widow of the late Dookie Deane, who had provided much wisdom and insight during his long life and membership of the Society, not to mention the many artifacts he gave to us over the years. Dookie passed away in October last year, and we have some beautiful new artifacts to remember him by, thanks to Phyllis. One is a small inlaid table that was made by one of Greene's best known carpenters and cabinet makers, 'Limpin' Jim Harlow. We also now proudly display one of Dookie's beautifully arranged framed sets of projectile points. It can be seen, close up in the Gift Shop, and we are very pleased to have it, as well as one of several books written by renowned Virginia archeologist and native American expert Jack Hranicky that references Dookie and his unique collection of Native American artifacts from Greene County.

### **OTHER DONATIONS**

**SOME RECEIVED...** - Sometimes people are generous enough to give us items that are not historical artifacts, but that certainly help in our mission of displaying and illuminating the history of the County. Some recent donations of this kind include: a projector from Joe & Star Freni; a projection screen from Kim & John Spitzmiller; a microphone and amplifier from Jeanne Rexroad; and paper and ink from Ron Mosher. Thank you all for these gifts.

**AND ONE REQUESTED...** Being organized requires lots of shelf space! We could really use a tall bookshelf in our office; a bookshelf about roughly 6 feet tall and 3+ feet wide would do the trick. Please call us at 434-985-1834 or write to [info@greenehistory.org](mailto:info@greenehistory.org) if this piece of furniture is cluttering up your life. We can arrange a pickup.

## GREENE COUNTY MISSIONS

After I moved to Greene County, I became interested in local history. It was suggested that I read *Where Time Stood Still*, the memoir of the Reverend Watkins Leigh Ribble, who ministered to many during the 1920s and 1930s through the several missions in the mountains of Greene County. As members of the public were made aware of the hardship of life in the mountains, money and land were donated and the missions were built and organized. Episcopal congregations in other areas supported the missions.

I enjoyed the Reverend's stories but it made me wonder if any of the old mission buildings might still exist.

I searched for the missions on the internet and, for the most part, found the locations on a map, with place names such as Simmons Gap, Upper Pocosan, Lower Pocosan, High Top, Saint James (Lydia), and Blue Ridge, but satellite pictures mostly just showed the tops of trees—no rooftops or other structures. I've talked to residents who are familiar with the missions and most seem to have disappeared over time.

But the Cecil Mission Church remains in its original location, west of Stanardsville just outside the Park boundary. The mission, which was established in 1910, is built of native stone laid by Jason Knight, with a bare concrete floor. There was a belfry and vestry or meeting room.

While the missions were active, a member of the clergy would be responsible for several missions spread out over the mountains of Greene County. Travel was difficult, often on foot or by wagon, over rough trails that could barely be called



*Cecil Mission Church, 1930s*

roads. In winter, mud and ice often meant that roads were totally impassable. For the Reverend Ribble, getting to some missions required driving across pastures, opening and closing numerous gates to keep the livestock where they belonged as he passed, or fording streams.

Buildings were not fancy and there was no electricity. A nearby spring supplied necessary water.

A typical mission consisted of a building that served as a chapel, school and meeting place, although some had two buildings. Heated with a wood stove, activities would be moved outside in hot summer weather. The mission employees would establish a clothing bureau to collect used

clothing, originally to be given away but then for resale because those who needed clothing were too proud to take charity. If they had no money for a necessary purchase, they would do work in exchange. The missions became the social center of the neighborhood. Life was hard with very little free time and families were very isolated. They would come early and stay late on Sundays to visit with neighbors



*Lower Pocosan Church with 'Sunshine'*

and catch up on the latest news. There might be a battery-powered radio or the only phone on that part of the mountain. There would be books to read and Sears and Montgomery Ward catalogs, where items might be purchased or inspiration for home improvements might be found.

A small two-story house sometimes served as home for the mission workers - maybe a teacher or a lay minister. There were no public schools and education was resisted at first because children were needed to work. Teachers taught homemaking, cooking, nutrition and sanitation in addition to the regular school subjects, in hopes of improving living conditions and life in general in the mountains. They weren't paid a great deal and life was often at least as hard for them as for the local residents.

Mission workers didn't only teach but might be called on to perform a funeral service or stand in for the doctor at the birth of a child or medical emergency. During the Reverend Ribble's tenure, he might also need to break up a fight, take someone to jail or swear out a warrant for some offense committed on church property.

The Cecil Mission is only three miles from the town of Stanardsville, but without it, children would not have attended school and many might not have gone to church. For many children the reality was having to walk three miles each way to go to school every day as well as doing chores at home!

By 1935, when the Shenandoah National Park was established, roads were much improved and the school board had begun transporting students to the public school in Stanardsville. Attendance at Sunday services at the Cecil Mission had fallen to the point that the church recommended closing it. Word of the plan spread by a church worker to everyone on the church registry and a meeting with church officials was packed beyond all expectations. Everyone, it seemed, loved the little country mission. The impassioned pleas of those present persuaded the church to continue to maintain it.

All missions with the exception of the Blue Ridge Industrial School were closed by 1940. For the most part, there remain only the primitive cemeteries, indicated only by boxwood bushes nearby.

The Cecil Mission fell into ruin from roof leaks and neglect. With its broken down organ and stripped down altar covered with dust and cobwebs, the mission was finally deconsecrated in August of 1963. Very recently however, it has taken on new life as the Lydia Mountain Chapel.

