

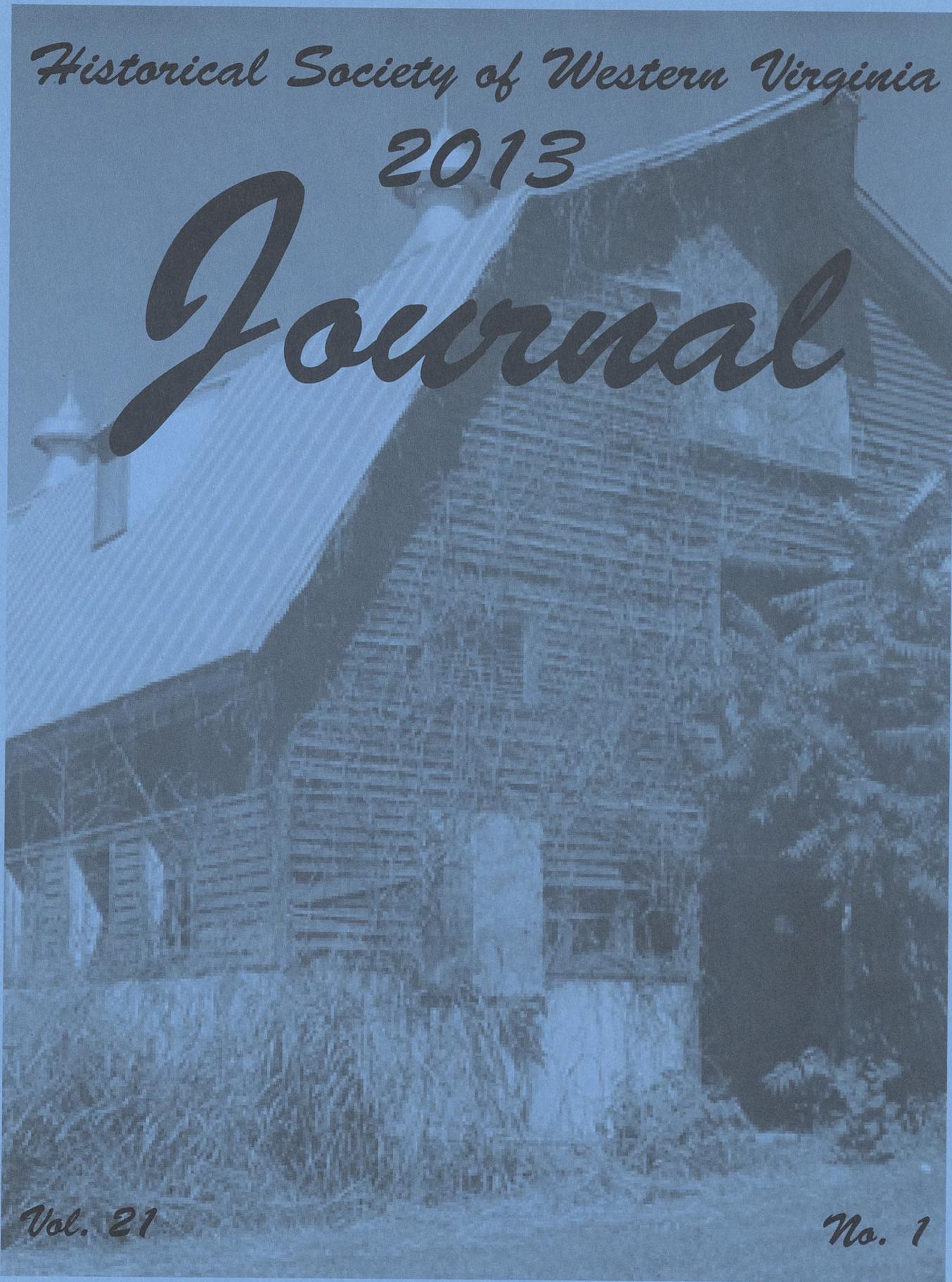
Historical Society of Western Virginia

2013

Journal

Vol. 21

No. 1



Historical Society of Western Virginia

Amor montium nos movet
(For the love of mountains inspires us)

Officers

Bill Honeycutt President
Natalie Norris Vice President
Tommy Moore Secretary
Scott Clarke Treasurer

Board of Directors

Alison Stone Blanton	Louise Forsyth	Tommy Moore
John P. Bradshaw	Gordon Hamilton	Natalie Norris
Jay R. Brenner	Rev. Nelson Harris	Dr. Norma Jean Peters
Ben Chapman	David G. Helmer	Charles Price
Scott Clarke	William E. "Bill" Honeycutt	F. Anderson Stone
Wilburn "Wil" Dibling Jr.	Jim Humphrey	Katherine Watts

Directors Emeriti

Sara S. Airheart	Barbara B. Lemon
George A. Kegley	Edgar V. Wheeler

George Kegley

Editor of the Journal

Christina Koomen

Production, Editorial Assistant

The Journal, Vol. XXI, No. 1, chronicles the history of the Commonwealth west of the Blue Ridge. It is published by the Historical Society of Western Virginia (formerly the Roanoke Historical Society), P. O. Box 1904, Roanoke, Va. 24008. The price for additional copies is \$5 for members and \$10 for others. The Society welcomes unsolicited material but submissions cannot be returned and the Society cannot be responsible for damage or loss.

Table of Contents

<i>page 4</i>	President's Message	<i>page 52</i>	Roanoke College and its 'advantages' for Salem <i>by Linda Miller</i>
<i>page 6</i>	Two Roads Diverged: Architectural History and Historic Preservation in the 21st Century <i>by Michael J. Pulice</i>	<i>page 55</i>	The Grove: More than a presidential residence <i>by Clara Cox</i>
<i>page 12</i>	'Cotton to silk': An oral history <i>by Al Holland</i>	<i>page 58</i>	Timeline of Roanoke Regional Airport (Woodrum Field) <i>by Nelson Harris</i>
<i>page 20</i>	How Lyman Draper saved history <i>by George Kegley</i>	<i>page 66</i>	Another look at the Fincastle Resolutions <i>by Mary Kegley</i>
<i>page 23</i>	Down on the Market <i>by Bob Garland</i>	<i>page 72</i>	Proposed extension of the National Lewis & Clark Historic Trail <i>by Peggy Crosson</i>
<i>page 30</i>	Furniture and aviation history reside in forgotten facility on Kessler Mill Rd. <i>by Michael J. Pulice</i>	<i>page 76</i>	'A once-vibrant community': New panels tell of Gainsboro history <i>by Alison Blanton and Evie Slone</i>
<i>page 37</i>	I remember <i>by Goldie Damewood Garman</i>	<i>page 84</i>	Help Us Preserve Our History
<i>page 46</i>	'From angry words': A Bent Mountain tragedy <i>by John Long</i>		

On the cover: Bedford County dairy barn, circa 1930. See "Two Roads Diverged" by Mike Pulice, page 6 of the Journal.

President's Message

Historical Society repays loan for exhibit space

The Historical Society of Western Virginia ended 2013 in a very positive manner. In a press conference in December, we announced that our bank loan for renovation of the History Museum and for new exhibition space had been paid in full.

I'm sure that those who have visited our Migrations at the Crossroads of History exhibit will agree that we have a world-class exhibit that tells a very interesting story about our part of Virginia. For those who haven't had a chance to visit, the exhibit is an exciting experience for the whole family. Also open until mid-2014 at our museum on the third floor of Center in the Square is *An American Turning Point; The Civil War in Virginia*, a traveling exhibit developed by the Virginia Historical Society, specifically designed to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the American Civil War. If you haven't visited, come and see *An American Turning Point* while it is here.

On January 10, the Society's Virtual Museum sponsored a fundraising dinner at the Shenandoah Club, where a specialist from Bonhams International Auction House gave an interesting talk on dog paintings and another specialist conducted a live auction. This was followed on Saturday by an appraisal event, which was open to the public. For the appraisal day, Bonhams sent six experts, knowledgeable in different specialties, from its New York office to conduct the oral valuations. Categories included paintings, jewelry, books and prints, furniture and decorative arts, Chinese and Japanese art. Over a marathon seven-hour period, more than 200 individual items were appraised.

The format was similar to *Antiques Roadshow*, the popular television program on which Bonhams personnel make frequent appearances. The appraisal event was held in Watts Library. Paintings, large and small, were the most popular items. Among other interesting pieces were a silver ladle made by Paul Revere's brother, Chinese root sculptures, a mourning painting, and a first edition of *Peter Rabbit*. Visitors were glad to learn interesting details about their possessions as well as obtain estimates of market value.

2014 marks the 10th anniversary of the O. Winston Link Museum and there was a two-day celebration of reaching this milestone. Events included opening of two new exhibits, a night photo shoot with N&W 1218 from the Virginia Museum of Transportation, and railfan tours of Roanoke's Norfolk Southern facilities. On January 24 we opened *Link: Commercial* – a collection of O. Winston Link's commercial photography and an exhibition featuring concept sketches of some of Raymond Loewy's



Bill Honeycutt, the Society's new president, is a southwest Virginia native and mechanical engineering graduate of Virginia Tech, and he holds a master's in business administration from Lynchburg College. He worked in the Norfolk and Western Motive Power and Norfolk Southern Mechanical departments. Since early retirement, he's served as a consultant for the railroad industry and volunteered at Virginia Museum of Transportation, its Fire Up 611 Committee and the Rescue Mission.

most famous designs. Be sure and stop by and see these most interesting exhibits.

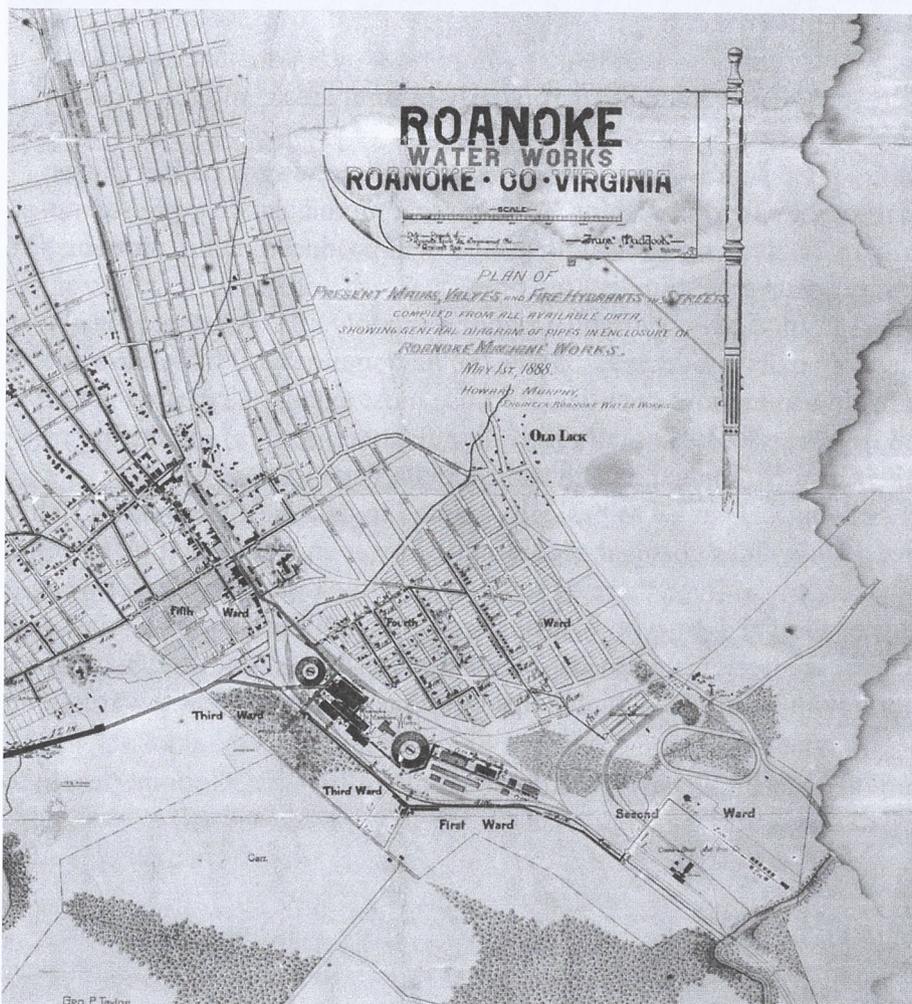
On February 23, *History is Served*, our annual brunch at Hotel Roanoke, featured Wallace Gusler, who worked at Colonial Williamsburg from 1963 to 2004 and became their master gunsmith. Gusler is an expert on back-country living and frontier life.

A new exhibit, *The Virginia Dulcimer: 200 Years of Bowing, Strumming and Picking*, developed by the Blue Ridge Institute at Ferrum College, will open at the museum in June. The exhibit was featured in the July/August issue of *Antiques* magazine.

Our monthly Kegley Lecture Series held at Christ Lutheran Church and our monthly First Thursday Lunchbox Lecture Series held at the History Museum will continue in 2014. Don't miss the opportunity to hear the varied and interesting talks about our area.

Both the History Museum and the O. Winston Link Museum look forward to seeing you in 2014. Be sure and visit www.vahistorymuseum.org and www.linkmuseum.org for an update on events and programs. Both websites also have links to the Virtual Museum and Collections.

Bill Honeycutt
Board President



The Historical Society of Western Virginia was chosen one of the recipients of Virginia's Top Ten Endangered Artifacts awards in 2013 by a program of the Virginia Association of Museums. The Society's 1888 Roanoke City Water Works map was a winning entry for its historic significance and endangered condition. The competition calls attention to the need for preservation and conservation of objects in museum collections. Efforts are underway to obtain funds for restoration of the map. The map shows Old Lick and Roanoke Machine Works (predecessor of the East End Shops) and a nearby race course.

Two Roads Diverged...

Architectural History and Historic Preservation in the 21st Century

by Michael J. Pulice

Though the roots of the preservation movement in America began much earlier, the movement's greatest boost came in 1966 with the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act, which created the National Register and State Historic Preservation Offices. The preservation movement has grown immeasurably since then, and become more effective at saving old buildings from destruction and keeping them in service. Preservation has facilitated revitalization, enhanced quality of life in communities and bolstered tourism opportunities.

However, as the field has evolved, it has become less an academic model and more of an economic development tool. Early interests in recording and interpreting old buildings, and the study of broad architectural themes have seemingly fallen out of fashion, despite the fact that there is much left to be documented and studied within a finite period of time. While no one would argue we should move away from efforts to protect buildings in the physical realm, many important but undocumented buildings beyond our tenuous protective reach are lost annually, particularly in rural areas, and their losses seem to go largely unnoticed.

It is abundantly clear that at the intersection of the change in emphasis among preservationists, groups of important, under-studied resources are diminishing. A return to a more balanced, holistic approach, with renewed interest in fully understanding our built heritage, will produce greater, more lasting accomplishments for the preservation movement in the 21st century.

Consider the dairy industry in Virginia, which virtually died out roughly 30 years ago. [Fig. 1] Fairfax and Henrico were the two leading dairy producing counties in the commonwealth, yet now there are but one or two historic dairy barns in use in those counties. Because most extant dairy barns are of 20th century origin, they have often been overlooked as culturally significant resources, and the opportunity to fully understand them and their historic context has, to some extent, been lost.

Before the 1960s, the study of historical sites was basically limited to details of the lives of rich white men. This problem was exposed and values changed accordingly; however, when we look at a historic building, we still talk mostly about who lived there or activities that took place there. Yet when the stories of how the buildings were constructed, by whom, according to what traditions, with what designs, materials, and methods, the picture becomes immensely more interesting. These stories provide the sense of close personal association with buildings, which helps build positive sentiment towards them, and thereby support for their preservation.

This is the text of a talk Mike Pulice gave at the Preservation Virginia Conference in Roanoke in October 2013. He has worked in the cultural resources field for more than 20 years, first as an archeologist and then as an architectural historian for the Western Regional Office of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.



Fig. 1. The Catawba Hospital dairy farm complex in Roanoke County dates to about 1930.

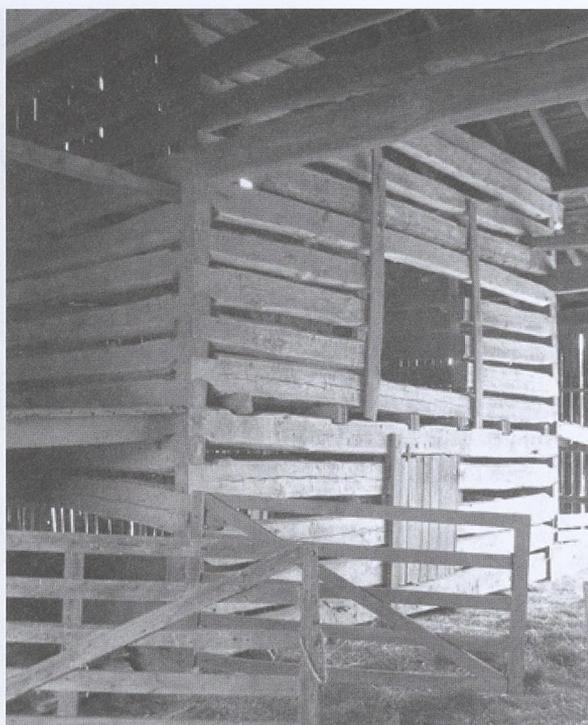
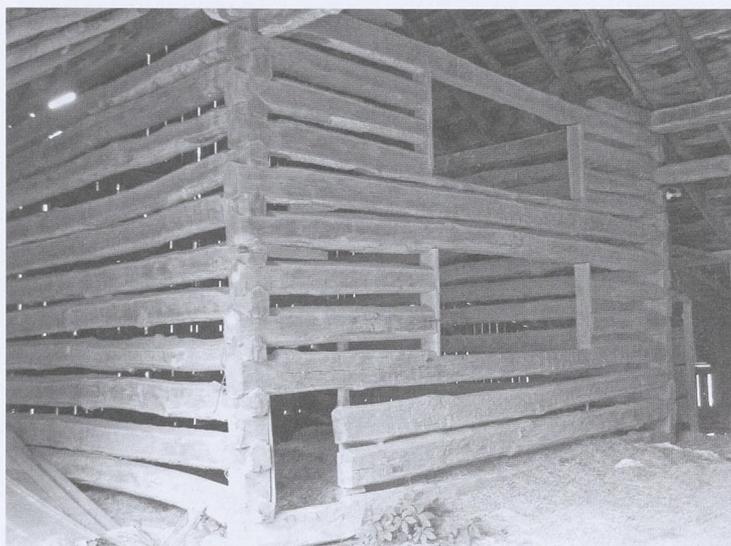
In fact, it is the very existence of old buildings that often prompts us to uncover the forgotten past; not only those stories associated with the buildings, but many related aspects of history as well. For example, much of the history of Roanoke has been revealed by studies leading to the establishment of the city's many historic districts. National Register nominations provide historical background and assessments made readily available to the public. Once buildings are lost, however, countless fascinating stories are unlikely to be uncovered and will never be retold.

SHORTCOMINGS IN CURRENT DOCUMENTATION OF HISTORIC SITES

Despite the best efforts of countless contributors over many years, much of the current body of information, especially for rural areas, is vastly incomplete, skewed, and outdated. Most data have come from government-funded and compliance surveys consisting of a few exterior photos and a brief description of each building or site. Government programs continue to add data annually, but funding for survey has greatly diminished since the early years, while persisting conditions instead call for increased funding.

Undoubtedly, photography and written documentation will ultimately be the most lasting forms of preservation. Despite efforts to maintain the physical presence of buildings, sadly, they are ultimately ephemeral. All will eventually disappear from the landscape, even those that we hold in the highest regard. However, photographs, especially those in digital form, are already being made electronically available all over the world, and through duplication are liable to survive much, much longer.

Buildings in the physical realm, such as the iconic double-crib log barns of western Virginia, are being lost at a pace that few people grasp. [Figs. 2 and 3] A simple change in agricultural practices



Figs. 2 and 3. Double-crib log barns, c.1830, Montgomery County (above); and c. 1840, Floyd County (right).

accounts for the loss of most log barns: since the 1990s, virtually all cattle farmers have replaced the traditional rectangular hay bales with much larger round bales. While the rectangular bales were often stored in old log barns, the round bales cannot fit and therefore farmers no longer have use for the barns.

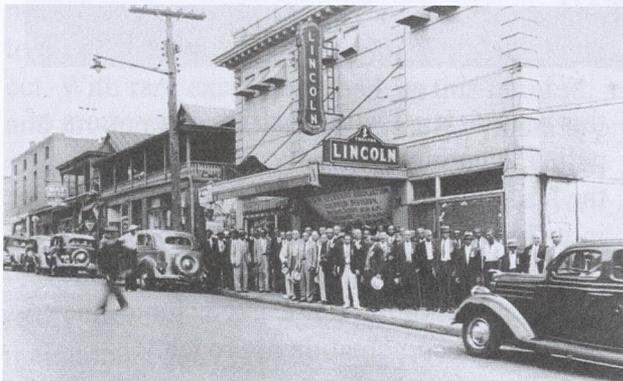
The unfortunate reality is that farmers generally cannot afford to maintain buildings that they cannot put to good use. Even if they could, large barns can be difficult to repair and there are few contractors around who will work on them. The survivors among these rapidly diminishing resources must be documented within the next several years if they ever will be, and the photos and written descriptions may be all we will have to remember them by.

One might ask if the preservation field is reacting to the rate of loss with an appropriate sense of urgency. We tend to think of economic development and other economic conditions such as poverty as the only catalysts of historic resource loss, but cultural and demographic trends are also responsible for vacancy, long-term neglect and ultimate destruction.

The aging of rural America is a trend that deeply affects us, particularly in western Virginia. As elder folks pass away, buildings are left vacant and neglected. Adult children move away from home, leaving no one to care for the family farm, for example. In the short span of a few years, neglected buildings can become uninhabitable. Commercial buildings on small-town main streets become vacant for lack of business. Property values suffer. Meanwhile, unknown numbers of historic resource casualties have resulted from fires and weather events such as floods, tornados, hurricanes and even earthquakes. [Figs. 8 and 9]

The central point of this essay is that a proactive approach to documentation is equally as crucial as a reactive response. In any case, we do not seem to have a mechanism by which we can mobilize quickly to document a property once its impending doom becomes known; therefore, we must rely upon proactive work to ensure all is not lost.

Perhaps significant losses should be tracked in some formal way. Although it might seem demoralizing, loss statistics can be a useful tool for building positive public sentiment and participation in preservation efforts. We can always use more fodder to bolster the persuasiveness of our message.



Figs. 4 and 5. Then and now: the former Lincoln Theatre (left) on Henry Street, once a hub of the African-American community's social life, is now the Claude Moore Education Complex of the Roanoke Higher Education Center, which uses it for culinary arts instruction and event space. Adaptive reuse keeps historic structures in inventory, but sometimes the cultural context is lost.

ECONOMIC VALUES VS. CULTURAL VALUES OF PRESERVATION

Though building rehabilitation and restoration are commonly seen as the main goals of preservation, they are generally not “pure” forms of preservation. Undoubtedly, a documentation-only approach would leave a great deal to be desired, but photographs provide an honest portrayal and therefore are arguably a “pure” form of preservation. Appropriately sensitive rehabilitation maintains historic character, but tends to leave behind a building’s cultural associations, which can then be completely forgotten. [Figs. 4 and 5] Extensive revitalization efforts in neighborhoods can result in gentrification, which goes further by forcing out one socio-economic class of residents and bringing in another, thereby stripping away even the most recent cultural associations.

Adaptive re-use is one type of rehab that may actually involve anti-preservation changes, yet adaptive re-use projects are often celebrated, and rightly so because a building still stands, albeit in altered condition, sterilized from its past cultural associations. Restoration is only slightly different in



Figs. 6 and 7. A tobacco barn documentation project in Southside helps develop new experts in this area of preservation by giving them hands-on experience in the field. Field work is one of several priorities for the future health of the preservation movement. (Images courtesy of Sonja Ingram)

this regard. It effectively strips away years of patina, creating a partially artificial view of the building as it once was, at a specified point in its history. If all this is true, then clearly it is not prudent to concentrate on bricks-and-mortar preservation to the exclusion of the proactive documentation approach.

THE VALUE OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY EXPERTISE TO THE FIELD OF PRESERVATION

Most would agree that one cannot develop expertise without hands-on experience and personal study. Book learning alone is not sufficient. A valid argument may be made that first-hand knowledge of building design, construction and usage is still important to the field of preservation. Only years of in-depth study, with comparative analysis sufficient to "connect the dots," can lead to broad understanding of the historical built environment.



Figs. 8 and 9. Basil Talbert's Stagecoach Inn (left) and Hutton Place show the effects of a 2011 tornado in Washington County. Natural disasters of all kinds pose additional threats to the preservation of significant structures.

Expertise then continually enhances the gathering of data by enabling recognition of similarities, disparities, and any significant, unusual features of the subjects being recorded.

