

Greene County Historical Society Newsletter



Year 2010

Vol. 16 Issue 3



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

Corrections;

Please, be advised that *Mike Deane* of *D&D Floor Coverings* located in Ruckersville, VA allowed the GCHS to reproduce the photograph of the *Mountain View Tea Room* which was displayed in the previous issue of the Newsletter. Mike's last name was stated incorrectly in that issue.

Also, note the correct spelling of **John Humphries** a new member from Ruckersville.

Membership; *Make History; support the Greene County Historical Society.*

The GCHS encourages existing members to ask non-members to join the Society. Membership only requires that you support us with a small annual donation, \$15 (individual) or \$20 (family) a year! No tests, no mandatory meetings. For your dues you receive our newsletter, published 3 times a year, occasional email updates, notification about our programs and our magazine when published. And you have the satisfaction of knowing that you are supporting a very worthy cause. From year to year membership dues are our primary source of funding to keep the Society operational.

Please, inform your friends and ask them to join or to give paid memberships as gifts for birthdays or holiday occasions. There is a membership form on page 9 of this issue.

Your support is greatly appreciated, thank you.

President's message

Greetings to all. As I say each time, we have, as usual, been busy. Our Independence Day celebrations on Saturday July 3rd included a Parade in downtown Stanardsville, and we had many Museum visitors. With a big crowd in attendance for the festivities, the Society honored several members who had been with us from the beginning, (See the photo below): **Gathelene Rhodes, Ann Shelton, Mamie Runkle, Audrey Morris and Benjamin Sims III** accepted certificates of recognition at the podium. Certificates were mailed to those who could not attend.



We continue to attract visitors from different parts of the country on Fridays and Saturdays, but for those of you further afield – and for everyone else in the world! - I am very pleased to be able to report that www.greenehistory.org is now up and running, with the able assistance of Jill Probst of ClassicWebDesign.com. Jill has streamlined the site, and has made a beautiful gallery with some of the objects from our collections. Check it out, and give us your feedback. I have to say that receiving a complimentary email the very first day the new site went public, from a lady in Sydney Australia, made my day!

We are also involved in another exciting online endeavor. www.piedmontvahistory.org is a 'digital collection' contributed by ourselves and other central Virginia historical societies and museums. By pooling our resources, we can illustrate more fully the rich history of this area. So far this Society has added pictures and descriptions of such items as our hand-made and bound Powell math text book, including a page dated July 22nd, 1813, and a late 1800s photograph of Mr. and Mrs. William Henry Brill and Mildred Anne Long Brill in their buggy outside the Courthouse. It is truly a delight to be able to share our riches this way. Elsewhere in the newsletter we list donations we have received recently. We are most grateful both for financial donations and for artifacts that you give us. An early 1900s 'credit receipt system', a gift this summer from Glenn and Doris Richards, which once was used in Miss Violette's store in Stanardsville, is a unique piece of store furniture in our collection, and we wonder how many survive elsewhere. Did you buy anything at the auction of the contents of Miss Violette's Store? If you did, and it is gathering dust in an attic, basement, or the back of a drawer, would you consider making it a donation to our collections? We would be pleased to hear from you if you would leave a message at the museum – 434-985-1409 about such a gift. Our table at the Greene County Fair received much attention, thank for your attendance.

Jackie Pamerter

Remembrance of Stewart Estes Wood, Miss Ruth Moore and Don Covey

It is with sadness that we note Stewart Estes Wood's passing on February 3, 2010. Stewart, who was born in 1926, served his nation in the U.S. Navy during both World War II and the Korean War; he served the Richmond Metro area as a banker, merchant and civic leader; and he served his family through his ardent research of his family history. Stewart was one of the first members of the GCHS.

On July 11, Miss Ruth Moore passed away at age 97. Miss Moore was known as Miss Ruth to countless students in the Greene County school system and also to many people who came to know her later in life. She was an elementary school teacher here for decades, teaching students, their children and their grandchildren after them. To the end she was full of spirit and of memories that she loved to share. She was one of the original members of this Society, and regretted not being well enough to celebrate with her founding friends at the Independence Day ceremonies. She is greatly missed.

We lost another dear friend on March 8th, 2010 when Don Covey passed away peacefully at 89. Don was a true friend to the Historical Society, as had been his wife Vivian, who predeceased him in November 2009. The Coveys moved to Florida several years ago to be close to their family but his heart remained here in Greene. Don had been involved with the GCHS for many years, as President and as the author of a history of the County. After his move to Florida a shorter edition of that book with extensive illustrations was published. Don arranged for us to receive copies to sell at a substantial discount. He gave me much sage advice, latterly by email. I am grateful to have known him. Jackie Pamenter.