The really important lesson learned here was that there are so many resources available at the Greene County Historical Society. There are many more in depth articles and books that tell so many stories if you are interested. There is always someone who knows about the history - sometimes first hand - or where to find it. Stop by the museum on Friday or Saturday between 10:00 and 3:00 and we'll show you! Visit our Gift Shop (or our website) and purchase a copy of *Where Time Stood Still* for more stories of a bygone era - its 182 pages are filled with interesting reading. The cost is \$17.95 plus shipping.

My thanks to Larry Lamb and Jim Lawson for assistance with the article and as always, Larry's photos.

Jeanne Rexroad

## **THE BLUE RIDGE HERITAGE PROJECT IN GREENE COUNTY**

Many of our members know about the establishment of the Shenandoah National Park in the 1930s. They know because the story has been handed down in their families from generation to generation. The Park includes land in eight Virginia counties. One hundred and seventy-nine families were removed from their mountain homes in Greene County alone. The land, structures and orchards were carefully surveyed by the government and payment made to property owners. Some were resettled nearby, but few went willingly.

Today, there are still traces of those homes within the Park. Stone walls, cemeteries, beds of flowers and occasionally, the stone chimney of a long-gone house, can still be seen. As her entry in the National History Day competition described earlier, Middle Schooler Isabel Tusing created a poignant website about the Park, including pictures of some of those headstones. It can be viewed at <http://49509684.nhd.weebly.com/> and from our Facebook page [www.Facebook.com/greenehistoryva](http://www.Facebook.com/greenehistoryva).

The Blue Ridge Heritage Project was established to build a memorial in each of the counties, to commemorate those families and their sacrifice in making way for the Park we enjoy today. Each memorial will consist of a stone chimney representative of those lonely chimneys left behind in the mountains. On the chimney there will be a plaque with the surnames of the displaced families.

The 10-member steering committee for Greene County has considered several locations for a memorial, and is working on memorial design, research of families, publicity and fundraising. Committee members have studied existing chimneys for relocation as part of the memorial and chosen a stone mason to do the work.

In May, the Stanardsville Town Council endorsed the project, and the steering committee updated the Greene County Board of Supervisors on their progress. In July, they will present a formal resolution asking the Board for permission to incorporate the memorial into a planned park next to the county office building in Stanardsville. The memorial will include an educational display of photographs and stories, to help future generations appreciate the people that once lived in what we now know as The Shenandoah National Park. You can see some wonderful photographs of former residents of the Mountains by visiting Facebook and looking for 'Blue Ridge Heritage Project Greene County Memorial.'

Your Society has contributed to the memorial in Greene County, and three of our board members are on the steering committee. Our hope is that the public will also want to be a part of building the memorial because they want the people and the stories to be remembered. A Bluegrass music event is being planned as a fundraiser, with the Deane Family performing as a benefit show for the memorial project. The Society is collecting funds on behalf of the project. If you would like to contribute, and celebrate the lives of those families, please send a check payable to GCHS Memorial to us at PO Box 185, Stanardsville, VA. 22973. Please put "BRHP-Greene Memorial" on the memo line. At this time we are not accepting donations via PayPal. On behalf of the project, we thank Kathy Ladika, Yvonne Morris and Jeannette Pryor for their donations. Thank you and pass the word!

Jeanne Rexroad

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**OUR CONDOLENCES** go to Society President Joann Powell and her extended family on the death of her brother Norman. It is safe to say that this Society would not be what it is today without the many contributions of the Powell family, who are connected to so many of us and whose roots run very deep here.

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**MEMBERSHIP NOTES**

**BUSINESS CORNER**

We are delighted to welcome our first three business members: The Cottages at Chesley Creek Farm in Dyke ([www.chesleycreekfarm.com](http://www.chesleycreekfarm.com)), owned and run by one of our Society’s Charter members, Chuck Swinney; Armstrong and Associates International ([www.armstrongassoc.com](http://www.armstrongassoc.com)) of Stanardsville, whose President is Shari Bedker; and the Farm at South River, owned by Judy and Cliff Braun. We thank them all for their faith in us and in our mission.

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.

We are most grateful to longtime members Ann Reel of Stanardsville and Jackie Williams of Richmond for choosing to become Lifetime Members. And we are delighted to welcome lots of new individual and family members: Jim Lawson, Rebecca Tate, of Elkton; Cynthia Hutcherson of Ashland, VA; Don and Jean Price of Barboursville; Martha & Brad Rodgers of Crozet; Pat Johnson of Chadds Ford, PA; Larry Lamb of Charlottesville; Kim & Jeff Powell, Stuart White, of Dyke; Lester Bush of Gaithersburg, MD; Walker & Mary Breeden of Normal, IL; Patti Christie, Ronnie Wray, of Orange; Clyde Davis of Pound Ridge, NY; Betsy Bean, Ronald and Maryann Padley, Sharon Schinstock and Gale Sweetanos, of Ruckersville; Wayne & Barbara Ballard, Lew & Joyce Byrd, Joyce & Bill Lofiego, Jimmy and Betty Morris, Jon & Shirley Newton, Larry & Emogene Powell, Merrill and Mary Powell, Griffin & Lillian Powell, Amy & Ryan Roman, Ivar & Vyvyan Rundgren, Geneva Shifflett, and Buddy & Sue Spencer, all of Stanardsville. We welcome back returning members Alan and Kay Pyles of The Lafayette Inn. Thank you all for joining, we hope to see you at 360 Main Street.

**Membership Form**

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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. Membership dues 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 \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL NEWSLETTER? YES  NO  TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

INDIVIDUAL \$15.00  FAMILY \$20.00  LIFETIME \$500.00  BUSINESS: \$100.00

***The Greene County Historical Society***

360 Main Street  
PO Box 185  
Stanardsville, VA 22973