An unusual and exciting ongoing project consists of the documentation of hundreds of tobacco-related structures (namely barns and pack houses) in Southside Virginia, a project with great merits that has already made significant contributions to our body of historical knowledge. [Figs. 6 and 7] Though not formally trained as architectural historians, the project leaders are fast becoming the authorities on tobacco structures through their personal experiences in the field, conducting the thematic survey project. With rare exceptions such as this in mind, it is readily apparent that the field is not actively training and producing enough new experts with an appropriately diverse array of specialties.

LOOKING FORWARD AS PRESERVATION ADVOCATES, ACTIVISTS, AND PRACTITIONERS

First and foremost, more conversation is needed within the field. We carry on our work without really discussing our goals and strategies. In order to do that effectively, we must continue to build and maintain an active preservation community with a sense of identity. The Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation is to be acknowledged for its continuing efforts and growing success toward this goal, but it should be recognized that the organization needs greater support and participation.

Second, we need to continue educating ourselves about the historic architecture we are fortunate to have all around us, but also make active efforts to promote documentation and study, and place fieldwork among our higher priorities. We should broaden the conventional definition of architectural survey to include more analysis and theory, and strongly encourage publication of studies. We should find ways to help fund post-graduate fellowships for the study of Virginia architectural history. We must work together to help open doors for architectural surveyors because property owners are often distrustful and unwilling to allow access to their homes and buildings, requiring effective outreach aimed at correcting any misconceptions or negative views.

Lastly, we need to work harder to reach children at an early age and engage them with the full array of stories that historic sites and buildings can tell, so that they can feel a sense of association and pride, and will join us in our mission when they are old enough.

'Cotton to Silk': An Oral History

by Al Holland

Well, I was born in 1916. I was the fourth child in that family and my father, Gus Holland, was on the railroad then, where he stayed on through. And when I realized what he was doing, he was a blacksmith. I guess I was around seven, eight years old then and I could see him coming with his lunch bucket. He walked to work. He never bought an automobile. I never lived in a rented house because he bought the house and he walked to work every day. When they found out he was skillful, they made him a blacksmith. I can't say how much money he was making at that time.

Nevertheless, I was born in '16. The next boy was born in '19, and then there was 10 of us altogether. We lived on what he made and we lived on Eighth Avenue Northwest. We walked to school. We walked to church, which the church then was old High Street Baptist Church. He made sure that we got our shoes ready on Saturday and get out of there on Sunday morning and walk to the old High Street Baptist Church for Sunday school. He was a stickler for time. He was a great man, and I really appreciated him. He's been dead now about thirty-something years.

Blacksmiths — they had a building and built drive shafts for the engines. Anything that had to be made, the blacksmith had to make it, so drive shafts and wheels and so forth. So he was a blacksmith on [the railroad]. I went to work for the railroad, Norfolk & Western, in 1938. We just had come out of the Depression because President Hoover was the president in 1928, Roosevelt defeated him in '32. That's when he started making movements to get us out of that. He started raising us from the bottom up, see. He put in a WPA and a few of them would go down in Gainsboro behind the Catholic Church down that road there, you'll see a big wall, the WPA built that wall back there in the '30s and it's still there. They raised it up so it would cut down on the flooding.

My daddy always had a job in the Depression. He wasn't making \$200 million a year, but he took care of us. In other words, you could get a loaf of bread for a nickel or a dime. You didn't buy potatoes by the pound, you bought them by the gallon; you got them for maybe 15 cents for a gallon of potatoes. Anything was down to that 38 cents an hour I was making. He made a little more than I did, because I was a janitor, but he was already on the railroad.

My brother, Cyril, worked at the railroad for a while, he was the second oldest. He worked after he came out of the military. He was injured down in New Orleans and he got disability, got him out of the military. It was during the war when he was hurt, so he worked for a while but by him getting the disability, he was here then. Then he went on the railroad a while. And when the war was over he went into business for himself. There was five of us boys in the military at one time.

The railroad was the best job I could get because the steel mill wasn't paying as much as the railroad was then and there wasn't any other outfit paying as much as the rail for labor, because that's what I

This is an edited version of part of an interview by Sheree Scarborough with Alphonzo "Al" Holland at his Roanoke home on Feb. 15, 2013. Holland, who is 97, worked for the Norfolk & Western Railway for 46 years. This is part of an oral history project, "Cotton to Silk," to be published in early summer by History Press for the Historical Society of Western Virginia. Scarborough, who lives in Floyd, is an experienced oral history researcher.

would be getting is a laboring job. I went with the railroad. I stayed with the railroad, and I went to work at the freight station for a few years, both '41, '42, I think it was, I worked at the freight station, still with the railroad. Then in '43, I was called to the military. I had two children then. They were drafting people 18 to 45, and I was in that category, so I had to go.

During World War II, I left here on the 23rd day of February going to New Cumberland, Pennsylvania. That was 1943 when I went up there. It was a cold, good morning up there when we got our outfits and so forth. We had to stay inside because it was too cold to go outside. So I came down and I went to Fort Belvoir with this outfit of engineers, combat engineers. I stayed there until they moved us out of there. Basic training was one of the things that we went through. We had to learn how to build bridges and learn how to breach a minefield, so we learned both of those skills.

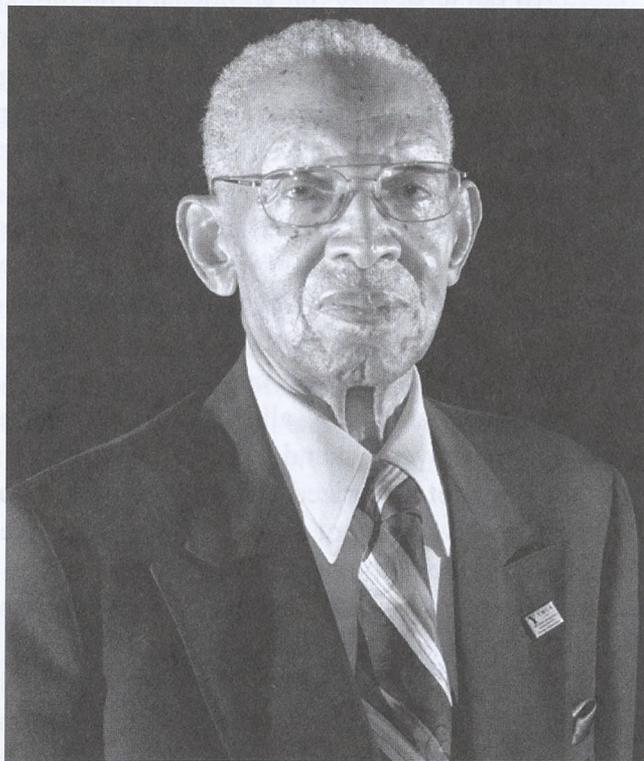
When I was working on the D-Day War Memorial (long after the war), I started with General [William B.] Rosson. He was talking about the 29th [Infantry Division], going over to the invasion of June 6. But, anyway, so I said to General Rosson when he was talking about the 29th invasion, I told him, I said, "Well, you know we didn't have anybody in the 29th like me." He said, "What?" I said, "No, we were in a segregated army. It was segregated all the way through." I said, "But they didn't cross there by themselves, because it takes eight men behind the line to keep men fighting on the line." You've got transportation, you've got clothes, you've got food, and all that, ammunitions, and so forth. So the Negroes, as we said, or blacks, were in the service outfits at that time. I was with the 38th Division.

They didn't declare the war ended until 1945. I was in the Philippines at that time. The invasion of the Philippines was Jan. 9, 1945. They had run General MacArthur out of there and so he had gone down into Port Moresby in Australia. He came back and invaded the Philippines to get the Japanese to surrender, so when they went out of there, they left Manila in a blazing inferno. But we built it back. I didn't get back home until 1946. I don't have any things to say that's not healthy for this great country of ours.

When they desegregated the army — Truman did that. I was back here, so I was back at work when we hit Korea, had me being in basic combat, they called me back again. I went to Fort Gordon in Georgia. I stayed down there. Eighteen months I was down there, Fort Gordon, Georgia, training. I trained some of the fellows that were going into Vietnam at the time.

I joined the 80th Division here in the reserves after I came back from Fort Gordon, Georgia, and then I stayed with them until 1976. That's when I retired from the reserves, in 1976. We were slated to go into Vietnam, but President Nixon called it off. I was a corporal, but when I came out, I was a sergeant first class.

My first job with the railroad was cleaning in the General Office Building. At that time there was a cuspidor at every desk. I had to clean those cuspidors, make sure the desk and everything was clean. As soon as Stuart Saunders came in as president, he said, "Get those cuspidors out of this building,



Al Holland, a 46-year railroad man.

throw them in the trash can.” That’s one thing he did. He made it clear that he didn’t want those cuspidors in that building. It was an unthinkable situation, but of course we had some gloves we could have used. But we needed the job. My kids needed the food, so I had to work somewhere. I stayed in there working until we desegregated the Army, then we started getting raises. I built a home, at that time I think it was 62 cents an hour I was making then.

That’s when I’m back from the military. I built a house on 62 cents an hour. Eugene Brown was the contractor and he built that house for me that’s standing there today on Staunton Avenue, a cinder block stucco, \$9,500. My notes were \$40 a month. I walked to work. I hadn’t bought a car yet because I couldn’t afford a house and a car at the same time.

That’s why I’m saying from “cotton to silk.” We took what we could get, and we made a life for ourselves. Our children went to school. Her [referring to his wife Sarah] granddaddy worked on the railroad. He sent her mother to Wilberforce College and she came back as a teacher. (She’s my second wife.) So you can’t say we took the money and just squandered it. We made cotton, but we took that cotton and made silk. That’s where I got the idea that we took cotton and made silk.

To see what they did with what little they were making, and you see, we’ve got men coming down meeting with us, they’re engineers, conductors, firemen, those jobs are open to them. We had to take what we had down here because we weren’t going to get those jobs. But I lived to see them get it. So the silk is what we did for our children and then also for the next generation — those men coming on the railroad. They didn’t have to come in and clean cuspidors; they went through training and got hired as engineers and got to move to conductors..

After cleaning I moved to the freight station, that was an upgrade. See, I was a freight handler then, before the war. I was a freight handler before I went. See, because when they hit Pearl Harbor more jobs opened up. But then they continued the draft, and they got me in the draft, see, in 1943. So I had to leave the freight station. If we got back, our job was supposed to be there for us, which it was. So altogether I worked 46 years on the railroad.

When I came back, all that time the freight handler job was there, open, so then I started moving. We got more movement and transportation. See, a lot of times we were just trucking with two wheels, but then they got motorized, moving the freight up and down the platform, it was motorized, moving from car to car, so we got away from the truck, we weren’t doing too much with the truck. They reloaded, we came to the next level, put it in, and so we started cutting out the freight. I had to go down to the passenger station and load the mail on the passenger train because they were cutting out the freight, closing down the freight house.

Then when I got moved out of that, then I had to go back to janitor. Well, there were men that were still working at the freight station who had more seniority than I did. So they pulled me out of there, and when you lose your job, they would have to find you another job. I went back to the General Office Building and the janitors, but all the cuspidors were gone then.

The Wabash Agreement was if you lost your job they had to find you a job. But whatever job they found for you on the railroad, you had to take that job. Then I go back to the janitor [position]. But they moved up from the 38 cents. It was higher; it was at \$1.75 an hour in the 1950s. I went back to cleaning. Then they needed security, so I bid on the security and it was a high paying job. Then segregation was going out, and you could bid. I had enough seniority, so I started bidding on the clerks’ jobs in the 1960s. After the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964, we moved up and now I worked as a clerk. I stayed in that clerk position until it opened up a little more.

Al Mayo was the chief clerk who was in charge of Pricing and Marketing. I was in the mailroom then and so when we had what you call the freight cars, the ones hauling all the wheat, they had to be in a special car, it had to be a special time. So when the job came available for clerk, he said, “It’s a good job, Holland, you can bid on it.” So it came through, I had the job in Pricing and Marketing. So we

moved down where the old passenger station was then. So I got this as a head clerk in there. I did that job.

When I was in the Army Reserves, each summer, I had to go back to summer camp. So I had to go to two weeks down to summer camp; when I came back, I was at home on a Sunday morning and the telephone rang and he said, "While you were gone, we decided that you needed to be the assistant chief clerk." My pay then was I was on salary. So I worked there for about two years straight, then I kept moving up. When I retired from down there, I was the assistant manager in tariff compilations. I was the assistant chief clerk and I retired from that.

I worked my way up. I tell youngsters now: "Don't think that you can jump up and play basketball or play football. It's just a matter of time that that will run out. Put something up here [pointing to head]." [Pointing to photographs] My wife's son is up there. Yeah, standing with that young girl over there, with that bowtie on. I've been married to her [Sarah] now 34 years. Her son, Tom Pettigrew, calls me Daddy. He played for the Los Angeles Rams and he got injured. I think he was there about 18 months and he got injured, but he came out of Eastern University. He's in food service now. He doesn't have to dig ditches. He got a good job. I tell these youngsters, "Don't think you're going to play basketball and when you get hurt they're going to ship you out." Get an education, get something up here that you can be then.

Yeah, I was locked in those positions at the railroad but when Civil Rights came through, they had to break that, so every time a job came, I bid into it.

In the meantime, while I was in this reserve unit, we'd meet on weekends. I was in supplies. Captain Robinson came to me and he said, "Sergeant Holland?" I said, "Yes, sir." "You're the president of the NAACP." I said, "Yes, I am." He said, "Well, you can help me. We're going to camp and we've got to have minority contributions on the training when we get to South Carolina this summer. I believe you can really help me get this put together. I want you to give the class to the officers." I gave it to them. I gave all the contributions that helped build America: Garrett Morgan and the electric light; Charles Drew and blood plasma; George Washington Carver and the peanut and the sweet potato. So when they got through with it, Major Hawkins said, "Get him out of the supply room and get him in training."

That's why I'm saying from
"cotton to silk." We took what we
could get, and we made a life for
ourselves.

I found out about those contributions by reading these things. Just like when Abraham Lincoln came in as president, he said, "Four score and seven years ago, our forefathers came forth to this country," and built this country, and said, "that all men are created by their creator and are endowed with certain inalienable rights. Among them, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." That split this country at that particular time. He said, "Now we stand at war, a civil war. This country and no other country cannot stand such an endeavor."

So they started fighting. They had a Negro outfit that came out of Boston and joined with the regular army, and they pushed straight on through until they broke down Jeff Davis. Then they put the army in the South to make sure. Blanche Bruce was the first Negro senator out of Mississippi. Rutherford B. Hayes was going to run for president. He told them if they voted for him, he would take the troops out of the South. He said, "If you vote for me, I'll take the troops out of the South." He went into the presidency with one vote. Don't let anybody tell you that your vote doesn't count, because that one vote put him in the presidency. He was true to his word. He took the troops out of the South, and that's when the Ku Klux Klan came into it.

This was a black history class to the Reserves. They gave me a correspondence course out of New York University, so I was taking those correspondence courses and sending them back. You have to continue reading things and keep going with it. You never outgrow your need to learn.

I was president of the Roanoke NAACP chapter for nine years in the 1960s. I went to Selma. [William] Wilson was the president, and I was vice president at that time, and we went to Selma. They said, "You mean the president and the vice president?" I said, "I guess we just had more nerve than we had sense, I guess." Martin Luther King was marching then. We lost men in that time, but we kept pushing until we got it done.

Here in Roanoke, Reuben Lawson challenged the school board to break down segregation in the school system here. I think it was a reverend at the First Baptist Church, his two children were first to go — Reverend [E.L.] Green's children went in first. He was over at First Baptist Church. And then Reverend [Raymond] Wilkinson's children were next to go in. We got desegregation through the school system here.

We had a tough time moving that because when [J. Lindsay] Almond was governor, he said there wasn't any Negroes going into schools in Southside, and so they closed up schools over there. I was president then, when they closed those schools over there in Southside. We went over there and we sat down, because those children couldn't go to any school. They closed up the schools, and some of the kids had to come out and go to school someplace else. Some of the whites got caught in that also because they didn't have the money to leave. Finally we got it down to where we got segregation moved out of the state.

Roanoke didn't have this same thing that they had some of these other places, down in those other cities. They would rather give than to have the place torn up. At that time, I was president of the NAACP. We went down to Miller & Rhoads, a tea room there, and we talked with the manager. Sometimes when you go talk to people, you can get more done than using your fists. He said, "Sure." He set us a place and we sat down and we had lunch there. Reverend [Frederick G.] Sampson was my pastor then at High Street. Reverend Sampson, Dr. Law, Wilson, we were the ones who went in there.

We left there, and we went down to Kress; we couldn't eat in Kress's at that time. We talked with them. They pulled that out and Woolworth's with them. We stayed down on Campbell Avenue [in Roanoke]. We pulled a sign down in the station over there. See, they had two waiting rooms over there when you got off the train.

We desegregated Roanoke without any incidents. So sometimes when you talk to people you can get things done. Reverend Sampson made a statement and said that Roanoke had what was known as "stand-up integration" at that particular time. You could go anywhere in any store as long as you stood

up, you got what you wanted. But now it's real.

The vice president of personnel called me and said, "Mr. Holland, I know you're in the NAACP now, and I know we've got some diehards on this railroad." He said, "If you need any help of any kind, you come here."

Well, that's when we started getting raises. We wanted to go into the union but they gave us an auxiliary. Reverend [Carl] Tinsley will tell you that because he worked with the union a lot. But then finally we got into the main union. Then I went out of the union because I got a class. I got a class five.

Well, you see, we were down there at the freight station and we had our dinnertime, it was a whole hour, so we ate our lunch and a fellow by the name of Ira Womack, he was very gifted at singing. He started working and singing with us, and so we started singing as the Twilight Singers. We had about 15 men; we were on the freight station. We went by churches, went to the YMCA, we raised money for the YMCA just singing. We did great things out there just singing; and then we'd sing a lot of times down there for things happening at the freight station.

We were different from the N&W singers. We were just strictly from the Freight Station. That was the Twilight Singers, so we did great things around in this community. We sang at the YMCA on several occasions, sang at a lot of churches, and we went down in Franklin County and sang gospel music. I was the lead singer, a tenor. We stopped singing when they closed the freight station but I was still singing in my church choir.

See, where we're meeting [with the African American N&W Heritage Celebration Group], we're meeting at the freight station. When they closed it down, they gave that building to the Museum of Transportation. That building was turned over to them. They've been working on it since; they're bringing in airplanes and decorating it. Well, that's where the exhibit is. And the engines, the 1200 and the 600 were given to the city, but the city put them right there where people could see it.

The old freight station came from Park [Fifth, Southwest] Street to Second Street, straight through. It was built in 1918. When they stopped having the transportation breakdown, then it started taking carloads for freight. That cut the jobs out, see, there wasn't anybody unloading then. You used to get furniture cars coming out of Bassett, Martinsville, and we'd unload them over there. But then they closed down the freight station. So it sits on the side and like Nelson Hardware, they set them outside, and then they get somebody to unload it. So that's how we started doing things.

My first wife was living, so we went all the way to Cincinnati to see Jackie Robinson play. We went up and watched him play and the train didn't cost me anything; free passes. If memory serves me correctly, I think I put \$50 or \$60 in my pocket and we went on all the way up to Cincinnati, caught the bus, ate in the station, went to the ballgame, came back, and had about \$15 or \$20 in my pocket when I got back. That's just how down to earth things were then.

The trains were segregated then, you had to ride in the front end, when you got to Bluefield, you could switch going up. You could go in the front end and go in the dining car from there.

The funny thing is, the way the world goes, even in segregated times — you're going to see pictures up on that wall [at the museum]. There's a baseball team on there. They had two roundhouses: one at Sixteenth Street and one up where it is now. But you'll see that picture because I've got the picture of those baseball players, the N&W Stars sitting on the wall in the den. If you could play baseball, Roy Gable, the superintendent would hire you, and he didn't put them in harm's way where they'd be lifting anything. He had them wiping down engines and so forth, those were his children, because he loved his baseball and he was the superintendent at the Sixteenth Street roundhouse. He'd follow those baseball players anywhere, if they were playing anywhere, he was gone. That's what my daddy was in. He was the blacksmith in Sixteenth Street [roundhouse] at that time.

When they had picnics they'd have excursions. They'd run an excursion train to some particular base for the whites, and come right back and run one for the colored. That happened the last time we

went — I was a little boy running around at that time — when we had our excursion to Pulaski. Mom packed the basket and we got on the train from Roanoke to Pulaski. If they would run the excursion for the whites, they would run one for the Negroes. We went up to Pulaski and that ball club, and they'd probably go up there and play ball on the field, while we were up there. We'd have a good time. You were segregated, but you weren't segregated because they did the same for them.

I played ball with the Roanoke Cardinals, a semi-pro team. We played against guys like the Homestead Grays, the Pittsburgh Pirates, and the Kansas City Monarchs. Those were the Negro Leagues. They'd come through here traveling, barnstorming going into Cuba for winter baseball. We didn't have a stadium like they've got up at Salem now. We played in Maher Field. They tore down the stadium over there before they built the [new] stadium. We worked at least eight hours a day, played baseball, sang and went to church. Just did it. We'd go to Norfolk on the weekends and come back and play baseball. I remember we went to Greensboro for the Cardinals. It said, "We will give \$100 guaranteed." Jim Jones was the manager, and he took the \$100 guarantee. We got there that night, at Greensboro, and that stadium was filled up. At that time we were driving our automobiles and we'd get some guys, they'd drive us down to the game. We got the \$100. We had a good time. Chatter Slims was manager for us then, and he had a store over in Gainsboro. We'd meet there and talk it over, next game, so forth, but we had fun.

There wasn't any tearing up things and beating down. We did wholesome recreation. It bothers me to see what's going on in this town. It really bothers me to see what's going on — guys shooting up schools and fighting the president because he wants to get rid of those AK 47s off the streets. He should get them out. Nobody needs those kinds of weapons.

I have three children. I have a boy and two girls. My boy's a brick contractor. The funny thing is I was going to be a lawyer. I was going to be a lawyer, but I didn't make it, so I went to the railroad. I went to Hampton Institute about 19 months. It's Hampton College now, but anyway, I went there. I came back. I didn't go back. But, anyway, what I started to say about my kids was when my son, Al Holland Jr., finished [Lucy] Addison, I said, "He's going to be a lawyer." I missed it. But so he finished up school. He was an outstanding basketball player. He went to Virginia State. I said to him, "Junior, what're you going to take up?" He said, "Dad, I'm going to be a brick mason." I said, "You mean to tell me here's my buddy who is teaching brick mason and you decided you wanted to be a brick mason?" He said, "Well, that's what I decided to be other than playing basketball."

He was in industrial management, that's what he took up. He can do electrical work, lay brick, do concrete work, he can put up rows of houses, he got the whole shebang. My oldest daughter, Carrieoma Brooks, was a payroll supervisor at the Veterans Hospital, and my other daughter, Maryann Cummings, did commercial work, selling stuff over the telephone.

That is my two daughters. It's a funny thing how this happened. Junior, my son, has five children. Lucretia went to Ohio State. She is a lawyer down in Charlotte, North Carolina. So that lawyer got into my family anyway. It's a funny thing how things come around. She's a lawyer, and that's my son's daughter. He didn't [get there], but his daughter's a lawyer.

I saw some lawyers in town, At that time, the courthouse was segregated. Lawyer Reed was a lawyer and Lawyer Hobbs was a lawyer. These are Negro lawyers. But, anyway, they were practicing law, and they were dressed. I would see them and I would say, "I want to be a lawyer." They were based up on Henry Street. I was striving to be a lawyer. So but you see, they couldn't practice law for whites, but for Negroes. I didn't make it through Hampton Institute. I had to come get some more money. I was there on a basketball scholarship. The coach said, "Some of you boys have to go back and bring some money. We've got other kids we've got to take care of." So they asked me what I was doing and I said, "I was milking cows and slopping pigs." They had a farm down there. [Laughter] I said, "I was milking pigs."

I came back, and I was trying to make some money. I got married, so I couldn't go back, and then the kids started coming, two kids coming. My son and my oldest daughter — Maryann wasn't born until 1947. But, anyway, I don't have any remorse about not being it, because I think I made great strides with what I had to work with, from cotton to silk.

Well, I've had a great life. My mother — at that time, there weren't any washing machines — she brought us up on washing boards. We had chickens in the backyard and we never went hungry because we could raise chickens and we had eggs. Daddy had a lot on the other side, two doors up the street, he'd plowed it every summer, cabbage, beans, squash, cucumbers. He put all that in that lot, tomatoes, all we didn't use, Mama canned. When it got cold, she always had that food back in that closet there. She just opened up a can of string beans or opened a can of soup. There were half-gallon jugs. Nobody was ever hungry.

At that time, we had stoves in every room. You could get coal for six dollars a ton. By him being on the railroad, when they'd take those crossties out, he'd get those crossties, bring them here. He'd get somebody to haul them here with a wagon. He had a crosscut saw and cut those crossties into stove length, split them open. They had a lot of wooden boxcars then. When they scrapped boxcars, he'd get wood for kindling. We'd have to cut that kindling, put it on the back porch, cut that wood up on the back porch. Bring the coal up from the coalhouse. It was down on the alley. Bring that coal on the back porch.