Gifts and Acquisitions June to September 7, 2010

Our members, friends and supporters have been extraordinarily generous to us, never more so than during these summer months. We thank them all.

Elaine Barnett: Greene County Commemorative Plate

Ellen Deane: collection of Galen Morris documents, including High School Yearbooks, poll tax receipts, photographs

Rocky Fitzhugh: ice pick, ice tongs and wooden sausage grinder (see article in this issue)

Clara Herring, two oval china serving platters

Elmer Herring, History of Shenandoah National Park, Herring Family biography

Ron Mosher, APC Backup for the office computer

Betty Garth Nixon: Copies of 'The Trail' for 1950s

Don Pamenter, facsimile of Virginia Gazette, July 26, 1776, Number 78, with a small ad re "The Little Mountains near Albemarle in Orange County"

Eugene Powell: Earl Estes research notes from the Cemetery Survey

Eugene Powell, printing of pages for reprint of Vol. 1 and 2 of Cemetery Survey

Ellen Pratt, photograph of Dennis Frye home in Ruckersville

Ginny Reese, Greene County Librarian, GC Place Names Index

Watkins L. Ribble: memoir "Where Time Stood Still", gift of 20 copies & others heavily discounted for sale.

Glenn and Doris Richards, NCR credit receipt storage system from Miss Violette Moyer's Store

Beverly Whitlock: appointment notice for B. I. Bickers April 9th, 1906 as postmaster of

Stanardsville; and his appointment notice as County Clerk, after the November 1911 election

Blanche Whitlock: four pressed glass shot glasses.

William Monroe Graduates Reunite

The spark of an idea by a dedicated small group, in snowy January, culminated in a memorable gathering at "October Hill" (Route 810- Dyke Road) on September 11, a beautiful fall day. Originally oriented to graduates of the 1950s, this event became known as the "Fifties Fling." Subsequently the 1940s were added, and even the 1930s, which were represented by Ethyle Cole Giuseppe--- congratulations Ethyle!

Coordinators of this event, worthy of commendation, were Gwendolyn Garth Conklin, Marian Watson Durrer, and Barbara Haney. The event was dedicated to the memory of deceased classmates, teachers and principals.

Reservations for 205 attendees were received in response to the invitation letter, and 3 more came on the day. Those with reservations could submit a brief synopsis of information on family, education, work experiences, hobbies, interest and a picture. The inputs were published in a most attractive booklet, with a picture of William Monroe High School, circa 1935 (wooden building). A copy of the Fifties Fling book and a CD of submitted photographs were given to the attendees. The book was dedicated to John Ray Breeden, who graduated from William Monroe in 1930, returned in 1934 as a teacher, and became principal in the mid 1940s.

A display table provided copies of the year book "The Trail" for 1940 to 1957, most provided by Betty Garth Nixon. Missing was 1949, for which no year book was published, by order, it is said, of the then Principal. Copies of these yearbooks can be viewed in the Historical Society Museum. Some individuals brought displays of memorabilia to share.

Prior to the picnic, each 1950's class assembled for a group picture. The 1940's classes were combined for their photographs. These photographs may be purchased separately*.

Mill Valley Caterers of Madison performed in a most professional way, providing a delightful picnic menu that was universally praised. Fling attendees were grateful for the support of the Greene County Sheriff's Department and the Greene County Rescue Squad.

Submitted by Henry Shelton, Charlottesville, VA.

* The Society will be happy to pass on requests for these photos to the Fling organizers.

New Members May-September 2010

Allen Cason, Ruckersville. **Beth Close**, Stanardsville. **John J. Davies III**, Culpeper.
Marlin Diehl, Earlysville. **Betty Garth Nixon**, Culpeper. **Chloe Smith**, Montpelier Station.
Virginia Snow, Stanardsville. **Alex Waldrop**, South Portland ME, **Julie Winslow**, Stanardsville.

Rejoining after long absence;
Ellen and Carroll Deane
Carlyle Hystad

Lifetime membership;
William Thomas, West Lafayette, IN

Mystery Object

When we asked Fair-goers to identify this year's 'mystery object', they had 150 suggestions, some quite strange, but coming down to two potentially very valid answers: a sausage grinder, or a tobacco shredder."



Gift to the GCHS



Above is a National Cash Register, “NCR”, receipt storage cabinet used in Miss Violette Moyer’s store in Stanardsville. The cabinet is a gift to the GCHS from Glenn and Doris Richards of Ruckersville, who purchased it at the auction of the contents of the store before the building on Ford Avenue was demolished.

Financial donations

\$250 from **Greene Tourism**, part of the **Greene County EDA**, to support our participation in www.piedmontvahistory.org. **Gwen Conklin, Arden Coulsby**, several people who rounded up purchases of books, along with 41 visitors to our table at the Greene County Fair. We thank all of you for your interest and support.