I'll never forget, James and I were out there doing something. It was on a Wednesday because he went to prayer meeting — and we didn't cut any kindling — so he came in from the prayer meeting. He went upstairs and we were in the bed. He went in there and looked at that wood box out on the back porch. "Alphonzo?" "Yes, Papa." "I don't see any wood in that wood box." "Well, I was going to cut it in the morning." "Oh, you're not going to cut it in the morning. You're going to get up and cut it now. And don't turn that light on the back porch, you cut that wood." [Laughter] I didn't let that happen anymore. You were scared to say anything to him. He wasn't mean, but he meant what he said.

I'm not saying this to be funny, I see on television, these young girls having babies, and letting some joker come in and they're saying, "my fiancé," and the fiancé comes and abuses the children. That's how a lot of them are getting in all that stuff up there. I hope we can get a better way of training the children. We've got schools and they're trying to get the school skills, but some of the kids are not making it through college, they get there and come back.

I was scoutmaster at High Street for about 50 years. We were segregated. We had scout troops over at Pilgrim, over at First Baptist, Hill Street, and High Street. I never thought I'd hear what I've heard about scouting. Because we were there all this time to train young men, to get them ready for things.

Well, see, the family was what made the country. We didn't have everything maybe we wanted, but there's a difference in wants and needs. But we had what we needed for that particular time.

After I sold that house, I bought one over on Grayson [Avenue], sitting on a hill out there. After my first wife died, I married Sarah, and she had this house, so I sold that one. Somebody called up, and she said, "Well, I've still got the castle over here that you built." The house I built over there, that \$9,500 house, at 624 Staunton Avenue. You couldn't build it for that now.

The railroad is family. See, Norfolk & Western made this town. If you could get a job on the Norfolk & Western, at that time, you were home free. You had it made because my daddy went from labor to blacksmith. Look at that showcase, there's a hammer in there [at the Transportation Museum]. My daddy made that for my oldest brother in 1908. It's in that glass case there. And it was just family. You got a pass to go where you want to go, but you rode in the front end of the train. Somebody said we were segregated. I said, "Yeah, we get to town ahead of the white people." We get into town before the white people get there. We were in the front end of the train.

How Lyman Draper Saved History

by George Kegley

Lyman Copeland Draper, a small man from New York State with a passion for history, traveled hundreds of miles across Virginia and neighboring states in the mid-1800s, collecting valuable papers of such prominent pioneer leaders as William Fleming, William Preston and even Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson.

Draper gathered papers from the families of these frontiersmen and took them to Madison, Wisconsin, where they are prized and studied by scholars at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin today. Thousands of pages of the papers, known as the Draper Manuscripts, are available on microfilm for research at many libraries.

Traveling from a temporary home at Baltimore, Draper made nine major trips from 1844 to 1852, in Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee. Among many letters he wrote in search of papers is one addressed to Charles Campbell of Petersburg, saying "I hope, in due time, to aid, indirectly, in rendering ample justice to some of the gallant sons of Virginia, more particularly those who figured prominently west of the Blue Ridge."

In another letter to Campbell, published in the *William & Mary Quarterly* in January 1946, Draper tells of an early trip through the Roanoke Valley:

"In 1844, when passing down the Valley of Va., I took occasion to visit Col. Lewis (Andrew Lewis Jr.) at his residence on Bent Mountain — but found him in a situation which rendered him unfit to communicate any reliable information. A year or two before he had been thrown from a horse & injured inwardly in the head, from wh. he never recovered. He was a noble specimen of a gentleman of the olden time — then about 86 years of age, but active in his movements & possessing a generous, ruddy healthy countenance. I am gratified that his recollections of the pt. Pleasant battle were put on paper before his misfortune." (The recollections would have come from Lewis's father, Gen. Andrew Lewis, who played a leading role at Point Pleasant and died in 1781.)

In his travels, Draper once spent weeks in Abingdon with former Gov. David Campbell, copying the papers of his ancestors and records from the Battle of King's Mountain in the Revolution.

While other historians were working in libraries and record offices in Europe, "Draper was wandering through the West on his quest ... often footsore and weary, disappointed or disheartened. Frequently he would reach a goal only to find the pioneer he sought was dead; often to find the papers he eagerly hoped to acquire had been carelessly destroyed or devoured by fire," according to Louise Phelps Kellogg, a prominent historian and writer in Wisconsin.

An article on the manuscripts in *Essays in Western History* reported that Draper traveled over 60,000 miles, "meeting with hundreds of curious adventures and hairbreadth escapes by means of runaway horses, frightful storms, swollen streams, overturned stages, snagged steamboats, extremities of hunger and the like, yet never injured nor allowing any untoward circumstance to thwart the particular mission at the time in view."

William B. Hesseltine, a Virginia native who taught history at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, said Draper "built a great collection of papers, the first significant collection of personal, non-official

George Kegley is editor of the Journal.

materials in America ... [he was a] hero-worshiper and patriot, who in his own favorite expression, 'rescued from oblivion' the 'hardy adventures' of countless heroes of the Southwest and sang the praises of the pioneers." The collector had "a remarkable persuasiveness in gathering his material," he added.

The scope of Draper's work is enormous. Sometimes copying by hand, he left "a collection of nearly 500 volumes of records in a potpourri of formats and dates," according to "Guide to the Draper Manuscripts," a 464-page book with an index of almost 200 pages, compiled by Josephine L. Harper for the Wisconsin Society. In 1875, Draper said his collections were "the systematic result of over 40 years' labors and 60,000 miles of journeyings."

The collection includes 65 volumes of George Rogers Clark Papers, 32 volumes of Daniel Boone Papers, six volumes of William Preston Papers and 16 volumes of Virginia Papers, according to William Luebke, reference librarian at the Library of Virginia.

Some historians have complained that Draper was a raider, taking valuable material out of state. But the majority of scholars commend his work, saying that he saved primary sources which might have been discarded if he had not collected them.

In a 1922 article for the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Louise Kellogg wrote that Draper "ransacked memories ... [and] from their hiding places, old letters and documents were brought forth and pressed into his hands ... These half-forgotten, neglected papers would most of them soon have perished had not this knight errant of historic adventure passed by that way." She said Draper seldom met rebuff in his quest: "... friendly faces greeted him and kindly hearts entertained him in the rich homes of planters or the rude homes of the poor."

Hesseltine, in an article for the *Journal of Southern History* in February 1953, wrote, "People gave him (Draper) papers. He did not steal them. He did not borrow them without intention of returning them. He owned the papers — and sometimes he owned them by right of purchase ... He appealed to old men and to their descendants to give him information and their letters and papers in order that he might set the record straight. It was an appeal to pride, and even to vanity, and dozens of people turned their papers over to him."

An example of early correspondence saved by Draper, indexed in the "Guide to the Draper Manuscripts", is a letter from Anne Christian, who once lived at Cloverdale in Botetourt County, to her husband, Col. William Christian, telling him of harassment by Indian marauders she and her Kentucky neighbors experienced in the spring of 1786. Her letter ended, "God bless you and protect you safe from harm." Christian was killed by a party of Indians less than a month later.

Among other papers collected by Draper and listed in the Guide are three letters from George Rogers Clark to William Fleming, more than 20 official and personal letters from Jefferson to Clark, Draper's correspondence with the families of John Floyd, James Patton and William Preston, and a letter from Caleb Wallace, formerly of Botetourt, to Fleming, discussing Clark's Wabash campaign.

Draper collected copies of pension applications from Revolutionary War veterans who had served in western Virginia and Valley Forge; original manuscripts of Thomas Madison, longtime surveyor in Botetourt County; letters to Fleming in 1767 about a scheme for land settlement near the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers; and an 1801 letter by James Monroe about the Virginia-Tennessee boundary line.



Lyman C. Draper portrait from "King's Mountain and its Heroes: History of the Battle of King's Mountain."

Draper is remembered in Wisconsin for his work in reorganizing the State Historical Society and serving as its secretary from 1854 to 1886. In his first year as secretary, he wrote with his own hand 1,833 letters, according to Louise Kellogg.

Soon after the papers were deposited in Wisconsin, historians, scholars and genealogists began to glean the information. In his research for his "Winning the West," Theodore Roosevelt spent an afternoon with the Draper Manuscripts, and the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) admitted members on the basis of these papers, Hesseltine reported.

Who was this man who left his mark in American history? Lyman Draper, born in Lockport, New York, in 1815, attended a village school, worked on the family farm and clerked in local shops, according to the Guide. Only 5 feet, 1 inch tall, he was "ill-suited for rough sports and heavy physical labor" so he sought adventure in books and stories from the Revolution and the War of 1812. With the help of a cousin, he attended Granville College in Ohio for two years but left to work on a newspaper and as a land agent in Mississippi and later as a canal clerk in Buffalo, New York. Louise Kellogg described him as "a singularly quiet man, almost a recluse in habit, modest and unpretentious in manner, with no capacity for self-advertisement, but with unmeasured ability for hard work and a self-sacrificing determination to render service both [to] the past and to posterity."

While working, he read history and planned a book of sketches of pioneer lives. Peter Remsen, his cousin, financed his historic research and collection travels until Remsen's death nine years later. He then moved to the Wisconsin Historical Society post. Draper, a Democrat and a Baptist, was married twice.

Despite almost universal praise for his collecting skill, as an "indefatigable collector who preserved whatever he gathered, a truly unique and significant collection resulted," according to Hesseltine, however, Draper was labeled as a procrastinator for his failure to publish. He collected materials with a promise to write stories of pioneers but his only published history was an 1881, 612-page book, "Kings Mountain and Its Heroes."

He promised descendants "to acclaim the memories of their heroic ancestors," but he did not write books based on the papers. His health "would never permit him to work on them," Hesseltine said. Louise Kellogg said Draper's "standard of thoroughness paralyzed his pen ... [He] was not a literary genius; he lost himself in the abundance of his material; he had no sense of historical proportion, no appreciation of the relative value of fact."

Yet, "as a pioneer collector, he stands unrivaled ... he has left an enduring legacy," according to Kellogg. After he suffered a stroke, he died at Madison, Wisconsin, on Aug. 26, 1891.

SOURCES

"Guide to the Draper Manuscripts," by Josephine L. Harper. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1983

The Journal of Southern History, Vol. 19, No. 1, Feb. 1953

"Lyman Draper and the South," by William B. Hesseltine, *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol. V, No. 3, March 1922

"The Services and Collections of Lyman Copeland Draper," by Louise Phelps Kellogg. State Historical Society of Wisconsin *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 6, No. 4, October 1953

"The Historical Fraternity: Correspondence of Historians Grigsby, Henry and Draper," edited by William B. Hesseltine and Larry Gara

William & Mary Quarterly, January, 1946, "Correspondence Between Charles Campbell and Lyman C. Draper"

Down on the Market

by Robert Allen Garland

I hope to give you a brief history of the City Market area which is so important to the city, given that there has been considerable work on the market area for the last two years, especially on the main Market Building and a complete renovation of this building, Center in the Square, which we are presently in, and other changes are still to be made.

These thoughts and observations were made when I was a young lad of 6 until I was a teenager of 16. I remembered I had given a speech in 1992 to a civic club which I had entitled "Down on the Market." After searching my files I finally located it.

You most probably would ask me why I would be qualified to speak on that subject. In 1915, my father, Walter B. Garland, and my mother moved to Roanoke from his native town of Buchanan, a scant 30 miles away, to live with his sister who ran a boarding house which is now the site of the Patrick Henry Hotel. Daddy found a job as a "soda jerk" behind the soda fountain of Clore's Drug Store at the northeast corner of what is now Campbell Avenue SE and Williamson Road, which in 1915 was Randolph Street. He later bought a half-interest in the store and around 1920 bought out Dr. Clore, thus becoming the sole owner of Garland's Drug Store, 132 E. Campbell Ave. The store was one block down from the Market Square. The building is still there and is very much the same as it was then.

My most vivid recollections of the market area start in the early 1930s and extend into the wartime years of the 1940s. The drug store of that era was the meeting place where people could gather at little expense, exchange gossip, carry on a courtship, or simply watch the world go by. It is probably the closest this country ever came to the European cafe or coffee house. For 5 cents one could buy a "Coke" made from scratch with one ounce of Coca-Cola syrup, a scoop of ice and five ounces of carbonated water directly from a soda arm. You could get a freshly made limeade for 10 cents, and a milk-shake for the same, unless you wanted Horlick's Malted Milk added, which was 5 cents extra. Other popular drinks in those days were the Cherry Smash and Hire's Root Beer. All these drinks were prepared on request while the customer waited. There were no machines or premixed drinks as you have today, and on hot summer days, with no air conditioning in any of the offices or stores, business was often very brisk.

The market area in the 1930s was a bustling mecca of activity. Practically all grocery shopping, particularly for meat and produce, was done there. The first floor of the Market Building itself housed, I



The writer, Bob Garland, with his wife, Frances, on their 70th wedding anniversary, Oct. 2, 2013.

Robert A. "Bob" Garland, longtime Roanoke pharmacist, vice mayor and City Council member, gave this talk for the First Thursday lunch series of the Historical Society of Western Virginia on July 2, 2013.



Roanoke's Market Square has always been busy. The McGuire Building — Center in the Square today — is at right.

would estimate, 10 or 15 independent butchers who had stalls on each side of the building. However, one butcher, A.R. Minton, a future Roanoke mayor, had his butcher shop on the corner of Campbell Avenue and Wall Street.

On the outside of the Market Building there were numerous stalls where vendors would sell mostly fresh vegetables and fruits, homemade honey, and other delicacies. Also, many farmers lined up their trucks, with the backside facing the curb, and sold their goods from there. Since most of the shopping was done on Fridays and Saturdays, in the warm months a number of these farmers would sleep in the back of their trucks to be ready for the early morning business.

On the third floor of the Market Building there was a basketball court with spectator seats, used for the various city leagues, as well as for some high school games and the Gold Medal Tournament. I witnessed many exciting games there.

The 100 block of East Campbell, the block down from the City Market, was a very interesting block of businesses. On the north side of the block, on the corner, was another drug store, Humphries and Webber. They, too, had a soda fountain, but the store specialized in all kinds of garden and flower seeds. They stored these in a beautiful wooden fixture, each drawer labeled with its contents. They also stocked a complete line of patent medicines and trusses — a support used in the case of a hernia, a condition com-

mon to men. If one were to ask for a "truss" in a modern pharmacy, I doubt if the clerk, or even the pharmacist, would know what was wanted.

Next door was the Army and Navy store operated first by Mr. Halpern and later by his son "Poachie" and his sister. They sold clothing, overalls, boots, shoes, etc. Next door to them was Oscar Graves General Store. Today, that store would be an antique lover's dream. I remember the fixtures were all of wood. There were barrels of merchandise on the floor. "Penny candy" — it really sold for 1 cent — was displayed in a glass case, and you were waited on from behind it. Mr. Graves stocked all kinds of groceries, gloves, barrels of pickle, fat-back and anything a farmer might need. He had an especially large selection of chewing tobacco, which most farmers used, which came in slabs packed in wooden boxes. He had a tobacco cutter to slice the tobacco as he sold it. We had the same instrument at my father's drug store. Farther down the block was Sam's Army Store, run by the Shapiro family, who left that location in 1932 to move to First Street SE and is still there today but owned by a different family.

In the middle of that block was another grocer, L.I. Booth. He and his wife operated this typical "Mom and Pop" store and did it very well. My parents were regular customers of Mr. Booth's store, buying most of their staples from him. I remember going to that store with my mother, having a list of all her needs. She handed it to Mr. Booth, and he went throughout the store getting each item off the shelf, and then completed the transaction by charging it to our account and bagging it. He would then give me a small bag of penny candy. Imagine that kind of service today!

In those days, the 100 block of East Campbell would be considered the furniture mart of the city. It included some of Roanoke's most prominent business names. There were at least six of these.

The Appalachian Power Company moved to the building across the street from my father's store in the early 1930s after it was vacated by the street car company who used it as a waiting room. This helped my father's business. My brother "Dickie," who also worked at the drug store, met his future wife, Eloise Turnbull, while she was working with Appalachian. She still lives in the family home on Belleville Road that the Garland family moved into in 1925 when I was 2 years old.

In the 1930s my father installed a slot machine in the front part of the drug store. It took nickels and paid off just as the ones do now in casinos. They were very popular, and customers would gather around, waiting in line to play it. Even though these machines were illegal, they were allowed to operate. I have been told that a member of City Council had these slot machines in his cigar and confectionery store with a soda fountain, and consequently the police were reluctant to enforce the law, thus enabling the other merchants to also operate. However, on occasion, to let everyone know that "the law" still existed, the police would raid those businesses and fine the owners for possession of these gambling devices. My father was a victim of one of these raids.

Another longtime business in that block of Campbell Avenue was "The Big Four Barber Shop." Since all of them were customers of the drug store, my hair was cut by a Mr. Jones until I went off to college. During an infantile paralysis epidemic (now called polio) in the mid-'30s, my parents forbade us from mingling in crowds, or going to the drug store, or even playing with other children because of the fear of this disease. The Salk vaccine was not discovered until 1955. On at least one occasion during an epidemic, I can remember my barber, Mr. Jones, traveling to our home in Raleigh Court and cutting my hair in the bathroom. The barber shop stayed open until 11 p.m. on Saturday nights and would do a brisk business up until that hour. The price was 25 cents for a haircut, and no tip was given or expected. In addition, they had a shoe-shine stand, and you could receive an expert shine for only 10 cents. When the bootblack was finished with the shine, he would take a whisk broom and brush your clothes as an extra service.

There were many unique businesses in that area in the 1930s. On the west side of Randolph Street was Belmont Shoe Hospital. Mr. Richard Smith owned and operated this well-run establishment. This expert cobbler did quality work, and during the Depression did a brisk business. In those days, it was common practice to have your shoes redone after wearing out the soles or heels.

On the east side of Randolph Street (present Williamson Road SE) going up the hill was a building owned by Mr. Jacob Brenner, who operated the Roanoke Scrap Iron and Metal Company. He was a fine gentleman in every respect, and very aristocratic looking. He had a rather wide mustache and in the winter months wore a Homburg hat which gave him a very distinguished look. The Brenner family is well known in Roanoke for its civic and philanthropic activities. The family later owned and operated Cycle Systems.

Going up Randolph Street, there was John Hansbrough's shop where he made horse harnesses, bridles, collars, saddles and other equipment for farm animals. The last shop on the right just before crossing the Randolph Street Bridge was Dulaney's Bicycle Shop. I was more familiar with this shop than the others because my brother and I both owned bicycles, and we would frequent that shop often as they did an excellent job in repairing our bikes.

"Fats" Summers owned and operated a single-chair barber shop that faced Campbell Avenue. He lived in the back of the shop. As his nickname indicated, he was grossly overweight. Unfortunately, he would go on frequent drinking binges where he would really get down and out, until he was picked up by the police and taken to jail to dry out. There were no detoxification centers or halfway houses here during that era.

Diagonally across the street from the drug store was the N&W Salvage Warehouse where they sold damaged goods resulting in the transportation by the railroad. During the Depression years the hoboes and derelicts would gather there behind the warehouse. They would come to the drug store, buy a pint of rubbing alcohol for 19 cents or a can of Sterno and then go back and share it among themselves. Frequently the police would appear with the "Black Maria" paddywagon and haul them away. That land is now the location of the Firestone Tire Company.

Cigarette smoking was a national craze in the 1930s, promoted by the tobacco companies as glamorous, fashionable, and even healthy. The brands used catchy advertising slogans to attract smokers: Camels — "I'd walk a mile for a Camel"; Lucky Strike used the abbreviation L.S.M.F.T., meaning "Lucky Strike means fine tobacco"; Chesterfields bragged "They satisfy"; Philip Morris told us that their cigarettes were "recognized by eminent medical authorities"; but Old Gold had the most ridiculous of all — "Not a cough in a car load." At my father's drug store, we sold two packs (40 cigarettes) for 25 cents. That is approximately the price of one cigarette today.

In the 1930s the market area had its share of people with various problems. If there were homosexuals or transvestites on the market then, either I was not aware of it or I did not understand their role. I have no recollection of either. In those days, some of those poor unfortunate people were referred to in less sophisticated terms. Then, they were called drunks and dope fiends, not alcoholics or drug addicts as they do today.

Because of what we sold, these street people were frequent customers at my father's drug store. Paregoric [*defined by Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary as "camphorated tincture of opium used esp. to relieve pain" -Ed.*] could be purchased 2 ounces for 25 cents without a prescription, because it did have some legitimate uses. There were a number of these addicts who were well known throughout the market area. Several of these lost souls stand out in my memory. One of the most pitiful and pathetic human specimens that I have ever encountered was a woman whom I knew only as "Aunt Maria." That was not her real name, but was derived from the fact that she chewed tobacco, the brand name being "Black Maria." In addition to the chewing tobacco, she also used "Tube Rose" snuff. Aunt Maria must have been in her late 70s or early 80s. She was very stooped, one of her eyes was completely gone and shut, and she was toothless. She was nothing but skin and bones, weighing not more than 75 pounds. She was addicted to Paregoric, and would go up on the market and beg or sell pencils until she got enough to buy her fix. There was also Bessie Lambert and John Parrish, both of whom were dope fiends addicted to Paregoric. They were always seen together. Bessie, too, was a small pitiable figure, and John was a humpback always in need of a bath. They pushed an old two-wheeled cart around town, collecting various junk, then taking it to Jake Brenner's junk yard to get enough money for food and Paregoric.



An interior view of Garland's Drug store No. 8 located at 15 South Jefferson Street in Roanoke, circa 1952. Walter B. Garland, the owner of the business, is seated on a stool at the left. The gentleman standing behind the counter of the soda fountain is Wallace Eades, drug clerk. To his left are Mickey Spencer, Alberta Ferguson, and Hilda Green (left to right). The building housing the drug store was demolished later that decade to make way for the viaduct which brought traffic directly to Jefferson Street from what is now Williamson Road.

The story of the market would not be complete without some mention of the hotels in that area. The two that immediately come to my mind are the Shenandoah — later the Earle — and the Randolph, and there were others on Salem Avenue. The Shenandoah faced Salem Avenue, just as the Earle did later, and extended through to Campbell Avenue over my father's drug store. That building still stands and is essentially the same as it was then. Originally, the Shenandoah was a businessman's hotel and was considered respectable. However, as time went on, it attracted many prostitutes and their clients, and became known more or less as a whorehouse.

The Randolph was a much smaller hotel with several floors located on the left after you pass Salem Avenue and before you cross the bridge. It was known essentially as a house of ill repute. Many of the women were good customers of the drug store, and they would buy many of their needs from us, especially the products known today as feminine hygiene, which consisted of douche bags, disinfectants and douche powders. I remember one of these ladies of the night in particular. She was very pretty but was deaf and dumb. I have often wondered whatever happened to that girl.

In the evening, bellhops (always black) from the hotels would make a purchase from the drug store, which a clerk would get from one certain drawer in the back of the store. Until I became of-age,

this one drawer was “forbidden” and off limits to me, though I did not really know the reason until much later. I remember male customers (never female) coming into the store and, in whispered tones, saying something to the clerk or to my father. The clerk would then go to that drawer, take something out, place it in the palm of the hand of the customer, then ring up the sale on the cash register. I am sure at some point when no one was looking and my curiosity had gotten the best of me, I peeped in that drawer. In today’s drug store, the items in that drawer, prophylactics, are openly displayed. This would have been unthinkable, as well as considered unethical, even up into the 1970s. Although universally known as condoms now, the term was never used in the 1930s, to my recollection. Customers usually referred to them as “rubbers.” Other names that were frequently used were safetys, raincoats, or pros. I remember one particular brand that my father stocked was “The Three Little Pigs,” a rather appropriate name as three sold for 25 cents.

Although sexually transmitted diseases were prevalent then, there was little said or written about them. Syphilis and gonorrhea were the most feared. Of course there was no AIDS and I don’t even remember the term “herpes” being used until much later. There was one product that we sold, called “Dough Boy” — named after the soldiers in World War I — a mercury (mercurous chloride) type of ointment also sold from the forbidden drawer. This was applied by the male before and after an encounter, supposedly to protect him from those diseases.

Floods in the market area were quite common, particularly in the summer months. During heavy rains, the downtown streets would become flooded. The water would back up into all the businesses along Campbell Avenue, and Daddy’s store was no exception. Much damage was done. I can remember one such summer flood, mainly because a picture was taken by a newspaper photographer, showing me along with other members of my family with mops and brooms in front of the drug store. I am sure that was the first time my picture ever appeared in the newspaper. I found that clipping in a photograph album after my parents had passed away.