Since we are a 501(c)3 charitable organization, your donations to the Society are tax-deductible in the amount allowed by law. We are also eligible for matching grants from employers who make such donations. We are most grateful to Kurt Flaig, a new member in April of this year, who made it possible for us to receive an additional \$100.00 from Dominion Power because he requested such a matching donation.

Purchases

We purchased from eBay Volume XXXIII in Series I of the “Official Records Of The Union And Confederate Armies,” published in 1891 by the Government Printing Office. This 1525 page volume, published in 1891, deals with the Civil War in NC, VA, WV, MD and PA – and includes 8 pages of official records pertaining to Custer’s raid through Stanardsville on Feb 29 and March 1st, 1864.

We also purchased from Bob Thornton a CD containing Thornton family genealogy.



The REAL Birthday of Nathanael Greene

This summer member Iván Henao pointed out an interesting conundrum concerning the masthead on our Title page: we say – or have said in the past – that Nathanael Greene was born ‘5/27/1742’ and died ‘6/19/1786.’ This information is confirmed in the website sonofthesouth.net. But if you look at www.revolutionarywararchives.org you find that he was born on July 27th 1742. Which of these is correct? It turns out that both are. Gerald M. Carbone, in *"Nathanael Greene, a biography of the American Revolution"* addresses this confusing situation. On page 237, Note 5 to the prologue, he says:

“Greene's father logged Nathanael Jr.'s birth date as "the twenty-seventh day of the fifth month, 1742," which led to the impression that Greene was born in May. As was Quaker custom, Greene Sr. employed the civil year, which began on the day of the Annunciation, March 25, not the historical year, which begins more than three months earlier on January 1. Further confusing Greene's birth date was the adoption of a new calendar in Great Britain and America in 1752. Under the "new style" calendar, used to the present day, Greene was born on August 7, 1742, making him forty-three at the time of his death.”

So they used two different calendars in 1742 and then they switched to a third one in 1752! Note that on Thomas Jefferson’s grave, his birth date is given as “April 2, 1743. O.S.,” indicating Old Style. His death is of course recorded as ‘July 4, 1826,’ in the ‘New Style’ calendar.

Did General Greene celebrate his birthday, and if so, which date did he use? We don’t know, but suffice it to say that we will henceforth follow the example set by the stonemason who worked on General Greene’s tombstone, (pictured above), in Savannah, Georgia which gives the dates as 1742-1786.

Our thanks to Iván for helping us to untangle this calendar confusion.

Joint program with Greene County Library for Virginia Archaeology Month

October 9th, 3pm Library meeting room at 222 Main Street, Stanardsville (434)-985-5227

While the theme for 2010 is *“Written in Stone, Exploring the Commonwealth's Historic Cemeteries,”* our talk will range more widely, to cover preservation of family information in various forms. **Preserving Your Family Papers & Photographs**, by Franklin A. Robinson, Jr., gives a basic overview of how the layman can preserve important family papers and photographs for the long term. Attendees can bring one item for evaluation. As well, we will have our 3-volume collection of Cemetery records there to look at and buy, and researchers will be on hand to discuss local cemeteries, both public and private.

Franklin Robinson is an archives technician with the Archives Center at the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian.

Flight from Monticello – Thomas Jefferson at War
Michael Kranish, Oxford University Press – 2010

Michael Kranish has written a delightful history of the revolutionary period, which expands our understanding of Jefferson and the period during which he was the second governor of Virginia. While focusing on the time between June 1779 and June 1781, Kranish also provides a rich context covering Jefferson's youth to old age.

It is popular today to talk about the Founding Fathers with the reverence due to saints. A closer examination of history re-assures us that they too had their weaknesses, indulgences and moral foibles. It is fair to say that Jefferson, at times, had at least his share, including hypocrisy, duplicity, vengefulness, profligacy. His behavior as governor, while Virginia was under attack by Cornwallis, Arnold, Phillips and Tarleton, caused many to ask whether incompetence, cowardice and disloyalty should be added to this list. These accusations haunted Jefferson for the next 45 years of his life. Kranish tries to weigh the evidence and provide a balanced perspective by describing the dilemmas Jefferson faced and how he dealt with them.

Kranish provides insightful profiles of many of the characters who played a role in events of this period – among them Benedict Arnold, the Marquis de Lafayette, Jack Jouett, Baron von Steuben and Lord Cornwallis. He also describes the adventures of Mary Willing Byrd who hosted, at different times, both British and Virginian troops on her magnificent 'Westover' plantation beside the James. She had the chutzpah to eventually claim expenses from both the British and American governments.