I guess some of my fondest memories of the market area are of the Rialto Theatre — also known as the Shooting Gallery. In those days, you didn’t go to a movie, but you went to a “picture show.” Practically every week, we would go to see our favorite cowboy stars — Buck Jones, Ken Maynard, “Hoot” Gibson and others. Afterwards, we would walk down past “Diamonds,” which was a confectionery with a soda fountain, a pool room and a duck pin bowling alley in the back, past Nelson Hardware and Bob’s Shoe Store to get to the Roanoke Weiner Stand. There we would order a hot dog with everything on it and a bottle of “Coke” for 10 cents. We thought that was really living.

As I think of that little corner drug store of ours, Christmas time was the most memorable. The gifts my father offered were simple and inexpensive, most below five dollars. People seemed to appreciate those small gifts then, moreso than the elaborate items they have today. I remember the store and the window decorations to entice the passersby to come in. I remember the farmers as they displayed their Christmas wares from the back of their trucks or from the sidewalk stalls: the beautiful wreaths, the mistletoe, holly and the red poinsettias, all at unbelievably low prices compared to today. Many came to sell Christmas trees. One of these farmers I remember distinctly; he was a real character. His name was Mr. Lane. He would bring a truck-load of Christmas trees from Buchanan where he had grown the trees and set them up on a vacant lot behind the Appalachian building. In between customers, he would warm his hands over an open fire, usually a huge oil drum. At night, he would bring his daily receipts, probably less than 50 dollars, to the drug store, and Daddy would put it in the safe. I never saw him without a large wad of chewing tobacco with the juice running down each side of his mouth.

One can re-live much of Roanoke’s history, indeed, America’s history, in knowing and understanding the activities of the market area. As I reminisce about those times and recall my treasured memories of that unique area, I am reminded of a passage attributed to Ivanna Chamberlain. She wrote, “Oh memory, turn back the leaves of your book; on the pages of childhood, permit us to look.”



Nestle Brook, a Northwest landmark, faces demolition

Nestle Brook, a c.1850 landmark at the northwest corner of Salem Turnpike and 24th Street NW in Roanoke, is facing demolition by its new owner, Goodwill Industries. Although its headquarters adjoins the house, once owned by the late William H. Horton, Goodwill has reported no use for the site. A small but significant brick building at the rear of the big house will be saved. It may have been an office at one time.

Nestle Brook is one of only two surviving antebellum houses in the Roanoke Valley with the distinction of having chimneys built entirely within its outer walls, according to Mike Pulice, Salem architectural historian for the State Department of Historic Resources. The other building is the Williams-Brown House, home of the Salem History Museum. Pulice said Nestle Brook's high quality brickwork and other characteristics suggest that J.C. Deyerle, a prolific brick mason in Salem, was the builder.

The home, rental property for a long time, was occupied by Horton's widow, Susie Horton, who lived there until she died at the age of 101 in 1970. It has been vacant and in disrepair for years. Horton bought the house and 164 acres of land in Northwest Roanoke in 1901 and lived there until his death in 1941. Andrew "Andy" Roberts, a recent owner, was a nephew of the late Natalie Foster Lemon Ross, who with her sister inherited the house from the Hortons. The Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation recently gave the seller and the buyer Bulldozer Awards for loss of a landmark structure.

In the 1800s, the building was called the Melrose Inn. Daniel Yates, a previous owner, had plans for a lake and driving course for carriage horses there. The lake was not built but a track operated at the site of Forest Park School nearby.

Horton, a successful Roanoke businessman, operated a livery stable at First Street and Kirk Avenue in downtown Roanoke. In 1909, he replaced the stable with a two-story commercial building which has been renovated. The Preservation Foundation gave the owners of that building an award for adaptive reuse. — *Ed.*



Fig. 1. The former Thaden-Jordan Furniture Plant on Kessler Mill Road in Salem.

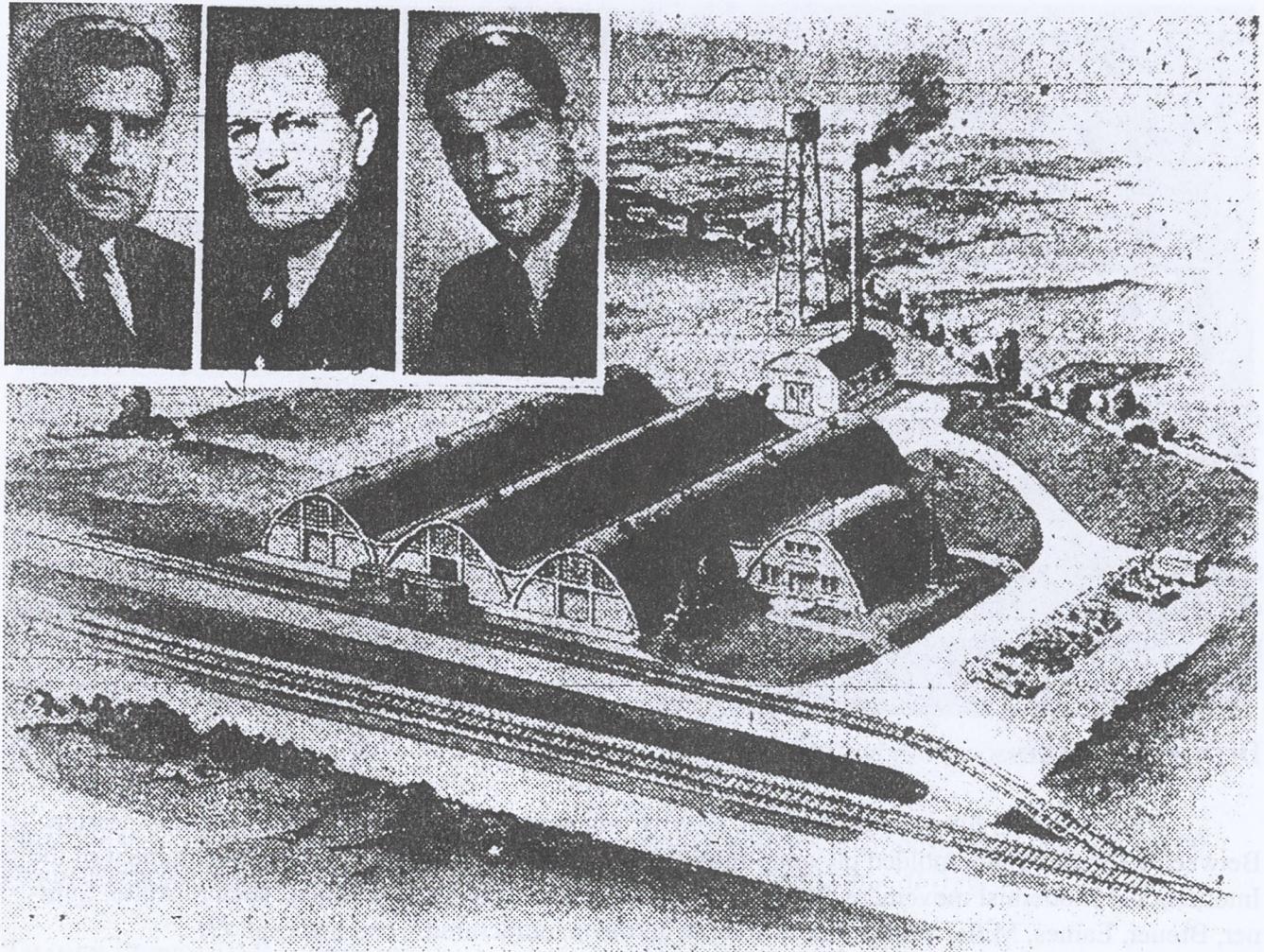
Furniture and Aviation History Reside in Forgotten Facility on Kessler Mill Road

by Michael J. Pulice

Many travelers on Kessler Mill Road in Salem probably wonder what the unusual arched-roof industrial building resembling an airplane hangar, just north of East Main Street, was originally used for. [Fig. 1] The business for which the facility was erected disappeared so long ago that it seems nobody remembers it. The current owner, who has held the property for many years, had no knowledge of who built the facility or for what purpose until recently contacted by the author.

The former Thaden-Jordan Furniture Plant was erected in 1946. Plans to build the plant were announced in the Roanoke World-News on January 31, 1946, and a February 1, 1946, Roanoke Times article, "Furniture Plant Plans Announced," noted that construction was planned to be complete in early spring of that year. An innovative building for its time, the plans called for "a new plant of original design" with "about 25,000 square feet of floor space," and "three rows of working areas provided by 50-foot, clear-span, parabolic arches, which will be manufactured of molded wood laminations by the Thaden Engineering Co. of Roanoke." The building, as it was constructed and still stands today, is a close approximation of the design rendering published in the Roanoke World-News article. [Fig. 2]

Mike Pulice once worked as an archaeologist but he has been an architectural historian for the Western Regional Office of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources for more than 13 years.



NEW FURNITURE PLANT—Now under construction, the plant above will be operated by a newly-organized concern, the Thaden-Jordan Furniture Corp., details of which were announced today. The plant, to be situated on a site at Lakeside, will contain about 25,000 square feet of working space on one floor and is scheduled for completion in early spring. Supporting arches are of molded plywood laminations. Inset photographs are of the firm's principal officials—left to right, Herbert V. Thaden, president; Donald L. Jordan, vice president; and E. Sigurd Johnson, secretary and production manager.

Fig. 2. Newspaper clipping from the article "Thaden-Jordan is Capitalized at \$250,000," Roanoke World-News, January 31, 1946.

Thaden-Jordan Furniture Company was the manufacturer of a nationally (and perhaps internationally) distributed line of molded-plywood household furniture, particularly dinette and breakfast-room suites, but also chairs, tables, case goods, church pews, television cabinets, glass cloth laminates, timber arches, and caskets. (1) The Roanoke City Directory lists the Thaden-Jordan Furniture Corporation as a "wholesaler of molded plywood furniture," from 1946 to 1952. [Fig. 3]

Former military aviator, aircraft designer and engineer, Herbert Von Thaden (1896-1969), was the president of the company and Donald Lewis Jordan (1896-1979), who made plywood products for the military during WWII, was vice president. Jordan had been an executive with Johnson-Carper Furniture Company of Roanoke since its inception in 1928. (2) Both men had expertise in manufacturing and designing with new wood products such as plywood and glue-laminated timbers.

Although their furniture was innovative in design and construction, Thaden-Jordan's products apparently were not well marketed and failed to sell in adequate volumes. By the end of 1952, the plant

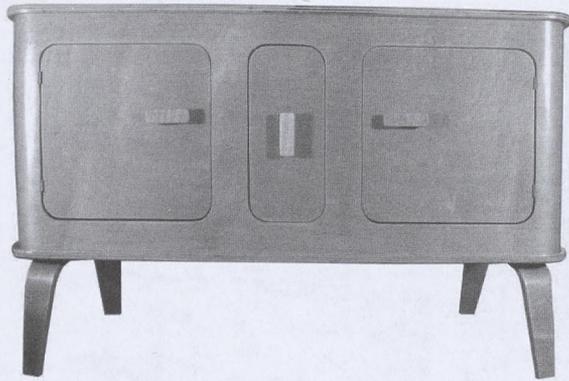


Fig. 3. A dinette buffet table manufactured at the Thaden-Jordan Plant in Salem between 1946 and 1951.



Fig. 4. Dinette furniture manufactured at the Thaden-Jordan Plant in Salem during the late 1940s.

and the company were defunct due to financial setbacks. The plant was soon sold to a new owner who enlarged it by adding the sprawling, flat-roofed, nondescript warehouse wing to the north. Yet the company's story did not come to an abrupt end in 1952 and is far more interesting than most would suspect. Moreover, their products are now considered to be rare and potentially valuable collectibles.

DESIGN INFLUENCES

Thaden-Jordan furniture pieces were heavily influenced by the International School of Design. Between 1930 and 1960, molded plywood furniture played an important role in the development of the International Modernist movement. Many of the movement's most famous names, such as Aalto, Sumner, Breuer, Eames, Miller and Molino worked with the manufactured wood material. (3)

Art historian Tran Turner wrote in 1998 about a particular set of Thaden-designed dining room table and chairs "constructed of wide interconnected planes of birch plywood," which, he asserted, revealed "Thaden's interest for creating a balance between mass, volume, and what he considered a necessary functional flexibility for the body and visual flexibility for the eye." (4) [Fig. 4]

THADEN'S EXPERIMENTAL RECLINING CHAIR

In 1947 Thaden-Jordan made a small number of unique, high-back reclining chairs made of birch plywood, designed by Thaden and quite possibly inspired by an airplane propeller. The experimental design is considered on par with, if not superior to, other acclaimed modernist chair designs produced by the International Movement. One of the few known surviving examples of the chair is in the permanent collection of the Minneapolis Institute for the Arts. (5)

According to Turner, Thaden's concept for this particular molded plywood chair stands alone as an example of modernist furniture. It belongs to the singular vision of Herbert Von Thaden, who was not trained as an architect, artist, or furniture designer, and it far surpasses most designs for molded plywood as a material before and after its arrival. Its three-dimensionality and sculptural implications are unrivaled, even when compared to the Eameses, Aalto, and Breuer. (6)

The world renowned Vitra Design Museum in Weil am Rhein, Germany, the "City of Chairs," ranks Thaden's chair among its "100 masterpieces," one of 12 masterpieces designed between 1941 and 1950. The masterpieces are displayed in a virtual exhibit on the museum's website. (7)

Reclining armchair

Place of exhibition:

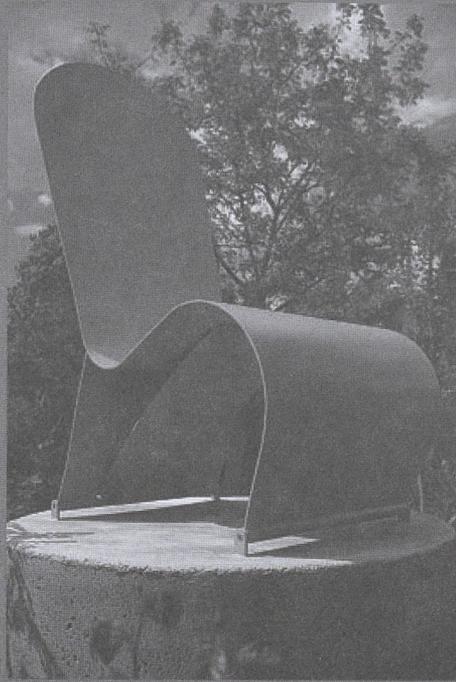
Gallery steel Berger
Pfädlistr. 4
Total height 2.20 m
Scale 2:1

Replica: D. Neumann,
Metal construction, Weil am
Rhein

Sponsor: Gallery steel Berger

Situated at: 05.04.2000
Photo: B.-C. Maier/ 2000

Original: Vitra Design Museum



1947

Herbert von Thaden

The Chair of Thadens had probably experimental character and has been produced with security not in larger numbers. However, its gently curving shape and its original design is fascinating. Backrest and seat surface consist of a continuous, double-curved plywood, whose front ends inside a round bar. Two more plywood, with the first connected by bolts, serve as a back brace or the reinforcement of the construction.

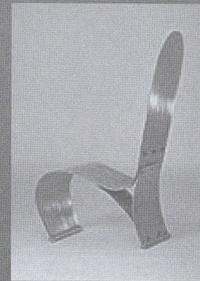


Fig. 5. A segment from the Weil am Rhein, Germany, “Chairs in the City” web page (2013).

Since 2000, a large-scale model of Thaden’s experimental high-back chair design has been one of 20 chairs displayed in public squares throughout the City of Weil am Rhein. (8) [Fig. 5]

THADEN PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Earlier in his career, long before the Thaden-Jordan Furniture business venture, Herbert Thaden designed the U.S. Army’s first all-metal airplanes, the T1, T2, and others. In 1928 he married the famous aviator, or “aviatrix” as they were then called, Louise McPhetridge Thaden (1905–1979). The Thadens moved to New Jersey in 1930 after General Motors bought his Thaden Metal Airplane Company, founded in 1927, which became Pittsburgh Metal Aircraft Company in 1929. Before merging with Fokker Aircraft, the company manufactured the Thaden T-4, nicknamed the Tin Goslin, which Louise flew in at least one race, in 1931. About 1941, the couple settled in Roanoke to raise two children, Bill and Patricia, and founded Thaden Engineering Company. (9)

Thaden Engineering designed and manufactured defense-related equipment for the military during WWII, earning two U.S. Navy “E” Awards. (10) Also during World War II, Herbert Thaden acted as technical sales representative for Johnson-Carper Furniture Company of Roanoke, where he may have met Donald Jordan for the first time, as well as for Lane Cedar Chest Corporation of Altavista, Virginia. (11)

Louise M. Thaden is an important historical figure who was a celebrated heroine during her many pioneering years of aviation, beginning in 1927. [Fig. 6] The list of her accomplishments as one of very few women in the field of aviation is extremely impressive. A peer and close friend of Amelia Earhart, Louise was highly skilled, tenacious and daring. The Bentonville, Arkansas, native’s life is chronicled in her fascinating autobiography, “High, Wide, and Frightened,” first published in 1938 and updated by her in 1973. Her aviation feats include setting the first official altitude record for women in the U.S.

(20,260 feet) in 1928; the women's record for solo duration (more than 22 hours); and the record for speed (156 mph) in 1929. She was the only woman ever to hold all three records simultaneously. She won the first National Women's Air Derby, flying from Santa Monica to Cleveland in 1929; set the record for fueling duration (196 hours in the air) in 1932; and won the Bendix Transcontinental Air Race in 1936. She was inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame in 1999. (12)



Fig. 6. Louise M. Thaden in her prime as a record-setting aviator.

In 1955, a few years after Thaden-Jordan Furniture Company folded, the Thadens removed to High Point, North Carolina, where Herbert founded the Thaden Molding Corporation and continued the Thaden Engineering Company. (13) Though Louise had little involvement in Thaden-Jordan Furniture, she became a partner in Thaden Engineering and continued to run the company as the sole owner for 10 years after Herbert's death in 1969. (14)

Donald Jordan had by then returned his focus toward the Johnson-Carper Furniture Company, becoming chairman of the board and eventually a nationally respected leader in the manufacturing (particularly furniture-related) industries. He was chairman of the National Association of Manufacturers, a leading industry organization. His life was chronicled by biographer Edward W. Rushton in his book, "Donald Lewis Jordan: An Industrial Odyssey" (1975).

NOTES ON THE FURNITURE PLANT STRUCTURES

The plant is comprised of parallel, arch-roofed sections or vaults. The three 150-foot-long vaults served for manufacturing, and the one-third-length (50x50-foot) vault on the south end served as office space. Constructed of wood framing, the structures are strengthened on each end by diagonal board sheathing clad with painted aluminum panels. The only 90-degree vertical exterior walls are those on the (east and west) ends of the vaults. The rest of the building exterior consists of rounded, asphalt-shingled roof. The three upper bays at each end, curved at the top, are filled with numerous small glass blocks in a grid pattern, which provide much-needed light to the interior of the building.

A view of the plant interior reveals that it was constructed as planned, with large open areas provided by the clear-span glue-laminate-wood "gluelam" arches, and concrete floors. [Fig. 7] Only the middle vault has a second floor — a storage area that runs the entire length of the vault. The floor is suspended from the roof arches by hundreds of steel cables spaced intermittently throughout the single large room. [Fig. 8] The flooring consists of the same 3x1-inch boards that are used throughout the plant as ceiling/roof sheathing. The interior of the office section at the south end of the plant is divided into two floors and has been completely modified since the Thaden-Jordan Company days with the addition of modern drywall and drop ceilings. Though not depicted in the pre-construction 1946 newspaper drawing, the main entrance on the south side of the office has a curvilinear plywood canopy and gluelam supports that indicate it was part of the plant's original construction. There is also a nearly identical, but smaller vaulted building directly behind (east of) the three 150-foot-long vaults. This building is depicted in the 1946 newspaper drawing.



Fig. 7. Interior view of one of the former Thaden-Jordan Plant's work areas.

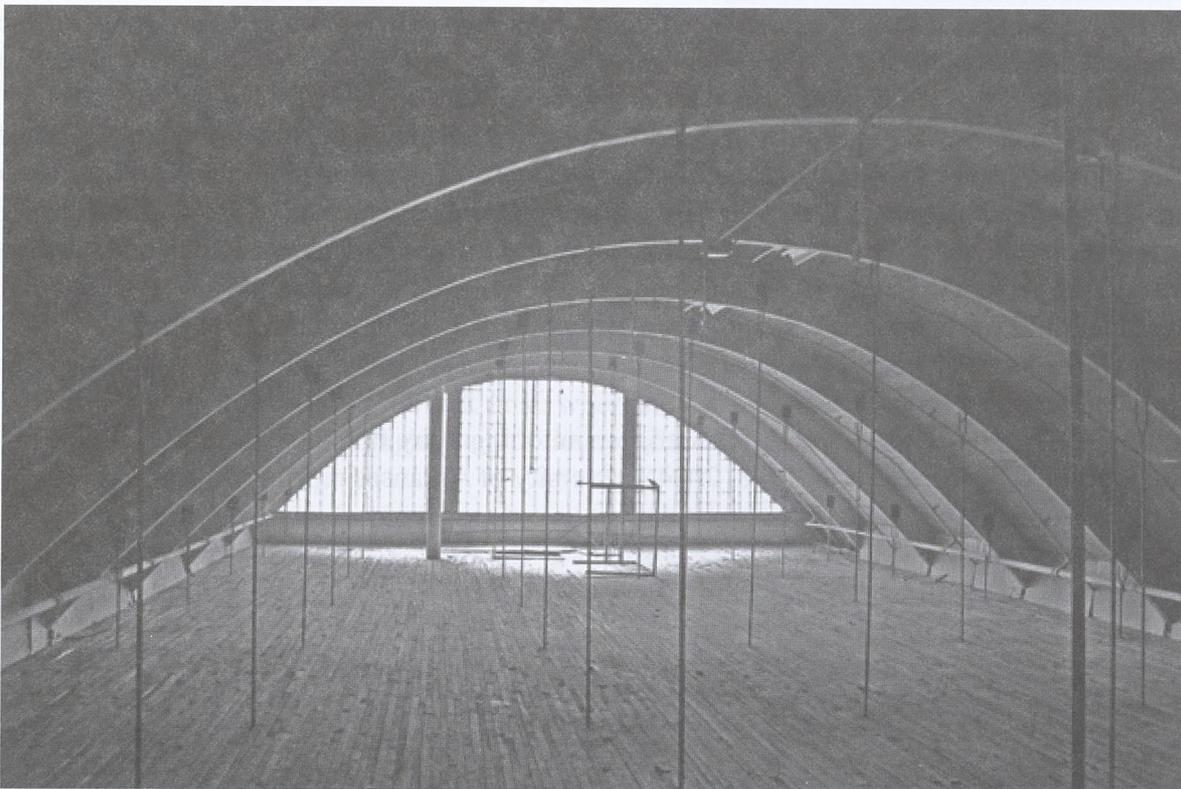


Fig. 8. Interior view of the middle tube, second floor, of the former Thaden-Jordan Plant.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to former Historical Museum of Western Virginia administrative assistant Roy Baugher III, who provided valuable research materials; and to the owner of the former Thaden-Jordan Plant, Richard Bishop, who provided access to the buildings.

ENDNOTES

1. Herbert von Thaden resume, circa 1969.
2. Couper, 446.
3. Turner, 51.
4. Turner, 52.
5. Turner, 52.
6. Turner, 52.
7. Vitra Design Museum website:
www.design-museum.de/de/sammlung/100-masterpieces.html
8. City of Weil am Rhein "Chairs in the City" webpage:
http://www.w-wt.de/tourismus_englisch/stadt_der_stuehle/stadt_der_stuehle.html
9. By the 1950s the Thaden family resided at 601 Camilla Ave. SE. The Roanoke City Directory lists the office of Thaden Engineering at their home address, but the company maintained a facility at 3346 Shenandoah Ave. and a laboratory at 2231 Patterson Ave.
10. Louise Thaden autobiography, 153.
11. Herbert von Thaden resume.
12. Louise Thaden autobiography.
13. Herbert von Thaden resume.
14. Son William "Bill" Thaden died in New Hampshire in 2012. Growing up in Roanoke he attended Crystal Spring Elementary School, Lee Junior and Jefferson High. He was a great athlete who accepted a football scholarship to Georgia Tech in the 1950s, and played on the National Championship team of 1952 under coach Bobby Dodd. Bill Thaden obituary, published in the Roanoke Times July 8, 2012.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL RESOURCES

- Couper, William, "History of the Shenandoah Valley," Vol. 3, 1952: 444–447.
- Turner, Tran. "Thaden-Jordan Furniture." *Echoes*, Spring 1998, Volume 6, No. 4. Full copy of magazine, with color photos of T-H furniture pieces, in Historical Society of Western Virginia archives, Roanoke.
- "Thaden-Jordan is Capitalized at \$250,000." *Roanoke World-News*, January 31, 1946. The article features images of the yet-to-be constructed plant, as well as images of Thaden, Jordan and the plant's secretary and production manager, E. Sigurd Johnson.
- "Furniture Plant Plans Announced." *Roanoke Times*, February 1, 1946.
- Resume of Herbert von Thaden, 1916 through 1969.
- Roanoke City Directory 1946-1956.
- Thaden, Louise M. "High, Wide, and Frightened," an autobiography first published in 1938. Prologue and Epilogue added by the author in 1973. 2004 University of Arkansas reprint features foreword by modern-day aviator Peggy Wagstaff.
- Vitra Design Museum website:
www.design-museum.de/de/sammlung/100-masterpieces.html
- Weil am Rhein "Chairs in the City" web page:
http://www.w-wt.de/tourismus_englisch/stadt_der_stuehle/stuehle_in_der_stadt.html
- Thaden Chair page:
http://www.w-wt.de/tourismus/stuhlstadtplan/stuehle/verstellbarer_sessel.html

I Remember

by Goldie Damewood Garman

I — Goldie Cornelia Damewood — was born in a log house that stood on the farm owned by my Damewood grandparents, George and Sarah, who had moved to Virginia from West Virginia early in the 1900s. They bought the farm from the Brattons, a black family who had been close neighbors to my Garman grandparents. My mama said that she and a sister played with the Bratton children and they called Mrs. Bratton “black mammy.” She once made my mama a cake for her birthday.

My dad, Nathan, was a teenager when they moved here from West Virginia and went to the same school as my mom, Gertrude. They also went to the same church. Shiloh was the name of the school as well as the church.

THE ELOPEMENT

Nathan and Gertrude had been meeting secretly for some time. Her dad, who was very strict about the girls dating, and he didn't like Nathan, made it very difficult for them, so they planned to elope. The most unlikely time for an elopement was this cold Christmas Eve when they were more than 20 miles from the train and had to travel by horse and buggy over dirt roads. This eve, the school had their Christmas tree and program, which began early, because this is one time the kids had to be in bed early. Everyone was walking to the schoolhouse.

Nathan and Gertrude planned to leave by horse and buggy as soon as the family was in bed. The Damewood home was just about a mile over a hill from the Garmans. Nathan would leave the horse tied to the fence in the lane near the main road. He would meet her in the field. His dad knew about their plans and secretly followed him to the place where the horse and buggy waited so he could watch the horse in case her dad found out and caused trouble. There might even be some shooting.

Once they were in the buggy, they had to go only a short distance to the Narrows Road (Sandy Ridge Road now) which led to the Creek Road (now Blacksburg Road), then they traveled east to Rt. 311 and on across Catawba Mountain to Salem. By the time they reached the mountain it was snowing and continued to snow all the way to Salem.

They left the horse and buggy at a livery stable, located just across the street from the jail. They walked in a couple inches of snow to the train depot, near the river, which was at least seven blocks from Main Street. They had to run the last block or so when they heard the train coming. Her feet were cold and wet when they caught the midnight train to Bristol where they were married on Dec. 25, 1909. He was 23, she was 19.

Her dad was so mad he forbid them ever come to his house again. So they never visited, my mama said, when I was born Oct. 25, 1910; my grandma Garman heard about it from neighbors (there were no telephones) and walked across the hill to the Damewood home to see me. Not long after that,

Goldie Damewood Garman was 101 when she died on Nov. 12, 2011. She wrote these recollections in her 80s: “My memoirs are written for my children and grandchildren, going as far back as I can remember, along with things that my parents told me, so that they may know what it was like seventy-five or more years ago to live with no modern conveniences as are here today.” She lived in the Catawba Valley of Roanoke County.

they all attended Shiloh Church and it was there that Grand-dad Garman invited my parents to stop in for dinner. After that, they all got along and several years later (my aunt told me) when my grand-dad had more sons-in-law, Nathan was his favorite one.

MOVE TO CUSTER PLACE

Sometime during the year 1911, my parents moved to J.A. Custer's place. He had a general store and also a mill to grind grain, powered by a power wheel. The house that we lived in and also the stream that supplied the water to run the mill were on the Newport Road (then known as the Back Road) near the intersection of the road leading to Millers' Cove. Dragon's Tooth was in sight. My dad was to run the huckster wagon for Mr. Custer, which was very important for the success of the store.

March 12, 1912, my sister Cleo was born here. Later that same year, my dad and Cleo had smallpox. They got it from Mr. Custer. They thought a disgruntled customer sent the disease to him in a letter. He had written to this family in Craig County about their overdue bill. They had smallpox at the time, so when they answered Mr. Custer's letter, they had smeared the paper with pus from their sores (this story leaked out afterwards). A doctor came and vaccinated us and no one else got sick. Cleo had only a few pimples on her but Mr. Custer and my dad were very sick. They said they suffered much with their feet, especially the soles of the feet where the skin was thick and they soaked their feet in whiskey.

Then when Cleo was nine months old, my mama got typhoid fever. The Garman grandparents took Cleo; my dad hired one of Mama's cousins to help out. They said she couldn't cook and I didn't like her at all. Mama said it was cold weather and I would be crying and she would let me get in bed with her to get warm and take a nap. Fortunately, I survived and didn't get sick. The doctor came about every other day. The Garman grandparents kept Cleo until Mama recovered and was strong enough to take care of the two of us. Cleo was afraid of Mama and Papa when they brought her back home.

It was probably a year after that something happened that I do remember very well. The old, familiar, blue enameled coffee pot was on the little heater stove in the living room. My mama was sweeping the floor. I was sitting on the floor playing with toys when Mama accidentally knocked the hot coffee pot over, spilling on one of my legs. I was wearing long, black stockings (the heavy Bear brand). Mama said when she took the stocking off, the skin of my leg came off too. The doctor came two or three times a week to dress my leg, which was sore for months. I can remember trying to hide when I saw him coming and I'd cry too, it hurt so bad. The doctor would bring me a stick of candy. Once, I remember a red apple. My leg was bandaged from just below the knee to the ankle. The deepest burn was near the knee; the scar remains to this day.

I am not sure of the doctor's name. I think he came up from Catawba. I do know that doctors made house calls back then. They traveled by horseback. I can remember some names, Doctors Short, Pack and Sibold, who at different times lived at McDonald's Mill in Montgomery County.

THE WATER WHEEL

I remember the big wheel that ran the mill. I liked to see the water splashing down from it. There was much noise when the mill was running. I liked to peep inside if I'd be going to the store. Two men working in there would be covered with white dust. Sometimes, Mama would send me to get a bar of washing (laundry) soap. It was Octagon, a brown colored soap, octagon shape. On one such trip, a neighbor, who was also at the store, led me back home and told my mama she'd better not send me there alone for he saw me pulling on the tails of horses that customers had tied to the fence.

I liked horses and was never afraid of them. Papa had a young horse, training for the buggy. Trixie was in pasture at Grandpa Damewood's most of the time. But sometimes he was kept at the

Custer place. I remember getting scolded for rubbing Trixie's legs to get mud off after they'd been somewhere in the buggy.

THE HUCKSTER WAGON

Papa drove the huckster for Mr. Custer, which was a covered wagon, pulled by a team of mules, Jim and Punch. He was gone from home three nights a week. Sometimes Mama would take Cleo and me to the Custer house, which was up on a hill from ours, so that we could watch for Papa to come back from Roanoke. He always started out early in the morning (I think it was on Mondays). He went

west on the Back Road (Newport) until he got to the Narrows (Sandy Ridge), picking up such things as butter, eggs, cured meat, chickens or whatever people had to sell. The Narrows took him to the Creek Road (Blacksburg) where he traveled on to Montgomery County to Dry Run Road that led back to the Back Road. By then, it would be getting dark. He would spend the night at an Alls family. They'd take care of him for the night, feeding the mules, and Miss Louisa always had a warm supper waiting. Starting out early the next day, he would travel east, stopping at the Custer store only long enough to pick up the order of things (supplies) for the store. Then on to the city market in Roanoke. By then, it is after dark. He'd unhitch the mules from the wagon, tying them behind it, where he'd feed and water them. He slept in the wagon. The next day, he'd sell the stuff he'd picked up on the city market, then pick up supplies to carry back to the store. (Night time again.)

The next day, he may have a few more items to pick up before starting home. It was on this evening that we liked to watch for him to come. He would "park" the wagon in front of the store until it could be unloaded. It contained boxes, maybe dried peaches or prunes; sacks, maybe beans and sugar, tin cans of food, maybe a bolt or two of cotton cloth, a keg of nails, or even shoes and socks. He would unhitch the mules and take them to the barn. Sometimes he'd let me ride on a mule to the barn. He'd be riding the other. Harness on the mules. I had the harness to hold on to.

I heard talk about "Freight Sales." It seems that Mr. Custer liked to go to the train station for the sale of damaged or unclaimed shipments. I do know that Papa got Mama a new Crown sewing machine at one of the sales. The metal frame had a break in it. Somebody wired two pieces of metal on sides of the break and it was as good as new. My mama did a lot of sewing on that machine for years as we were growing up. Papa got Mama a new Beckwith organ like the sewing machine which was run by foot treadle; the organ too had to be pumped by foot treadle to force air into the bellows.

I had a blue-gray kitten named Bluzie. I think it came from the Damewood grandparents. Bluzie disappeared. We searched high and low but didn't find her. The organ was across one corner of the living room. After several days, Mama was noticing a bad odor. She moved the organ and behind it was my Bluzie, dead. That was my first experience with death.

On January 29, 1915, Papa's younger brother, McKinley, still living at home, died of typhoid fe-



The Garman family gathered to celebrate the 100th birthday of Goldie Damewood Garman (center) in 2010.

ver. Then April 3, Grandpa George died also of typhoid. Soon after, we moved in with Grandma Damewood. I've heard her complain about Nathan coming in there and burning bed things: quilts, pillows and mattresses, just about everything that had been used on sick beds. She thought much of it could have been washed. Mattresses were straw-filled ticks, sheets and pillow cases, as well as towels and all white clothes were boiled in a big iron pot every time they were washed. Grandma was good to us and we all got along quite well. It was like having two mamas.

Going back to the time we moved in with Grandma Damewood, Grand-dad Garman moved all of our possessions in a wagon pulled by a team of horses, which included a bed, a dresser, a rocking chair, Mama's organ and sewing machine and a few straight-back chairs. We followed the wagon in a buggy, up the dirt road and over the hill. I got real scared, seeing the chairs, which were tied on top of the load, wobbling. It looked like they would fall off as the wagon went over bumps and deep ruts. I was worried about our little rocking chairs. Mine was brown and Cleo's was white.

June 5, 1916, we had another sister, Avis, a surprise to Cleo and me. In the fall of 1916, I started to school. This was the first year of school in the new schoolhouse that was built about half-mile from the old schoolhouse that my parents had attended. I had to go up a hill, through the woods until I came in sight of my uncle Festus Damewood's house. There I would get with my cousin, Mary, to go the rest of the way, which was about two miles altogether. One of my parents or grandma would go with me until I could see my uncle's house. My papa carried me on his back sometimes when there was snow. School was never closed in those days. Of course, the teacher, who boarded in the neighborhood, had to walk to the schoolhouse too.

Travel was done by horseback, buggy or wagon. My grandma and daddy each owned a buggy but of the team of horses, only one of them was gentle enough to pull the buggy. His name was Trixie. The other horse, a mare, was named Tez. Sometimes, she would like to run, but my dad could control her when hitched to the wagon. I remember one time on Christmas Day, we'd planned to go to Uncle Emmet Craft's for dinner. There was about a foot of snow had fallen the night before. Daddy hitched the team to a big sled and the whole family went, including grandma. The sled had been made by grandpa and was used quite often in winter.

Kerosene lamps and lanterns were necessities and wood-burning stoves were used for cooking and heating. We carried drinking water from a spring which was a hundred yards from the house. Two water buckets on a shelf near the cooking stove needed to be refilled several times a day. In extremely cold weather those water buckets would freeze up during the night. Fire was not kept going during the night-time unless there was sickness in the family or some other reason to be up in the night. We were warm and comfortable as long as we were in bed with home-made quilts piled on. Our parents rose early, starting fires in the kitchen stove and living room and when they called out, "Breakfast is ready" meant for everyone to get up and come to the table.

I think "wash day" was the most dreaded day of the week, when we had to carry so much water, heat it on the kitchen stove in a tub. And, yes, children carried water too. We had smaller buckets, usually a gallon size. In summer time, we did the family washing at the stream which flowed below the spring. A large iron pot was used for heating the water and boiling the white things — sheets, towels, underwear; everything that didn't fade. Mama was in charge but "we" did what we could, like carrying the washed clothes back to the clothes line in the yard, to hang up to dry. Grandma usually fixed the noon-day meal on that day. I remember looking forward to her fried biscuits.

We had cows to milk and we, like most farm families, learned to milk cows at an early age. The milk was put in crocks and set in the water which flowed through the springhouse. The cream, which came up on top of the milk, was skimmed off the next day if we wanted sweet cream (for cereal, desserts or to whip for pies) or left to sour to churn into butter. We churned butter about once a week. The milk that was kept until it soured was used to make cottage cheese or bread. The surplus was fed to the hogs.

The hogs' diet (usually three of them raised for meat) was varied indeed. The pigs, after taken from their mother (at 8 weeks) were fed milk, which was plentiful. Later they got kitchen garbage, dropped apples, potato peelings, etc., after they were penned. When we pulled the weeds from the vegetable garden the hogs got their "greens."

We even saved dishwater, which may contain some fried scraps, to mix wheat middlings for the hogs. If soap had been used it was lye soap and that was thought to be good for hogs. In fact, some folks would add a small amount of lye, to "sweeten the swill." But I can assure you that not very much food scraps got to our hogs because Papa always kept two old hound dogs. For them, my mama or grandma would bake a pone of cornbread, sometimes adding meat skins or scraps. My first try at cooking was for the dogs. I learned to make cornbread first.

I am not real sure about the year but sometime in the 'teens we got a telephone, about two dozen homes on a party line. We could hear all the rings but each one had their special, like two longs and a short or two shorts and a long, etc. Ours was a long — two shorts and a long. The telephone was battery-powered. Children were not allowed to eavesdrop; the reason given was because it would run the batteries down. They would last about four months. But it was plain to see that on certain rings, the grown-ups like to keep up with the neighborhood news.

Two of Mama's brothers, Lucian and Leo Garman, were in France during World War I. I remember one "bad news" telephone call (1918) telling us of the death of Lucian. He was on the way to the front lines of battle when he got pneumonia and died in a hospital in France. Leo survived and got back home. Both my grandmothers Garman and Gatewood received medals for knitting socks for servicemen in World War I. The Red Cross furnished the yarn and volunteers knitted. They also knitted a few sleeveless sweaters, as did my mama.

My sister and I followed Papa a lot to get to ride in the wagon or ride on the horses to the branch to get water or to the barn to be fed after work. In the fall, after corn had been cut and husked, Papa was hauling the fodder from the cornfield to where the cows were fed. He let Cleo and me ride on the load

Kerosene lamps and lanterns were necessities and wood-burning stoves were used for cooking and heating. We carried drinking water from a spring which was a hundred yards from the house. Two water buckets on a shelf near the cooking stove needed to be refilled several times a day. In extremely cold weather those water buckets would freeze up during the night. Fire was not kept going during the night-time unless there was sickness in the family or some other reason to be up in the night. We were warm and comfortable as long as we were in bed with home-made quilts piled on. Our parents rose early, starting fires in the kitchen stove and living room and when they called out, "Breakfast is ready" meant for everyone to get up and come to the table.

of fodder. He had already stopped the team when we stood up and began jumping around. I fell off and broke my right arm. The doctor was called at McDonald's Mill, which was eight miles or so away. The doctor rode a horse to come set my arm, which was swelling by then. In the meantime, Mama had called our nearest neighbor, Mrs. Deeds, who came before the doctor got there, bringing a cigar box. Papa cut that box into strips, about an inch wide and that was used for splints bandaged on my arm after the doctor and Papa pulled it back into place. Those splints stayed for six weeks until my arm healed.

Oct. 11, 1920, we had another sister, Coralie. Us kids slept upstairs and that morning when we were called to breakfast, there was Mrs. Molly Lawson and Grandma was getting breakfast on the table. Papa greeted us with "just look what Mrs. Lawson brought us." There was Mama in bed with a baby. Cousin Maude Peters came to our house and stayed until Mama was up and around. She did most of the work, washing, etc. and Grandma did the cooking. Cleo and I were in school. Avis was just past 4 years. No boys in the family did not mean no chores for us. Just like all farm families, children learned at an early age to help, like carrying water and firewood, milking cows, feeding chickens and pigs. Grain crops, such as corn and wheat, were necessary, as well as vegetable gardens. All of which required a lot of preparation and hard work. Corn crop, for instance, was tilled for three times before maturity, the first time when it was only a few inches high. At that time, the plow would often pile the dirt so high around the plant it would be covered. By the time I was 10 years old I was following Papa and the plow, uncovering, by hand, the little corn. The second time it was plowed was the time also to thin out plants to about two feet apart, or sometimes replant.

Life on the farm did not change much (nor improve) over the years when we were growing up. Here I am going to skip a few years, inserting a poem which was written by my youngest sister, Coralie, after she was away from there. She was only 10 when I got married and left home, but she too had worked with our dad before she was grown.

THE END OF THE ROW

By Coralie Damewood Gant

I used to ride upon the horse that pulled my daddy's plow.
As my mind goes back to childhood, I can almost see him now.
Out early in the morning, carefully plowing row by row,
To kill the weeds and loose the soil so ears of corn would grow.

As I rode upon that patient horse,
The world I did survey,
Cattle grazing on the hill, some lying in the shade.
Butterflies go sailing by, searching for the flowers,
Grasshoppers jumping in the air,
I'd watch by the hour.
As the morning past, the sun grew hot,
The horse just seemed to know
We'd stop and rest 'neath the shade of a tree
That stood at the end of the row.

The years have flown so quickly by,
Life's sun is sinking low
And I know somewhere God waits for me
In the shade at the end of the row.

Our home was just about the end of the road, about a mile north of the main road (Newport), only one family on the road before getting to ours. They were Joshua and Tibatha Dees. Two families lived farther on toward Brush Mountain but the road had two or three gates to go through before getting there. The little valley beyond us was called Possum Hollow. A cornfield along 785 Hwy was typical of early times when corn was cut by hand.

In addition to a vegetable garden, every family had a big potato patch; potatoes and beans were the principal food staples. Any farmer who didn't raise enough of these to feed the family all winter was called "lazy."

Not many folks had a cellar for storing potatoes or apples, but we, like many, buried them in pits. My dad would prepare two in the garden after the things had been harvested. By digging the pits, lining the insides with straw before putting in the apples in one, potatoes in the other, straw was put over them, then a layer of dirt. Boards placed overall made the "roof." Under one board would be an opening so that we could reach in to get out potatoes, even when there was snow.

To keep dried, shelled beans from getting bugs, they were heated in the oven before storing. To keep some to plant next season, they were put in jars with a rag soaked with kerosene or turpentine or mothballs (a small rag).

Mama canned fruit, anything that was available — pears, peaches, apples, grapes, also pickles, cucumbers, beets, and made kraut and chow-chow from cabbage. We picked blackberries and dewberries, also cherries to can. If the men-folk found time, they may go to the mountain and pick huckleberries. Because of the danger of snakes, children were not sent there to pick huckleberries but we did go to the open fields with Mama to pick dewberries which were more plentiful.

In the winter-times, we wore long, knitted underwear, which was usually put on when school began, or soon thereafter. With long, black stockings and high-top shoes, the "long-johns" were not visible. Then came the time when teen-age girls didn't like the idea of long underwear. Then it was bloomers that came to the knees, with elastic at the bottom. They were worn with a top undershirt or vest. In winter, it was two pairs of bloomers, whites for underneath and the favorite black sateen over them. Some well-to-do and more uppish bought the knitted underwear which was knee-length. They seemed to look down on us black bloomer girls but we were the ones who could climb trees, skin a cat, play rough and tumble and were labeled "tomboy." The long, Black Bear brand stockings stayed around for many years.



The Garman children walked to Shiloh School.

Even the country general stores carried them in all sizes.

Shiloh schoolhouse was on top of the ridge in the woods. There was only cleared area close to the building itself. A road passed near the schoolhouse. Wild grapevines were numerous and seemed to climb to the tops of big trees. We had a couple favorites, where the bigger boys at school had cut the vines near the ground. Those who were brave enough to grab on to the grapevines had a thrilling ride out over a rock cliff. Someone at the base would give the ones on the vine a shove, then catch them on the return. Luckily we never had any bad falls.

We played ball sometimes at recess; girls and boys played together. The worst accidents on the playground were from our "merry-go-round," a long plank fastened on top of a stump by a large spike in the center. After a few had been spun off that thing, the breath knocked out of them, the teacher made the boys take it down. It was powered by someone running and pushing it.

School was never closed in those days, come rain, sleet or snow. Of course, the teacher walked there, same as the children and had to start a fire in the heater stove. The big stove had a tin jacket around it and often on rainy days that jacket would be covered with coats, sweaters and even socks to dry out before the end of the day.

The teacher boarded at the Grisso home. Also, the little man who cut the wood for the school, Jim Baugh, made his home at the Grissos'. It was in sight of the schoolhouse but probably a mile by foot.

The county school superintendent, Roland Cook, visited the school occasionally. He drove a Ford roadster. If he came during recess, he could be seen coming by the Grisso home, which gave the boys time to put a rail or something across the road, forcing him to stop. When he was leaving, sometimes the boys would hold the car from behind. Mr. Cook would just sit there smiling until they'd let him go.

The county superintendent had other one-room schools in Catawba to visit also. The Starkey and Narrows on 785 and Gravel Hill, besides Shiloh. He always conducted a class while he was there. We all dreaded that and some kids were scared to death. He also prepared the seventh grade exams at the end of the school year and was often present when they were being given. We received diplomas at finishing the seventh grade. I received one in 1925.

In the mid-'20s, patrons had requested eighth grade to be added to Shiloh. The school board agreed to supply the extra teacher when the patrons agreed to build the extra room to the school. My grand-dad Garman, who owned a sawmill, saved the rough lumber for the new building. After that we had two teachers and the eighth grade until the consolidation of the county schools in '29-'30.

UNCLE FESTIE'S SNOW BUSTER

My Uncle Festie Damewood built a sort of snow plow that he called a "snow buster." It was a triangle-shaped, horse-drawn contraption, with a seat mounted near the middle. He used it after snow had fallen to make paths around the house and barn so they could get around to do the usual chores. He would also come toward our house as fences would allow, clearing a path for us. He would even run "that thing" to the schoolhouse. It was so funny looking that we got a thrill just to see him riding it, especially when it would flip over if it hit a rock or something. We've seen Uncle Festie take a tumble in the snow more than once and heard him holler, "Whoa Jolly."

Horses were such an important, necessary part of living. They all had names and were known by folks in the neighborhood as part of a family. Our horses were Tez and Trixie. My uncle Festie's were Jack and Jolly. Our close neighbors, the Deeds, had Prince and Lightfoot. Byrd Hall had Scott and Pete and a pony, Essie, that pulled the buggy. My uncle Emmet Craft had Beaut and Charlie. An elderly couple, John and Lillie Garman, kept one horse, Maude, to work the garden. The Ross Alls family had an

old horse, George, for gardening and was also gentle for girls to ride. My grand-dad Garman had more horses than most families. There was Barney, Rocky, Billy, Dandy and Ginger, also a team of mules, Jack and Logan.

SHILOH CHURCH

As far back as I can remember, we attended Shiloh Church, traveling by buggy. After we moved in with Grandma Damewood, some of the family, sometimes all of us, walked across the hills to Shiloh. My parents had a buggy, also Grandma owned one, but only one horse was gentle enough to pull a buggy. Two grown-ups and two children could ride.

Very few families owned a car. It was in the early '20s that my dad bought the first car, a Model T Ford. It cost between \$700 and \$800, without any extras, only a hand tire pump and a can of inner tube patches and glue. You could get the same car for under \$1,000, with accessories such as a box of tools mounted on the running board, a spare tire and isinglass snap-on curtains and tire chains. The engine started by turning a crank. The self-starter came later. By this time, the church yard was filled with about half-and-half of cars and horse-drawn buggies.

Shiloh was built in 1858, a one-room building with a balcony or slave gallery which had its own entrance from the outside. A big wood stove sat in the center of the room, on one side of the aisle. Men sat on one side of the aisle and women sat on the other. I did not know back then that Shiloh was a union church. Most of the people who worshipped there were Methodist.

On the fourth Sunday of each month the Brethren preached there, after we had Sunday School at 10 a.m. The first Methodist preacher that I can remember was L.M. Nalls, 1916 to 1921. He lived in Salem. He travelled by horse and buggy. Very often he came to the neighborhood on Saturday and stayed all night. Once, I remember he came to our house and my dad was plowing (digging) out potatoes. We were all picking them up and Rev. Nalls helped.

On the fourth Sunday, the Brethren preacher usually came from the Roanoke area. When they couldn't come, the "stand-in" came from the neighboring church, Johnsonville, which was about 5-plus miles from Shiloh. I must admit that many of the younger folks did not enjoy hearing him. He would pace back and forth in the pulpit, pounding his fist and wiping sweat from his face. The pulpit was two steps high and sometimes we expected him to fall, though he never did. My mama had told us of a preacher in her younger days who did fall from that pulpit, injuring a big wart on his hand, that the blood scared the kids so bad they thought he would die.