Interwoven throughout the story is the character of Patrick Henry. Jefferson developed an early dislike of Henry, fought against him as a lawyer, disagreed with him when Henry was the first Governor and believed that Henry was behind many of the charges that were raised against his performance as Governor. It is fair to say that Jefferson hated many rivals – Hamilton, Marshal, Randolph – but perhaps he hated Henry most. In this he was joined by his faithful friend Madison.

Michael Kranish benefited from having full access to the wonderful resources and scholarly staff of Monticello and the Jefferson library, among other excellent sources. He was also willing to travel out to the woods, rivers and mountains that Jefferson loved so much. He has married the physical and documentary evidence to write a very compelling story.

Review by Don Pamenter

Vandalism at Ruckersville Church and Cemetery

We were horrified to hear in August of some truly despicable acts by a pair of teenagers in Ruckersville. Attacking not once but twice, these vandals set fire to the 100 year old Ruckersville Baptist Church, doing much harm inside the church, and damaging all of its stained glass windows. Not content with this sacrilege, they proceeded along Moore Road to Ruckersville Community Cemetery and knocked over 22 headstones, breaking several old marble stones. Donations for restoring the church can be sent to its Fire Restoration Fund at PO Box 104, Ruckersville, VA 22968. At the time of writing it was not clear what steps the Cemetery Association would be taking, we will keep you posted in the next newsletter.



During the 1920's and early 1930's the people of Greene County were privileged to have the Reverend Watkins L. Ribble serving their community as an Episcopal missionary. The many notes of his experiences were recently made available by his family in book form entitled "Where Time Stood Still".

If you are a native of Greene County or if you have adopted Greene County as your home this book should be placed on your "Must read" list. Once you begin reading the book you will be hard pressed to put it down until it is finished.

One particular section really caught my attention in chapter 5, "Now Explain That To Me", page 40 when the Reverend was traveling first by car on gravel roads then by horseback on a rented horse up to the Saddleback Mountain Mission area to visit a "Spell" with "Milt". As it was stated in the book when the Reverend finally arrived....

"Milt was quite surprised to see me, but his welcome was very warm. Getting another rocking chair from within the house, he invited me to sit and visit with him. No one else was home. Mrs. Allen, he said was away visiting a sick friend. The boys had taken the dogs into the woods to see if they could find a 'coon. So Milt declared that he was glad to have some company that morning and as etiquette demanded, he hoped I would stay all day. Yet, I could see that he was wondering why I was there.

We talked of this and that for a while and admired the rare quality of the view from his porch, for seldom in the Blue Ridge was the air so clear. We could see Charlottesville clearly, and from our vantage point pick out a few of the larger buildings. We were interested in spotting the street cars (long since things of the past now), and at times on their routes sunlight was reflected from their roofs and windows. It wasn't often, Milt said, that the city was so visible, but many times at night it was a pretty sight all lighted up."

Each chapter of this wonderful book gives the reader a glimpse of how life was back then. The "Mountain people" were fiercely independent, cautiously friendly, and had survival skills learned from their ancestors along with the faith and wisdom needed to cope with the extremely harsh living conditions of the mountains in the 1920's and 1930's. Read this book and learn of the wisdom of a people who lived close to the earth and made something from nothing so that they and their families could survive.

Reviewed by W.L. Steo

The GCHS is very proud to have copies of the Reverend's book on sale at the Museum in Stanardsville or it may be purchased through the US Mail for \$17.95 plus \$4.50 shipping. Call 434 985-1409.

The Greene County Historical Society
P.O. Box 185
Stanardsville, VA 22973



Membership Form (Rev. 9/20/10)

Telephone: 434 985-1409 or < www.greenehistory.org>

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City, State, Zip code _____

Telephone Day _____ Evening _____ Email address _____ Date _____

Membership Status: ___New ___Renewal ___

Update (name, address, email address etc) _____

Type of yearly membership (January 1 through December 31) Payment deadline Feb 1st of each year

New dues rate effective 1/1/10

Individual \$15 ___ Family \$20 ___ Institution \$35 ___

Individual lifetime membership \$300 ___

Please complete this form and mail to the above address, with a check for the type of membership desired, made payable to the **Greene County Historical Society**. Since you have an interest in history, we encourage you to support the Greene County Historical Society by becoming a member, and participating as you desire. Joining will ensure that you are invited to all of our events, and in addition you will receive our Newsletter, and a Magazine featuring local and family histories, which is published as material is acquired.

As a member of the GCHS, I am interested in the following. Check all that apply:

Museum Minder* ___, Genealogy ___, Family Cemeteries ___, Events ___, Historical Buildings and Structures ___, Officer or Board member ___, Submit Articles for the Newsletter or Magazine ___,

Other _____

* Museum Minding requires a commitment of only 2½ hours a month on a Friday or Saturday, either 10-12:30 or 12:30-3:00. Training is given, schedules are flexible, you meet interesting people, and we thank you for helping us to keep the doors open!

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