We had a few minutes intermission between Sunday School and preaching. Sometimes the young folks walked to the nearby spring or just stand around in the church yard, "secretly" hoping the substitute preacher (who was most of the time) late arriving wouldn't come at all. At the last minute, here he comes riding a lame horse, whipping the poor thing with a switch.

*'From angry words they resorted
to deadly weapons':
A Bent Mountain tragedy, 1878*

by John D. Long

“Woodrum rose with the axe still in his hands and again advanced upon Huff, who drew a derringer pistol and fired upon him, the ball taking effect in the abdomen near the navel, inflicting a mortal wound from which Woodrum after suffering great pain died in about 32 hours...”

Thus reported a local newspaper 136 years ago on a notable Roanoke County tragedy, an event nearly forgotten today. It was a story of a friendship gone horribly wrong, a tragic tale of alcohol and gunplay and untimely death. The ugly episode involved two prominent families of the Bent Mountain community of Roanoke County, and perhaps reveals something in microcosm of the rural mountain culture that existed in that day.

Bent Mountain in 1878 was a tight-knit rural community built primarily on the cultivation of apple orchards. Explored and settled, according to legend, in the mid-18th century, the best known early pioneer was Col. Andrew Lewis, son of the Revolutionary War general of the same name.

It was only after the Civil War that Bent Mountain began to develop into more than an isolated wilderness community. This transformation was due primarily to one man: Jordan Woodrum. Born in 1822 in Mercer County (now West Virginia), Woodrum studied law and practiced as an attorney in Fincastle before coming to Salem in 1854. In his new home, Woodrum founded a newspaper, the Salem Weekly Register, and published it for three years before selling it to other parties. During the Civil War, he briefly served in the Confederate Army, but being nearly 40 and the father of several children, he was soon sent home. Woodrum was assigned the task of furnishing supplies to the army and overseeing the Roanoke County poorhouse.

After the war, Woodrum had the visionary idea that the remote Bent Mountain area could be, with concerted effort, made a thriving orchard region. He moved there and began the laborious process

John Long, executive director of the Salem Museum, teaches history at Roanoke College and writes a column for the Roanoke Times.

of clearing land and planting fruit trees, especially apple trees of the pippin variety. Later, Woodrum would relocate to the Air Point area of the mountain and operate a second orchard. The WPA history of Roanoke County commented that Woodrum had started “the growing of apples on Bent Mountain while his neighbors shook their head and spoke discouraging words. Like all successful pioneers, however, Woodrum soon had reason to know that imitation is the sincerest flattery.” Indeed, apple orchards, as well as other agricultural products such as cabbage and tobacco, formed the bedrock of local economy.

It was Woodrum’s eldest son, Byron, who figures most prominently in the 1878 tragedy. Born about 1847, Byron grew into a man of prominence in Roanoke County, involved in several business concerns in addition to his involvement in the family orchards. For a while in the early 1870s he seemed to have lived in Salem, where he operated a tobacco manufactory. But by 1878, he was back on the mountain and operating another new tobacco business in partnership with a close friend, one John Huff.

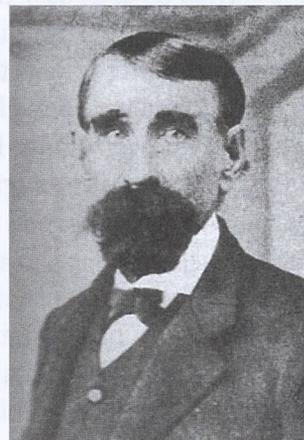
What transpired that autumn between the two men is preserved only in an article found in the *Conservative and Monitor*, a short-lived Salem weekly. Only a few Roanoke County papers from the 1870s survive by happenstance, and a rare issue of the *Conservative*, dated September 26, 1878, is housed in the collection of the Salem Museum, containing the account headlined “Fatal Shooting of a Young Man.”

Before examining the fatal dispute between Byron Woodrum and his friend it is worth establishing some context. Bent Mountain in 1878 was a remote corner of Roanoke County, far removed from the more “urbanized” centers of Salem and Big Lick (themselves only small towns at the time). As such, Bent Mountain would have been considered by many a different culture; a wild place astraddle the more cosmopolitan world of the valley and the rough-edged, isolated mountain communities beyond.

And as such, we may look at the unfortunate altercation as an example of the endemic violence that historically plagued such mountain communities.

The south in general and the mountain folk in particular were widely considered to be overly aggressive, a judgment shared today by many historians of the period. For instance, John Hope Franklin commented that “violence was inextricably woven into the most fundamental aspects of life in the south and constituted an important phase of the total experience of the people.” Bertram Wyatt-Brown concluded that interpersonal violence represented “an ethic of honor [which] suffused the Old South.” This ethic, he said, often played itself out in the form of the duel, but need not have done so — a sudden fight, as was the case on Bent Mountain in 1878, could also constitute the requisite “public recognition of a man’s claim to power.” In short, a man of the mountains would be less a man if he allowed another man an unanswered insult or challenge.

Richard Davids, in his biography of famous mountain preacher and church builder Bob Childress, describes the violence of mountaineer culture this way: “[Mountain people] lived at war with one another. They stilled whiskey and drank and fought and stabbed — and shot each other with Owlshhead pistols. Shot only folks they knew well — their enemies, their friends, and their kinsfolk. It was said that one man would sometimes shoot another at a frolic and then dance in his victim’s blood. Curiously, a man might kill another and then feel remorse and take a gun to anyone who spoke ill of the deceased at his funeral. If they lacked knives or guns they fought with jagged, skull-crushing rocks. Killing was a habit of generations. To argue was womanish. A boy didn’t become a man until he came to discard words with actions.”



*Jordan Woodrum
(Courtesy of Jack and
Jacobs’ “History of
Roanoke County”)*

The more remote the community, the more removed from "citified" standards of law and order and societal expectations, the more such violent encounters might be found, it seems.

Other modern scholars have justifiably argued that this stereotype of alcohol-soaked violence fits popular notions of "hillbilly" mountain culture more than reality. After all, the vast majority of residents of mountain communities would live and die in quiet anonymity with no incidents of violence worthy of note. But there is no denying that violent encounters were far from unknown in these places, and that one turned disastrously fatal on Bent Mountain in 1878.

The origins of this particular encounter are unknown today and were unknown at the time. The Conservative reporter recounted that on September 18, 1878, a Wednesday evening, Byron Woodrum and his colleague John Huff experienced some "misunderstanding" that spiraled out of control. The two were not known to have been antagonistic before; in fact the paper noted that "if they had ever previously disagreed it was unknown to their friends; in fact, their relations to each other during this whole period were those of the most intimate friendship." No one ever found out the original cause of the argument, but the paper was quick to put the blame on one influence: alcohol. "... In an evil hour when both were under the influence of the demon, strong drink ... the 'destroyer of millions' add[ed] another victim to the long list of the slain," the paper melodramatically reported.

At dusk an acquaintance of both men, J.W. Shelor, chanced by Huff's mercantile, which he operated in addition to the tobacco partnership with Woodrum. He found the two men arguing, but at first he "hardly knew whether they were quarrelling or jesting," the paper reported. Shelor nonetheless grew concerned, for he tried to pry Woodrum out of a situation that was beginning to appear volatile, directing him out of the store to calm down. Huff locked the door behind them, probably thinking the confrontation at an end. It was the first of several times that the disagreement could have ended, and in fact was believed to have ended, short of fatal violence.

But the intoxicated Woodrum, described as a "man of high spirit," would not relent, and forced himself back into the store by another door. "Come in," stated Huff, perhaps sardonically, and the two men "grappled each other and began a scuffle." In the mêlée, one of the two (probably Huff, who was armed) made a threat involving firearms, whereupon the frightened Shelor left the store and called for help from a passerby, Giles Tyree.

While Shelor was out of the store for those few moments, Huff apparently struck Woodrum with a pistol, opening a gash behind his ear which bled profusely. When Shelor returned with Tyree, Huff (described as "the soberer of the two") requested they disarm Woodrum, who apparently was threatening Huff with a small penknife. Shelor and Tyree did so and again led Woodrum from the store. A dangerous situation seemed again to have been averted, thought all involved — except Woodrum, who had no intention of letting go of his anger.

Thinking all was now well, Huff retreated to his nearby cookhouse, where an unnamed African-American employee had prepared his dinner. As he ate, Huff was suddenly surprised by the reappearance of Woodrum, this time carrying an axe he had picked up somewhere outside. Woodrum made two drunken swings at his business partner, shouting that he'd "show you whose blood you shed" (apparently a reference to the gash inflicted in the earlier altercation). Huff attempted to seize the axe, and the two fell out of the cookhouse door as they struggled.

Meanwhile, Huff's cook had run for help. She found Shelor and Tyree still nearby, and led them back to Huff's store. By then Huff seemed to have overpowered Woodrum, and the two neighbors apparently assumed him to be the aggressor. They dragged Huff off of Woodrum, once again thinking they had ended the scuffle.

However, what they had inadvertently done was free Woodrum, the real aggressor, to renew his attack on Huff, who was now constrained by two other men. While Shelor and Tyree held Huff, Woodrum grabbed the axe and charged his former friend. Huff, panicking, drew a derringer pistol from his

pocket and fired, hitting Woodrum in the abdomen. It would prove a fatal wound within 32 hours.

Instant remorse flooded Huff, according to the unnamed Conservative reporter. He helped to carry the wounded man back to his store, where he was laid upon a bed. Soon Huff's parents, Robert and Mary, rushed to the scene, and offered to move Woodrum to their house. However, it was judged too dangerous to move him. Someone must have been sent to inform Jordan Woodrum, and others were sent in opposite directions to bring back a doctor. There being apparently no physician on Bent Mountain at that time, word was sent to both Dr. M.T. Greer in Floyd and Dr. Joseph Gale of Cave Spring, hoping one would arrive in time. (Gale was one of the founders of Lewis-Gale Hospital.) Both doctors indeed arrived eventually to treat Woodrum, but the delays of communication and travel in those days meant there was little the doctors could do.

Huff, the report said, "was greatly affected and fell upon Woodrum, wept bitterly, and earnestly besought his forgiveness." For his part, Woodrum, though not beforehand a "religiously inclined young man," seemed to have experienced a deathbed conversion: "... before he died he entertained the hope that his sins were pardoned, and it is said he met death with great composure and resignation, bidding his friends to meet him in heaven." So in the end there may have been a reconciliation between the two old friends who were briefly mortal enemies.

Woodrum's body was taken to his father's home and he was buried there, though the location of that cemetery seems now to have been lost in the shadows of history.

While the community mourned and no doubt gossiped about the incident, there was a legal matter to consider. A man was dead, and perhaps a crime had been committed. Bent Mountain in 1878 was a long way from the county seat in Salem, and so from the more formalized machinery of law and order found in a larger town. Therefore the duty of investigating the incident fell to the local justice of the peace, Joseph R. King.

Confederate war hero and a descendant of General Andrew Lewis, "Squire" King was widely respected in the mountaintop community. An able farmer, it was said that he returned home from the Civil War and "to take up the battle of life on the farm and repair what had been lost through four years' conflict." He served as justice of the peace for the last 30 years of his life, a tenure that suggests his stature on the mountain.

'If they had ever previously disagreed it was unknown to their friends; in fact, their relations to each other during this whole period were those of the most intimate friendship.'

Acting as coroner, detective and prosecuting attorney in one, King interviewed witnesses, examined the body, and in short order summoned a jury to render his verdict: Huff had acted in self defense. There would be no arrest or prosecution, and the Woodrum family apparently would seek no retribution. This is why there are no court records to elucidate the case, and only the obscure newspaper account survives to tell the tale.

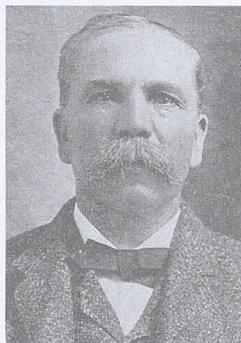
The modern follower of this old story may find this an unsatisfactory resolution. But in the context of the day, King's verdict made perfect sense — even apparently to the deceased's family. These young men were the product of a culture in which violence was, to some degree, an acceptable means of resolving disputes. That their argument turned tragically violent was distressing and undesired, but in no way out of the ordinary. Stories akin to the sad end of Byron Woodrum would be told many times in many different places throughout the isolated communities of the Appalachians.

The Woodrum family would remain prominent in Roanoke County for generations afterwards. A nephew of Byron would be Clifton Woodrum, the congressman for whom Roanoke's airport would later be named, and another generation would see Clifton "Chip" Woodrum serve in the Virginia House of Delegates. Though the details of Byron's untimely death would be seemingly lost over time, his name would reappear in future generations to memorialize the ill-fated young man.

As for Huff, if there was any stigma attached to his actions that September night, it did not seem to have lasted long. He remained a successful businessman and farmer on the mountain the rest of his days, living until 1917. He seemed to have never married. In a 1912 history of Roanoke County which included a section on Bent Mountain, Huff is listed among the leading citizens. His glowing biography attested to his stature as one of Bent Mountain's "most progressive farmers and fruit growers." No mention is made of the tragedy that claimed the life of his friend years before, nor would we expect it to have been brought up. The same book also lists Jordan Woodrum, who had died in 1901, and justice Joseph King, who had died in 1892, as two other men who had built the community atop the mountain.

If anyone whispered behind Huff's back about the shooting, if any of the Woodrums harbored resentment toward the Huffs, if any ill-will plagued the community over the terrible incident, history does not speak of it.

Over time, the differences between a remote mountain community like Bent Mountain and a less isolated town like Salem would begin to fade. Better roads and transportation, more effective law enforcement, greater economic ties, and a unified popular culture spread by such technology as film and radio began the homogenization of American society. Within a generation of Byron Woodrum's death, the people of Bent Mountain and the peoples of the valley were vastly less different than they had been before. Violence, of course, did not disappear. But the culture which instinctively resorted to violence as a means of conflict resolution developed other approaches to disagreements. Had Byron Woodrum and John Huff begun their argument a few years later, a much different outcome may have resulted.



John Jackson Huff
(Courtesy of Jack and Jacobs' "History of Roanoke County")

Historic Smithfield has Hokie ties

It might be a stretch to say that if it weren't for Historic Smithfield Plantation there would be no Virginia Tech. But the serendipity of Col. William Preston choosing this corner of the nascent Montgomery County to build a family estate on the eve of the American Revolution cannot be denied.

Preston was a staunch advocate of education, insisting that even his daughters be given schooling at a time when female education was hardly considered compulsory. Historical Society member Malcolm Bryan wrote of Preston in the 2008 edition of the *Journal*: "There is little doubt that both the Breckinridge and Preston families owe their remarkable accomplishments in subsequent generations to William Preston's industry in obtaining a respectable library, with books obtained from both England and the larger American cities. These publications were placed in his then-backwoods plantation. This admirable collection enabled him to start a school for his children and those of his sister, both male and female."

After Preston died in 1783, the plantation passed to his widow Susanna Smith Preston, who lived there for another 40 years, and continued his legacy of education for the family. The estate then passed to James Patton Preston, the first of William and Susanna's children to be born at Smithfield, and who would go on to be governor of the Commonwealth from 1816-1819. Upon James' death in 1843, Smithfield went to his son William Ballard Preston, who served in the 13th Congress.

The Preston and Olin Institute, a Methodist academy founded in Blacksburg in the 1850s, was named for William Ballard Preston, one of its first trustees. When the academy fell on hard times, it was reorganized in 1872 for the purpose of forming the state's first land-grant institution under the recently enacted Morrill Act, and was renamed Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College, which eventually became Virginia Tech. An additional purchase secured the nearby house known as Solitude along with 250 more acres of land. Solitude had been the home of Col. Robert Taylor Preston, another one of the original trustees of Preston and Olin Institute and William Ballard Preston's younger brother. Solitude still stands, overlooking the duckpond on the western edge of the Virginia Tech campus, and is still used by the university. — CK



IF YOU GO...

Historic Smithfield is located adjacent to the Virginia Tech campus in Blacksburg, just off Duckpond Drive, and is open April through the first week of December.

Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday, 1-5 p.m.
Closed Wednesdays

Admission:

Adults \$8* (*AAA members take \$1 off)
Seniors \$7 (60 and over)
Students \$5 (13 through college, with I.D.)
Children \$3 (5-12)
Some group rates available

<http://www.smithfieldplantation.org/>

Roanoke College and its 'advantages' for Salem

by Linda Angle Miller

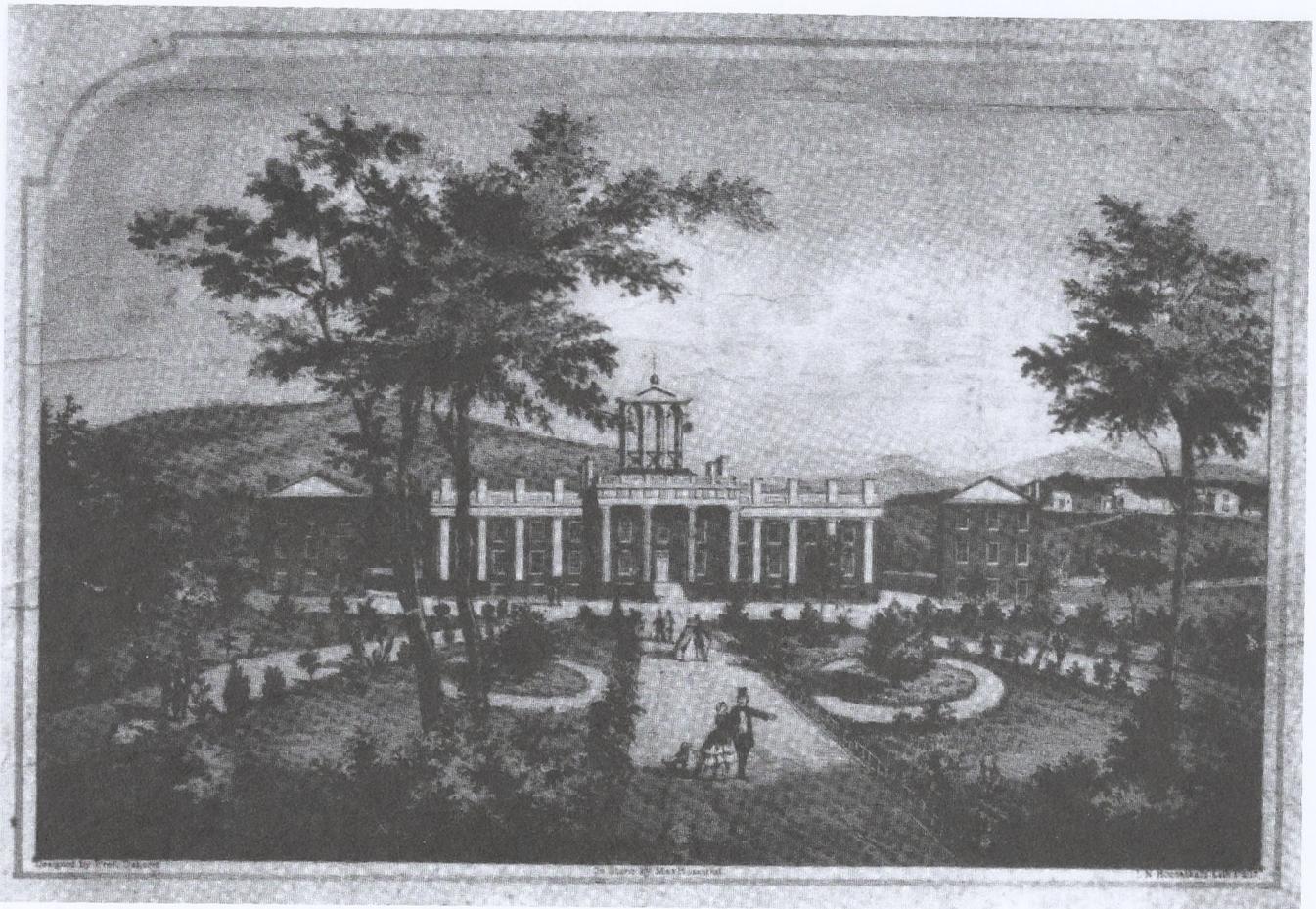
Modern colleges like to tout their monetary contribution to the local economy. Currently, Roanoke College boasts its impact on the Valley at a little over \$100,000,000. Interestingly, the 19th century was no different. From its early days, Roanoke College was cognizant of its "advantages" for Salem and vice versa. When the Virginia Collegiate Institute, which became Roanoke College in 1853, moved to Salem, local builders benefitted greatly, erecting four brick structures and two frame buildings in the first 30 years, plus numerous nearby faculty houses. Area farmers and tradesmen supplied food, candles and oil for lighting, wood and coal for heating, and other supplies. A mid-1880s publication estimates the college's annual contribution to the Valley's well-being at \$40,000 to \$50,000, about \$1.2 million in today's dollars.

But "impact" goes far beyond additional money in governmental coffers and citizens' pockets. There is also an abstract impact that is more difficult to assess. Certainly, merely having the college in one's town was a source of pride and status, especially considering that a college education — even a year or two — was reserved for the very few. It said something positive about Salem and helped attract new residents and investors.

In a town whose population approximated 600 in 1860, 1,600 in 1876, and reached 3,200 by 1890, it goes without saying that faculty were respected leaders of the community. Co-founder and Virginia Collegiate Institute principal Christopher Baughman helped organize Salem's Lutheran Church in 1852. He and, later, co-founder and president David F. Bittle pastored the church in addition to their numerous college duties. Other faculty members preached to various Lutheran congregations, sometimes doing duty at more than one church on any given Sunday. During the Civil War, President Bittle was one of three leaders selected to surrender the town to the Yankees.

In 1884, after two years of feverish building in the newly founded city of Roanoke, Salem established a Citizens' Executive Committee to promote the advantages of its own community, largely targeting northern investors. Articulating their mission and focus at the first meeting was Roanoke's third president, Julius Daniel Dreher, class of 1871. Although a South Carolinian, Dreher had developed a host of northern contacts, having spent much time there, knowing that at the time, generous donors for the college were more readily found in the north than in the south. The committee — whose executive secretary was Roanoke's assistant professor of ancient languages, John Crabtree '72 (later superintendent of the Lutheran Children's Home) — produced a 68-page booklet, touting the beauty of Salem, celebrating nearby mineral springs (Hot, Warm, Healing, Sulphur — Red, Yellow and White — and Chalybeate), and offering free land for the establishment of specific industries. Among the advantages of Salem, Roanoke College figured prominently.

This is adapted from an article Linda Angle Miller, archivist of Roanoke College, wrote for Issue Two, 2013, of Roanoke College Magazine.



This print of an 1856 painting by mathematics professor Henry Osborne shows the anticipated front range of buildings of the Roanoke College campus. (Used with the permission of Roanoke College Magazine)

The cultural enrichment brought by Roanoke College is immeasurable. Even the student body represented a host of states and countries. While most were Virginians and North Carolinians, even the deep South, and, occasionally, such faraway places as Florida, Michigan, Connecticut, Louisiana and California sent their sons to Salem. Internationally, Roanoke educated students from the Choctaw and Oneida nations, Mexico, Japan, Korea, China and other countries. These students broadened the world view of the college and the community as they learned English, attended churches and socials, gave speeches about their countries and their people, and wrote articles for *The Collegian*. Conversely, as alumni, they acted as cultural ambassadors for the college and the United States when they returned home.

Townfolk were invited to many college events, often held in Salem's Town Hall. Debates, oratorical contests, plays, musicales and even the three- to four-day-long Commencement activities were open to guests. Consuls and ministers, governmental dignitaries and prominent speakers — religious and secular — graced the college and Salem's parlors.

One cannot ignore the impact of the college through the eyes of Salem's women. Its arrival offered women more opportunities to supplement the family income, primarily by doing their normal tasks as homemakers. They cooked for the boys, took in student boarders and laundered and sewed their clothes. Some students even lived with faculty members, especially the younger preparatory school boys. And, imagine the delight of the young ladies of Salem as year after year the town was



Roanoke College today.

blessed with a fine group of husbandly prospects — and good prospects, too, as they were to become a part of the educated leaders in their communities. No wonder college events in the Town Hall were well-attended by these young women. At one point, the faculty issued a plea in Salem's Times-Register for the girls to stop strolling around the campus perimeter, as they were a distraction to the boys who should be focused on their studies.

Although Roanoke was officially all male until 1930, some girls benefited from its hallowed halls. In 1862, local girls attended the college during two sessions, since all the college men had gone to war. Beginning in the late 1880s, the Board of Trustees permitted a few girls each year to take the same subjects as the boys, albeit separately. Generally, these girls were daughters of faculty, the board or prominent townsfolk. Called "special students," they did the same work as the boys, but they were not permitted to declaim or speak in chapel, and they received a certificate, not a degree (although a B.A. was awarded retroactively in 1930).

Finally, the quality and impact of a college can be seen in the stature of its alumni. Roanoke's influence was felt through those alumni who became leaders in education, medicine, law, finance, agriculture and religion. Eleven between 1855 and 1903 became college presidents. Three — James A.B. Scherer '90, Rufus B. Peery '90 and Charles L. Brown '95 — were the first Lutheran missionaries to Japan. John Lupton '82 was co-founder of Coca Cola Bottling Company. James Bonsack developed the cigarette rolling machine. And what would Virginia be without William A.R. Goodwin '89, the dreamer who envisioned Colonial Williamsburg, and who, in the 1930s, convinced John D. Rockefeller to fund its development? All in all, it is incredibly impressive for a small southern college in the 19th century!

The Grove: More than a presidential residence

by Clara B. Cox

Long past are the days when sheep grazed on the lawn and ducks flew through the hallways of The Grove, Virginia Tech's presidential residence. Now the stately two-story brick house, which was completed in 1902, is more likely to host elegant dinners for visiting dignitaries, receptions honoring outstanding faculty and students, or luncheons recognizing regional economic leaders — although the occasional bird does make its way inside.

The university celebrates such a gem among its buildings because of the efforts of John M. McBryde, its president from 1891 to 1907, who persuaded the board of visitors in the late 1800s to build the 15,147-square-foot mansion. By that time, the forward-thinking administrator had already crafted innovative plans and proceeded to change the certificate-granting, industrial-type school, known as Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College, into a degree-granting college, spurring the Virginia General Assembly to add “and Polytechnic Institute” to the name in 1896. McBryde and his son, also named John, developed trappings to reflect the college's new identity, among them a seal, a motto, and a coat of arms. The Grove became one of those trappings, an elegant home for the president that spoke volumes about the college's emerging status in higher education.

McBryde was the first president given nearly free rein in planning the physical footprint of Virginia Polytechnic Institute (VPI), the popular nickname for the college. During his tenure, VPI's first native-limestone-clad, neo-Gothic-style building, known as the Chapel, was constructed on the site where Newman Library stands today. However, it was one of McBryde's successors, Joseph D. Eggleston Jr., president from 1913 to 1919, who fully embraced the neo-Gothic style of architecture that made the visual statement that VPI was a real college. Eggleston also holds the distinction of using sheep to “mow” the lawn of the presidential residence.

The Chapel, destroyed by fire in 1953, and The Grove are among the most impressive of the 67 buildings constructed during McBryde's presidency. The Grove survived an attempt to convert it into a residence hall and nearly two decades as an office building, a period when it slid into disrepair. Fortunately, a first lady sparked the renovation that returned The Grove to its original use as the home of Virginia Tech's presidents.

Clara B. Cox, who retired in 2010 as director of publications at Virginia Tech, wrote this article for the Summer 2013 issue of Virginia Tech Magazine. A complete history of The Grove, and recipes served in the elegant home, is available in the award-winning book “The Grove: Recipes and History of Virginia Tech's Presidential Residence,” edited and written by Cox. Book sales support an endowment for the university's Employees' Spouse and Dependent Scholarship Program.



The Grove as it appeared in a 1902 photo (left), and in a contemporary photo by Jim Stroup. Both photos are from the Special Collection, University Libraries, Virginia Tech.

THE GROVE'S EARLY YEARS

In 1899, McBryde suggested that the board of visitors convert the house where he was living — Tech's first presidents' home, now part of Henderson Hall — into an infirmary and build a new presidential residence. Board members concurred with his recommendations, resolving that the proposed house “be of brick and in such plans as the president and executive committee may adopt.” They selected the Southern Colonial Revival style of architecture for the house, whose dominant portico, according to Charles E. Brownell et al. in *The Making of Virginia Architecture*, “signaled the fact that a person of importance dwelled there.”

After McBryde retired in 1907, four presidents and a non-president lived in the residence, originally named the “President's Home in the Grove,” before a major renovation commenced. One of those four, Julian A. Burruss, president from 1919 to 1945, suggested that the house be converted into a dormitory for women. Although the board of visitors approved a motion to undertake the conversion and to erect a new executive residence, nothing came of the board's action, perhaps because the first female students, who matriculated that same month — September 1921 — either lived with their families in Blacksburg or had found housing in private homes.

When the last of those four presidents, John R. Hutcheson, became too ill in 1947 to continue in office, the board of visitors named him chancellor, a first for the institution. In another unprecedented move, the board allowed Hutcheson to continue occupying the presidential home as his residence. He lived there for two more years, while the new president, Walter S. Newman, who had begun working at VPI in 1946, remained in housing assigned to him on Faculty Row, a street of on-campus residences provided for faculty and administrators.

The first major renovation to the house that McBryde built commenced in 1949 after Hutcheson had vacated the house. It was completed in 1951, adding two more years to Newman's residency in the Holden House on Faculty Row. His wife, LizOtey (the spelling used by her family), played a major role in the renovation and said later that the additions of bathrooms and closets to bedrooms were her primary achievements in remodeling the house.

Newman, perhaps more than his predecessors, was aware that entertaining could benefit the college, telling the board of visitors, “The administration has recognized the need for the college to partici-

pate to a greater extent in providing entertainment for visiting dignitaries and organizations.” The board authorized an annual expenditure of \$1,000 for official college entertaining, which was usually held in the presidential residence.

THE GROVE BECOMES AN OFFICE BUILDING

Following Newman’s retirement, his successor, T. Marshall Hahn Jr., lived in the president’s home for nine years before building and moving into a house off campus. When Hahn left the university in 1974 to accept a position with Georgia-Pacific, the company’s foundation purchased the house and donated it to the Virginia Tech Foundation. Hahn’s successor, William E. Lavery, lived in the Hahn House throughout his 1975-87 administration.

After Hahn moved off campus, the former presidential residence began a marked decline. Remodeled in 1972 to serve as an office building, the once glorious venue where presidents had feted governors, actors, and other dignitaries acquired the inauspicious name “Building 274.” In 1983, when the first office occupants had vacated the building, an administrator inspecting the space was met by a duck flying down the stairway, through the reception hall, and into a room that had originally served as the front parlor. Work began shortly thereafter to prepare the building for other offices.

Meanwhile, the ever-increasing entertaining began creating problems for Peggy Lavery, wife of President Lavery, and she successfully recommended renovating the house and returning it to its original purpose. Her husband resigned before the renovation was completed, however, making Lavery the only president since 1902 not to live in The Grove.

SAVING THE GROVE

The \$1.2 million renovation updated and restored the presidential residence, which was officially named “The Grove” during the work. The first resident after the completion of the renovation was James D. McComas, president from 1988 to 1994. Promising that The Grove would be used as the “front door” to the university, McComas and his wife, Adele, opened the mansion to numerous guests, entertaining more than 10,000 people there during the first year alone.

Two more presidents have lived in The Grove since McComas, and a major mechanical renovation and extensive maintenance work were completed before the current president, Charles W. Steger Jr., and his wife, Janet, moved in. Like their predecessors, the Stegers entertain a wide variety of guests.

Thanks to their hospitality and the cordiality of all first families who have lived in the presidential residence, The Grove has served Virginia Tech well, establishing a gracious tradition of hospitality and standing proudly as the face of the university. That tradition is expected to continue when a new president, Timothy D. Sands, and his family move into the historic structure after he assumes office in June 2014.

Timeline of Roanoke Regional Airport (Woodrum Field)

by Marshall M. Harris

Ed. Note: This timeline was developed by Marshall M. Harris, in connection with the upcoming book, "Aviation in Roanoke," that he co-authored with Nelson Harris. The timeline chronicles the growth of aviation in the Roanoke Valley and the development of Roanoke's airport. The chronology includes certain national events to provide context and points of reference. Marshall M. Harris is the son of the late Marshall L. Harris, manager of the airport.

August 14, 1901: Controversial, first manned, powered, controlled flight of heavier-than-air craft in United States by Gustave Whitehead, Connecticut.

December 17, 1903: Wright Brothers' manned, powered and controlled flight of heavier-than-air craft in Kitty Hawk, N.C. – most famous of initial flights and recognized as the first of its type in the United States.

December 29, 1903: Dr. A.A. Cannaday purchases 410 acres in north Roanoke County that will eventually become the site for Roanoke's Municipal Airport.

September 22, 1910: Eugene Ely, a pilot for the Glenn H. Curtiss Company, flies a Curtiss aeroplane at the Great Roanoke Fair.

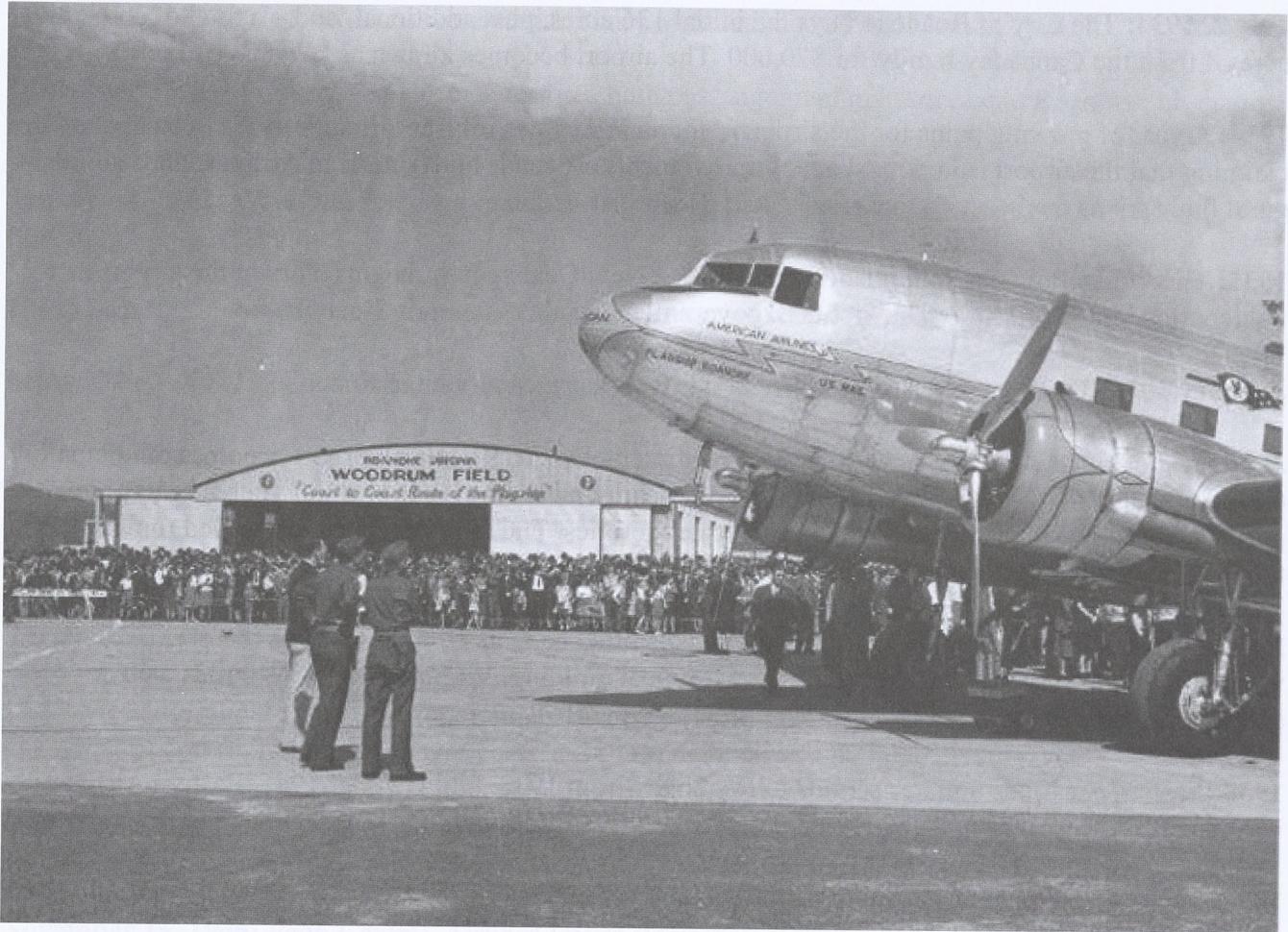
April 6, 1917: United States enters World War I.

November 11, 1918: World War I ends.

1927: Roanoke Mayor Charles D. Fox invites experts from Langley Field in Virginia to assist Roanoke in the initial development of an "aviation field." Earlier consideration had been given to a site near the Veterans Administration Hospital, west of Roanoke; that site was rejected.

May 20-21, 1927: Charles Lindbergh pilots single-engine Ryan in first recorded solo flight from New York to Paris, France (approximately 3,600 miles).

Marshall M. Harris, a Roanoke College graduate and a commercial real estate agent in Roanoke, is a son of the late Marshall L. Harris, longtime airport manager.



A big prop plane stopped for an event at the old Woodrum Field hangar.

1928-1930: Between 1928 and 1930, the Virginia Department of Highways (VDH) assumed responsibility for all major roads around the new “airport.” VDH also graded the first runway at the airport.

February 2, 1929: Upon the recommendation of the Federal Department of Commerce, the City of Roanoke leases a 136-acre site known as the Dr. A.A. Cannaday Farm in North Roanoke County for five years. The annual lease was \$2,500.

October 29, 1929: Black Tuesday – start of the Great Depression in the United States.

1929-1930: Access road to the airport is built and field grading is begun.

July 1, 1930: The unnamed airport is leased to Frank Reynolds and Clayton Lemon, two businessmen, who construct the first hangar (83' x 100'). Runways evolved from grass fields to dirt.

1933: Ludington Airlines serves Roanoke on New York to Nashville route. Often, these stops were scheduled as much for fuel as for business. Ludington Airlines was purchased by Eastern Airlines and service to Roanoke was cancelled.

July 2, 1934: The City of Roanoke buys the initial 136 acres, plus additional land – a total of about 320 acres – from the Cannaday family for \$70,000. The airport becomes known as “Cannaday Field.”

1934: A year of growing pains for the airport. American Airlines refuses airmail service to Roanoke, claiming that the airport is in poor shape. Improvements are made and American Airlines lands an inaugural flight for airmail service to Roanoke and Southwest Virginia.

1935: The Works Progress Administration (WPA), a New Deal agency, begins work at the airport that will continue into the 1940s. The first U.S. government weather station in Roanoke is staffed.

January 10, 1936: American Airlines inaugurates its passenger service in Roanoke.

January 1, 1937: After six years of private operation by businessmen, the airport becomes municipally owned and operated by the City of Roanoke. American Airlines moves flights to Lynchburg until improvements can be made to the runways and other facilities. The airport gets its first paved runway and the first airport manager, Robert J. “Bob” Dunahoe, is hired.

1938: Hangar #2 (66' x 100') is constructed of dismantled hangars from Ft. Eustis. The original hangar was purchased from Lemon & Reynolds for a terminal building. Virginia Airmotive builds a 60' x 60' shop for its operations.

1938: Eastern Air Lines initiates service to Roanoke. From 1938 until October 1941, Eastern Airlines was the only airline serving Roanoke because American Airlines had suspended service to Roanoke.

1938: The Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) was created by the U.S. Government under the Civil Aeronautics Act.

1939: The Acorn Flying Club was established by Gene Sweeney, J. Gordon Holt, Houston Ferguson and C.C. Thomas. Their first aircraft was a Taylorcraft, purchased at a cost of \$1,650.

1940: The Roanoke area was credited with having 312 licensed pilots and 21 privately owned aircraft. Both numbers exceeded the totals for any other airport in Virginia at that time.

1940: Rep. Clifton A. Woodrum, accompanied by Col. Arthur Wilson, inspected the airport to determine its suitability for a national defense project.

1940: Roanoke's municipal airport becomes a national defense project, thereby making it eligible for federal funds. Roanoke receives \$313,315 through the Roanoke WPA headquarters for development of airport infrastructure; City of Roanoke contributes \$60,000 to the projects.

March 29, 1941: United States enters World War II in Europe.

October 13, 1941: Roanoke's airport is officially dedicated and named Woodrum Field, in honor of Congressman Woodrum. A crowd of 15,000 attends the ceremony.

1941: Plans are made to provide a runway lighting system, and an administration building.

December 7, 1941: Japan bombs American military installations in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

December 15, 1941: American Airlines restores both passenger and mail service to Roanoke, based on improvements made to the airport as a national defense project.

January 8, 1942: Woodrum Field begins operating under Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) rules.

1942: Barns and silos, remnants from the Cannaday farm, are removed to make room for a third runway.

September 1, 1942: Penn-Central Airlines initiates Army-Navy cadet pilot training in Roanoke.

1943: The first tower is built for air-traffic control. The "nose-in" hangar is constructed on the north ramp.

1943: Due to the training of Army and Navy pilots at Woodrum Field, the total number of official "operations" (273,624) at the airport exceeded the totals for LaGuardia (New York), Philadelphia and Washington National airports combined.

1943: Woodrum Field is the only municipally owned airport in the United States to cover operating, maintenance and capital improvement costs and show as much as a \$15,000 profit.

January 1, 1945: Marshall L. Harris becomes manager of Woodrum Field; Bob Dunahoe is employed by the FAA.

November 15, 1945: Penn-Central Airlines leaves Roanoke.

May 8, 1945: Germany surrenders, ending World War II in Europe.

August 15, 1945: Japan surrenders, ending World War II in the Pacific.

1947: The first jet aircraft in Roanoke, a Lockheed F-80 piloted by Captain Charles P. Barnett, lands at Woodrum Field.

1947: The Yellow Cab Company of Roanoke begins the Airport Limousine Service to Woodrum Field, providing transportation from homes, hotels and businesses to the airport.

1947: Night flights at Woodrum Field were initiated after marker beacons were installed on mountains around Roanoke. The initial night flight, by American Airlines, was cancelled due to bad weather.

April 1, 1948: Piedmont Airlines begins regular passenger service to Woodrum Field with a twin-engine Douglas DC-3.

1949: Approval granted for a new Administration/Terminal Building at Woodrum Field, estimated to cost \$320,000.

November 1949: The Roy C. Kinsey Sign Company of Roanoke lays out on a ramp at Woodrum Field



An historic aerial photo from the early days of aviation in Roanoke. Old biplanes are parked at what was then the terminal.

the “star face” of what will become the Mill Mountain Star. These pieces were assembled prior to installation of the sign for its lighting on Thanksgiving Eve.

June 1950: The United States enters the Korean War.

Fall 1950: Construction by B.F. Parrott Company of Roanoke begins on the new Administration/Terminal approved in 1949.

June 10, 1951: A “time capsule” (history cell) is buried at the terminal building.

1953: Roanoke City pursues State and Federal money to purchase land for extension of Runway 23. The land being pursued is 57 acres from the Bushong family at a price of \$700 per acre.

May 15, 1953: New Administration/Terminal building completed and dedicated at Woodrum Field. Final cost: \$465,170.38.

July 1953: North Korea surrenders, ending the Korean War.

1954: One of the first TVOR (omni-directional radar) stations in the eastern U.S. placed into service.

- 1958:** The Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) is created under The Federal Aviation Act.
- May 16, 1959:** Celebration is held in honor of 30-year history for the City of Roanoke's Woodrum Field airport.
- 1959:** Air travel begins to grow rapidly. Plans made to pave a 1,700-foot runway at Woodrum Field.
- July 1960:** The 14th Annual All-Woman Transcontinental Air Race includes Roanoke as one of its required stops.
- 1962:** With approval from the Civil Aeronautics Board, American Airlines discontinues service to Roanoke. Radar is installed at Woodrum Field.
- 1964 (approx.):** Piedmont Airlines constructs a large maintenance and service hangar for its exclusive use in the north ramp area.
- March 16, 1965:** A TWA Boeing 727 "Star Stream" lands in Roanoke on a training flight from New York to Florida, the first commercial jet and largest to date to land in Roanoke.
- November 1966:** Piedmont Airlines opens routes through Roanoke to New York.
- 1966:** City of Roanoke publishes long-range plans for the future of Woodrum Field.
- January 1967:** Piedmont Airlines places Boeing 727 jet aircraft into service in Roanoke.
- December 1967:** Runway 33 Instrument Landing System installed.
- Spring 1968:** Piedmont Airlines places Boeing 737 jet aircraft into service at Woodrum Field.
- June 1970:** Emery Air Freight begins freight service operation at Woodrum Field with a twin-turboprop Skytruck.
- 1971-1975:** Multi-Regional Air Transportation Systems Study – no changes were made.
- May 1974:** Marshall L. Harris retires as manager; Robert C. Poole becomes airport manager.
- September 1974:** Dedication of remodeled main terminal, originally opened in 1953.
- October 1977:** Runway 5 Instrument Landing System installed.
- May 1979:** Celebration is held in honor of 50-year history for City of Roanoke's Woodrum Field.
- 1983:** Name change from Roanoke Municipal Airport/Woodrum Field to Roanoke Regional Airport/Woodrum Field to reflect regional service.
- 1983:** Noise Measurement Study at Roanoke Municipal Airport. Conclusion – airplanes and jets make noise!

1984: A busy year for Roanoke Regional Airport – a new public relations program for the airport was announced; a new carrier, Comair, initiated flights; and contracts were let for expansion of long-term parking, among other improvements. UPS begins contracted air freight service.

1985: The Regional Airport Advisory Committee voted to endorse a proposed new terminal at the airport projected to cost \$20,000,000. Local governments are lobbied to help support this expansion financially.

1986: The City of Roanoke and Roanoke County agree to create a regional commission to operate the airport. The initial Commission members are: Robert Herbert (city) – Chairman; Lee Garrett (county) – Vice Chairman; Joel Schlanger (city) – Treasurer; Bob Johnson (county); and Kit Kiser (city).

1986: The new Airport Commission becomes very active, seeking funding for the newly planned terminal and other improvements to the airport. In 1986 there were significant increases in passenger boardings and air cargo.

July 13, 1987: Ownership of the airport is transferred to the Roanoke Regional Airport Commission. A contract is signed with J.M. Turner and Company for construction of the new terminal. The new terminal, designed by Delta Associates, Richmond, and Odell Associates, Charlotte, N.C., will encompass 96,000 gross square feet. The estimated cost to construct is \$27,000,000.

1988: UPS begins jet air freight service with a Boeing 757.

1989: A search is initiated to find an executive director for the airport; Jacqueline L. Shuck is hired. Additional airline service is sought.

September 8, 1989: The new terminal becomes operational with a gala opening, co-sponsored by the Commission and the Arts Council of the Blue Ridge. The terminal opens for business on September 13, 1989.

1990: The year sees another large increase in business at the airport as new, lower air fares are offered, and shuttle service from the parking lots is added.

August 2, 1990, to February 28, 1991: Operation Desert Storm in Kuwait and Iraq.

July 1991: Robert C. Poole retires as manager; Jacqueline L. Shuck, executive director of the Roanoke Regional Airport Commission since 1989, adds airport management to her duties.

1991: Security at Roanoke Regional Airport is tightened due to war in the Persian Gulf. Eastern Airlines leaves the Roanoke market and a new microwave landing system is tested which allows pilots to make curved approaches to landings.

1993: The “Roanoke Phantom” poses as an air traffic controller and causes significant confusion. Arrested, the guilty party receives 10 years in prison.

1993: Smoking in the terminal is banned. The airport’s fire-fighting capability is increased with the

purchase of a \$250,000 Oshkosh TB1500 truck, specifically designed for fighting aircraft fires. A new air freight facility is planned, due to the increase in air freight.

1994: Planning begins for a new 100-foot-tall control tower to provide a 360-degree view of the airport.

1994: FedEx begins air freight service to the airport, flying Boeing 727s.

September 11, 2001: The airport is placed under tight security due to the hijacked airline crashes into the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

2001: Approval is granted for the new control tower. US Airways discontinues full-size jet service from Roanoke.

2002: Construction begins on the new (and current) control tower.

November 24, 2004: The time capsule (history cell) buried in 1951 is excavated. Items inside were badly deteriorated and insignificant.

December 2004: The new (and current) control tower is commissioned and dedicated. A new T-hangar is built.

June 2005: Demolition of the Administrative/Terminal building dedicated in 1953 is completed by Alan L. Amos Inc. of Roanoke.

July 7, 2005: Roanoke Regional Airport purchases the city-owned fire station on Aviation Drive for \$771,663. A new city-owned station is built on Williamson Road.

2006-2008: New hangars are built for general aviation use.

2013: A \$4,100,000 renovation of the present terminal facility is completed, the first such major renovation work since the facility was dedicated in 1989. Roanoke Regional Airport receives a very favorable "connectivity" rating for Non-Hub Airports in the Airport Connectivity Quality Index compiled by researchers William Swelbar and Michael Wittman for Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

April 2013: Roanoke Regional Airport places its new fire and emergency services facility into use.

January 1, 2014: The airport is renamed Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport, aka Woodrum Field, in order to recognize the economic impact of the Blacksburg area upon the region served by the airport.

Another look at the Fincastle Resolutions

by Mary Kegley

There are several questions about the Fincastle Resolutions, dated January 20, 1775, in Fincastle (now Wythe) County, which will remain unanswered for several reasons. The most obvious one is the lack of, or incomplete, original records. In spite of that, the significance of the document and the 15 men associated with it, has been written about on many occasions with different interpretations. This article, however, will consider some other matters, most of them not mentioned elsewhere. The first matter to be considered is the legal issue concerning time and place, and the second is the uniqueness of these resolutions.

LEGAL QUESTIONS OF TIME AND PLACE

By comparing what other counties in Virginia and elsewhere did to support the Continental Congress it might be concluded that Fincastle might do the same or at least something similar at this critical time. At least two legal points come to mind.

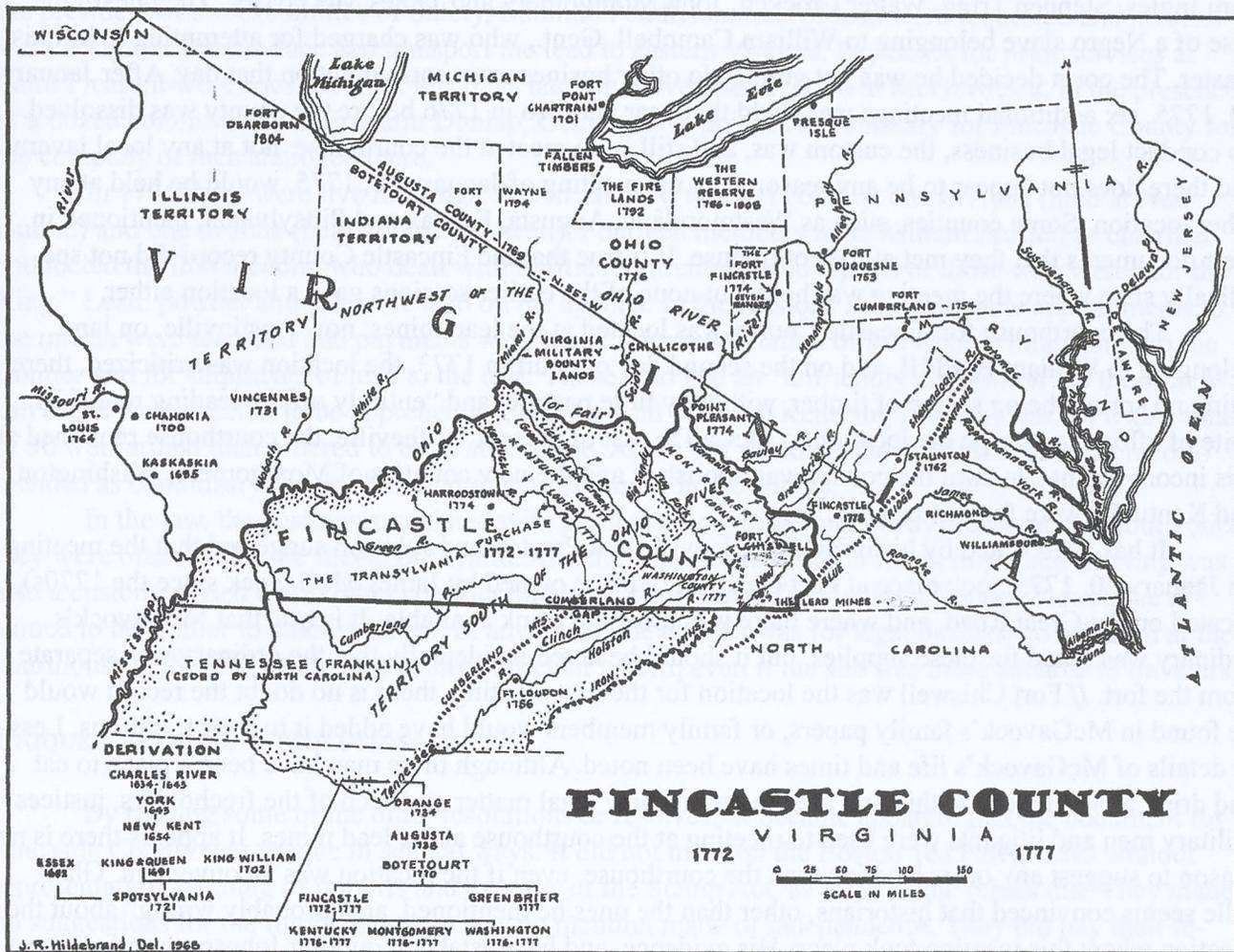
First, believing that this meeting held a priority on any agenda, it would be logical that a specific date would be chosen and the notice given in advance, not only to the members who would be specifically selected to serve on the committee, but also to the other Fincastle Freeholders particularly. Looking at Westmoreland County in 1766, for example, their freeholders "assembled on due Notice, at the Courthouse of the said County." Augusta County in their published version indicates that "after due notice," they proceeded with the meeting. In Pittsylvania County, it states that they were "duly summoned."

The Fincastle document did say that the land owners or freeholders of this huge county were present and the address was "unanimously agreed to by the people of the county." This meeting was not a private, secretive act promoted by the military men, civic or political leaders, or the justices of the county. This was a public document requested to be sent to the Virginia representatives at the Continental Congress in Philadelphia and was to be passed on to Williamsburg for publication when completed.

There is no doubt that word spread throughout the populated areas of the county and, as was the custom, notices were probably posted at the courthouse door, the mills, taverns, and at any other significant public place. People traveling carried letters, the local news and schedules of upcoming events. Of course we have no proof of notice for the Fincastle County meeting in January 1775 and we have no record of how many men showed up at the meeting, but common sense tells us that travel plans had to be part of the days prior to the meeting. And they had to know what day to meet at the courthouse.

For example, the men that we know were present and named to the County Committee came from a variety of locations and because travel was by horseback, it was a long and tedious trip for everyone, especially in winter. William Russell and Daniel Smith probably came from the Clinch River settlements of present Russell County, Evan Shelby from the present Bristol area, Rev. Charles Cummings from present Abingdon, and William Edmondson from the South Fork of the Holston River in present Washington County, each of them requiring at least three or four days to arrive at the courthouse. William Preston's home was in present Blacksburg, easily a 65-mile trip, taking at least two to three days.

Mary Kegley, Wytheville historian, hopes to publish her 60th book in 2014.



The courthouse for the vast area of Fincastle County, extending to present Wisconsin from 1772-1777, was in present Wythe County. The late J.R. Hildebrand drew the map.

William Ingles was at the New River near present Radford; the Campbells (William and Arthur) of present Smyth County, and Stephen Trigg and William Christian of present Pulaski County were closer but it would still take more than one day and perhaps as much as two days to reach their destination. Thomas Madison, James McGavock and John Montgomery were within an easy day's ride to the courthouse, living within the boundaries of present Wythe County.

The second legal point is that the custom long before the meeting of January 20, 1775, was to meet at the Fincastle County Courthouse located at the lead mines on New River to conduct the legal business of the county. Beginning in January 1773, and again in March, May, July, September and November, the justices carried out their business, each time taking two days to complete their work. In May 1774, a two-day session was held for the county with a brief session on August 2, 1774, making a total of eight meetings in those two years. No location is mentioned in the record, but the custom was to conduct county business at the courthouse.

The officers of the court, many of them involved with the local militia, were preparing for their march to Point Pleasant in the summer of 1774 and the battle there took place on October 10. No court sessions were recorded during this time in Fincastle County. The militia were said to have returned home in November. On December 6, 1774, a special called-court was held with five justices on the bench: Wil-

liam Ingles, Stephen Trigg, Walter Crockett, John Montgomery and James McGavock. They heard the case of a Negro slave belonging to William Campbell, Gent., who was charged for attempting to kill his master. The court decided he was not guilty. No other business was carried out on that day. After January 20, 1775, six additional meetings were held that year and two in 1776 before the county was dissolved. To conduct legal business, the custom was, and still is, to meet at the courthouse, not at any local tavern, and there does not appear to be any reason why the meeting of January 20, 1775, would be held at any other location. Some counties, such as Westmoreland, Augusta, Fairfax and Pittsylvania, mentioned in their documents that they met at the courthouse. It is true that the Fincastle County record did not specifically state where the meeting was held, but none of the earlier sessions gave a location either.

The courthouse for Fincastle County was located at the lead mines, now Austinville, on land belonging to William Byrd III, and on the second day of court in 1773, the location was criticized, there being no spring, being scarce of timber, with very little pasture, and "entirely off the leading road." In spite of efforts to change the location to McCall's, east of present Wytheville, the courthouse remained at this inconvenient site until the county was abolished and the new counties of Montgomery, Washington and Kentucky were formed in 1777.

It has been stated by historian Jim Glanville that Preston and Johnson suggested that the meeting on January 20, 1775, took place at Fort Chiswell (a place owned by James McGavock since the 1770s), located on the Great Road, and where there was food and drink available. It is true that McGavock's ordinary was noted for these supplies, but it should be noted incidentally that the ordinary was separate from the fort. *If* Fort Chiswell was the location for the first meeting, there is no doubt the record would be found in McGavock's family papers, or family members would have added it to their traditions. Lesser details of McGavock's life and times have been noted. Although there may have been a place to eat and drink at McGavock's, this first meeting was a new legal matter and each of the freeholders, justices, military men and litigants were used to meeting at the courthouse at the lead mines. It appears there is no reason to suggest any other location than the courthouse, even if the location was inconvenient. Glanville seems convinced that historians, other than the ones he mentioned, are "probably wrong" about the location where this meeting took place. His evidence, and his mistake in quoting Johnson (see footnote), does not convince me.

What no one else seems to have discovered or mentioned is that the regular meetings of the Fincastle County Court at the lead mines continued to be held, as mentioned above, with six additional meetings in 1775 and two in 1776. Each session had justices on the bench, usually five and most of them members mentioned in the resolutions. At these meetings cases were being heard, road surveyors and viewers were being appointed, deeds were recorded and estates were being administered. In addition, bonds were being posted for "good behavior" toward the King, indicating the beginning of the Tory problem in Southwest Virginia.

In the meantime, many of the same gentlemen were also acting as members of the Committee of Safety as recorded by Richard Barksdale Harwell, for "The Committees of Safety of Westmoreland and Fincastle." Their activity was recorded in March, July, October and November of 1775, and January, February, April and June of 1776. Their concerns were totally different than the routine activities taking place at the courthouse. The committee addressed Lord Gov. John Murray, Earl of Dunmore, first praising and thanking him for his service, and second denouncing his removal of the gunpowder from the magazine. In October they noted that William Christian was now in the regular army and Stephen Trigg became chairman in his place and signed the complimentary words praising Christian's services and wishing him future success.

On November 8, 1775, William Preston became chairman at the meeting held at "Mr. James McGavock's." On this occasion orders from the Convention asked that a census of citizens be taken and appointments were made for the ones who were to carry out this request. On a more serious request from

the president of the Committee of Safety, Edmund Pendleton, tons of lead were requested and persons were designated to produce and transport the lead to eastern Virginia. Payments for prior services at Point Pleasant were considered. A few days later on November 27, also at McGavock's, in the presence of a dozen committeemen, Ephraim Dunlap, Gent., was appointed commissary for Fincastle County for the company of men stationed there.

In 1776 there were five meetings, one in January, two in February, one in April (held at New Dublin) and one in June (held at Fort Chiswell). Fourteen members with William Preston as chairman conducted the first meeting who dealt with militia requirements and reports of those who were "for the King." Lead, powder and salt were also on the agenda. In the sessions following, new appointments to the militia were recorded and payments were made for transportation of salt from Williamsburg to the frontier and for shipments of lead to the east. Those who had an "unfriendly disposition" to the American cause were ordered to be apprehended, and the trial of Jacob Kettering [Catron] was set with a total of 30 well-armed men ordered to be in attendance. At the last meeting, James McGavock was recommended as commissary for one hundred men to be raised in the county.

In the law, the customs associated with particular activities were always relevant. Without notice they were often held to be illegal or invalid. And the courthouse location for an important meeting was also a custom carried out in other counties and even if not stated for Fincastle County, it could be assumed to be similar to other counties. In any event, the custom was for legal business to be heard at the courthouse at the lead mines, not at any particular tavern, even if the site was more suitable to travelers.

UNIQUENESS OF THE RESOLUTIONS

By reading some of the other resolutions or resolves, it became apparent that the document for Fincastle County was unique in several ways. It did not mention the Boston Tea Party, taxes without representation, banning of imports and exports, or the Stamp Act, as some of the others did. They made no suggestions for the future and there was no mention made of independence. They did pay their respects to Governor Dunmore; they did apologize for being late in providing their resolutions, explained by the fact that their leaders were actively engaged in the expedition to Point Pleasant, generally known as Dunmore's War. Others were on the home front, dealing with supplies of lead, flour, flints and corn and the building of forts along the western frontier. Because others in Virginia had filed their resolutions in 1774, Fincastle certainly was not the first to declare anything, their meeting being dated January 20, 1775.

At the Fincastle meeting, following the choice of the 15-man committee as stated in the resolutions, there was no mention of the men "withdrawing" to work on a draft of their proposal as referred to in the Fort Gower documents. *If* they in fact did withdraw to work on the draft of the document, it is not mentioned. *If* they did not withdraw, then they were fully prepared to present their resolutions at the meeting, which were "unanimously agreed to" by the "people of the county."

Two additional major reasons indicate the uniqueness of the Fincastle Resolutions: First, by actual count there were eight references to liberty or liberties, and second, they mentioned religion or religious rights three times. In doing so, they referenced crossing the "Atlantick," leaving their native land "where rights and liberties were denied," the Protestant religion and their situation in western Virginia where they or their ancestors had dealt with the "uncultivated wilderness," many "nations of savages," and where they were surrounded by mountains. Only Augusta County had similar geographic difficulties.

Historically and legally at this time in Virginia, there was no freedom of religion and numerous non-members of the Church of England were punished for their beliefs. However there was an exception, and that was for the early settlers who chose land west of the Blue Ridge. It was settled by

Protestants who preferred Presbyterianism, many of them "of the persuasion with the Church of Scotland" who had settled in Northern Ireland. In the 1730s, Governor William Gooch of Virginia promised religious leaders of the Pennsylvania Synod that "no interruption shall be given to any minister of your profession." This marked the beginning of religious freedom for the settlers west of the mountains. Although each county was required to have a vestry representing the Church of England, when the vestry was elected in 1746 in Augusta County, a curious result ensued. The vestry was led by James Patton of Northern Ireland who was joined by eleven others of a similar persuasion. Possibly only one was a member of the Church of England. Patton later saw to it that his nephew, William Preston, was secretary to the vestry.

The gentlemen of Fincastle made it clear in their resolutions that unless measures were taken so they could enjoy "free exercise of religion as Protestants and our liberties" and if the "enemies attempt to dragoon us they would never surrender except at expense of our lives."

The suggestion that they would live or die for liberty was a common theme. For example, Pittsylvania County suggested that all inhabitants would defend liberties and properties at the risk of their lives. In Augusta County they believed liberty was a "gift of Heaven," and suggested that they would join others to "secure and perpetuate ancient, just and legal rights" of the colony. In Botetourt County their words were more practical, offering to give their "gun, tomahawks and lives" for the preservation of liberty. The Fort Gower Resolves suggested that their love of liberty outweighed every consideration "at the expense of life and everything dear and valuable." In Westmoreland County, as early as 1766, the committee suggested that if any attempt should be made on liberty or property they would at the "utmost risk of our Lives and Fortunes" work to restore liberty and protect the citizens in the enjoyment of property. The Fincastle Resolutions may have said it best as they concluded that if an attempt was made to "reduce us to a state of slavery," they declared "that we are deliberately and resolutely determined never to surrender their privileges, but at the expense of our lives." They then added that in "these unpolished sentiments of liberty and loyalty, and in them we are resolved to live or die."

It has been suggested that orator Patrick Henry might have picked up on these words of "liberty or death," from his connection to the men of the committee of Fincastle County. Three of his sisters were married to three of the men on the committee, William Campbell, William Christian and Thomas Madison. Following Campbell's death the widow married another member, William Russell. Not only did these men have family connections but William Christian's sister was the wife of member Stephen Trigg. However, there is no record of this connection being influential, and in fact the words spoken by Henry were never committed to paper and the wording of the speech was invented more than 30 years after March 23, 1775. It was added to a book by William Wirt based on St. George Tucker's recollections, not recorded notes. We will never know exactly what Henry said unless we want to believe that memories 30 years after the fact were accurate. It appears that liberty or death was an alternative mentioned by several committees in different parts of the colony and as far back as 1766 when Westmoreland County expressed similar beliefs.

In this article the consideration of legal questions and the uniqueness of the Fincastle Resolutions bring attention to some unusual points rarely mentioned elsewhere in the discussion of life and liberty on the frontier of Virginia in 1775.

FOOTNOTES

1. Jim Glanville, "The Fincastle Resolutions," "The Smithfield Review," vol. xiv, 2010. Glanville lists several publications in Endnotes 1 and 2, p.108.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 103, 104; Richard Barksdale Harwell, "The Committees of Safety of Westmoreland and Fincastle." Richmond: The Virginia State Library, pp. 27, 37 and others.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
4. For a list of these men and their general locations at this time, see Glanville, "Resolutions," pp. 92-94.
5. Lewis Preston Summers, "Annals of Southwest Virginia, 1769-1800." Abingdon: privately published, 1929, pp. 588-651 records in the 63 printed pages, those present and the business conducted.
6. Goldthwaites and Louise Phelps Kellogg, eds., "Documentary History of Dunmore's War." Madison, Wisconsin: Wisconsin Historical Society, 1905, pp. 342-344.
7. Summers, *Annals*, p. 635; 635-651.
8. Glanville, "Fincastle Resolutions," 103, 104; "Fairfax Resolutions," Historical Society of Fairfax County, Virginia, Inc., Vol. 11 (1971), pp. 13-19; the on-line resources refer to them as "Fairfax Resolves," see among others, http://www.constitution.org/bcp/fairfax_res.htm, accessed July 21, 2013.
9. Summers, *Annals*, p. 596.
10. Glanville, "Fincastle Resolutions," p. 95. Glanville misquoted Johnson giving page 121 of her book as his reference. This page reveals a discussion of the location of the courthouse being unsuitable and not centrally located. See page 160 where she stated that they met "in their log court house at the Lead Mines on New River."
11. The records noted in Summers, *Annals*, mentioned Feb. 7, March 7, May 2, June 6, August 1, and November 7. In 1776 there were two meetings, one on April 2, and the other on September 3, both designated as being held at the Courthouse. See pages 635, 639, 641, 641, 643, 645, 647.
12. Harwell, *The Committees*, pp. 64-95.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 64-68.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 68-74.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 75- 95.
16. These two words are synonymous and some of the contemporary documents use one word, some the other. The meaning is the same.
17. Glanville, "Fincastle Resolutions," lists the Virginia counties with the dates of their meetings. See Lists 1 and 2, pp.74-75, 77.
18. *Ibid.* p. 107.
19. The resolutions are available in several published sources including Glanville, "Fincastle Resolutions," pages 101-103; Summers, *Annals*, pp. 673-675; Richard Barksdale Harwell, "The Committees of Safety of Westmoreland and Fincastle," pp.61-64.
20. Glanville, "Fincastle Resolutions," pp. 104-105; 102.
21. Howard McKnight Wilson, "The Tinkling Spring Headwater of Freedom." Fishersville, Virginia: The Tinkling Spring and Hermitage Presbyterian Churches, 1954, pp. 43-45.
22. Wilson, *Tinkling Spring*, pp. 114-115; Patricia Givens Johnson, "James Patton and the Appalachian Colonists." Verona, Virginia: McClure Printing Company, 1973, pp. 31-33. Johnson claims only four of the twelve vestrymen were Church of England men and the rest were Presbyterians.
23. Glanville, "Fincastle Resolutions," pp. 103, 105, 106, 107-108; Harwell, *Committees*, pp. 100-101.
24. Ray Raphael, "Founding Myths." New York: The New Press, 2004, pp. 147-150.

Proposed extension of the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail

by Peggy W. Crosson

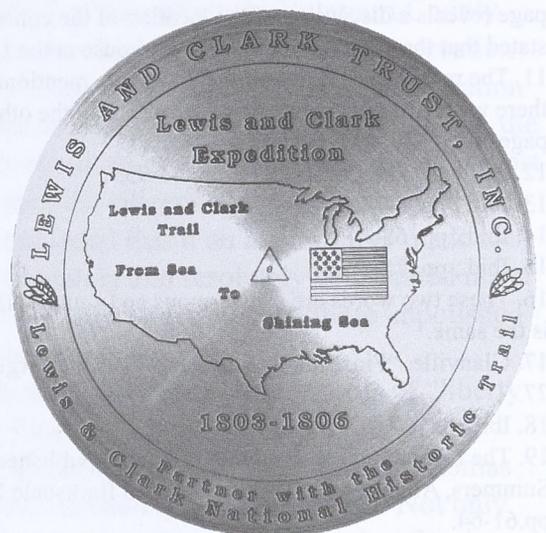
A study is underway for a proposed eastward expansion in Virginia of the famous Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail, generally following U.S. Rt. 11 from Cumberland Gap through southwest and central Virginia to Augusta County. This is one of 23 proposed major trail segments being studied by the National Park Service.

The economic impact and popularity of tourism led Congress to direct a National Historic Landmarks theme study revision be conducted to identify, evaluate and make recommendations about eastern legacy historic sites and other resources in the east that were connected to Meriwether Lewis and William Clark before and after their expedition. After Congress approved funding for the study, a workshop was held at Natural Bridge in 2012 to solicit comment on preliminary study corridors for verification of a historic route, to review the overall study area, to learn about criteria for trails and to explore possible route options.

Since that public workshop, a Lewis & Clark Eastern Legacy Trail commemorative disk from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) was installed on the grounds of the Botetourt County courthouse, signifying the county as a Lewis & Clark community. This was the first Eastern Legacy Trail disk installed in the state. A Lewis & Clark commemorative disk honoring the expedition was placed at Monticello earlier.

Representatives of Botetourt, Rockbridge, Augusta and Albemarle counties are participating in a Lewis & Clark regional committee operating under the Mountain Valley Preservation Alliance Inc., a new regional organization. The committee has generated a series of Eastern Legacy Trail projects to keep the initiative alive and in the forefront of the public.

Examples of these projects are incorporating eastern legacy trail history in middle school Standards of Learning (SOL) in Botetourt County middle schools, installing a legacy trail disk on the grounds of the old Rockbridge County courthouse in Lexington, planning in Augusta County to explore a partnership with the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) to document the Lewis & Clark Scots-Irish heritage in the Shenandoah Valley, and providing support and assistance to Albemarle County in efforts to open a Lewis & Clark Exploratory Center.



This disk, placed at the Botetourt County courthouse, was installed under the National Geodetic Survey of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to mark a particular occasion.

Peggy W. Crosson is chair of the Lewis & Clark Legacy Trail Project and Regional Committee of Mountain Valley Preservation Alliance Inc.

The regional committee has been invited by the National Park Service to participate in the initial scoping review of the proposed Lewis & Clark Eastern Legacy Trail Special Resource Study, a first step in the process to finalize the study for submittal to Congress by the end of this year, subject to change.

Organization of a major national historic trail route by smaller trail segments is important for both historical and management reasons if and when the proposed Lewis & Clark trail extension is approved. The 23 major trail segments have sub-segments. One includes Botetourt, Rockbridge, Augusta and Albemarle counties. Trail routes in these sub-segments may deviate. Other major segments in the state cover historic travel corridors between Charlottesville, Richmond, Washington, D.C., and portions of Northern Virginia, including Winchester.

TRAIL STUDY INFLUENCED BY EXPLORERS' DOCUMENTS

The four-county arrangement for study was influenced in large part by documentation that both explorers were connected to and traveled frequently through these counties before and after the expedition. In his William Clark Memorandum Book 1809, Clark details his travels from St. Louis to Washington, D.C., via Kentucky and Virginia, a trip that occurred after the sudden and sad death of Meriwether Lewis. Stopovers in southwest Virginia included "Tazewell C.H. ... Clinch Mountain ... North Fork of Holston ... Abbingdon ... Wyth ... Christiansburg and Fotheringay, and New Salem where he stayed with 'Mr. Lewis,' and noted ... 'very cold, stayed all night, his children have hopping cough.'"

Clark then traveled to Fincastle (Botetourt) to the home of his new wife's father, Col. George Hancock, a trip which he described as "21 miles, set out after early breakfast, very cold, began to snow, arrived at Col. Hancock's at dark, great joy." He continued through Rockbridge County, staying at McConkey's Tavern, Shields Tavern and the home of Col. and Mrs. McDowell, then on to Greenville in Augusta County and to Albemarle County, stopping by the Mark's residence in Ivy, home of Meriwether Lewis' mother. His next stop was at Monticello, home of Thomas Jefferson, where he noted, "saw Mr. Jefferson. Invited to stay at his house all night. Spoke of Gov. Lewis."

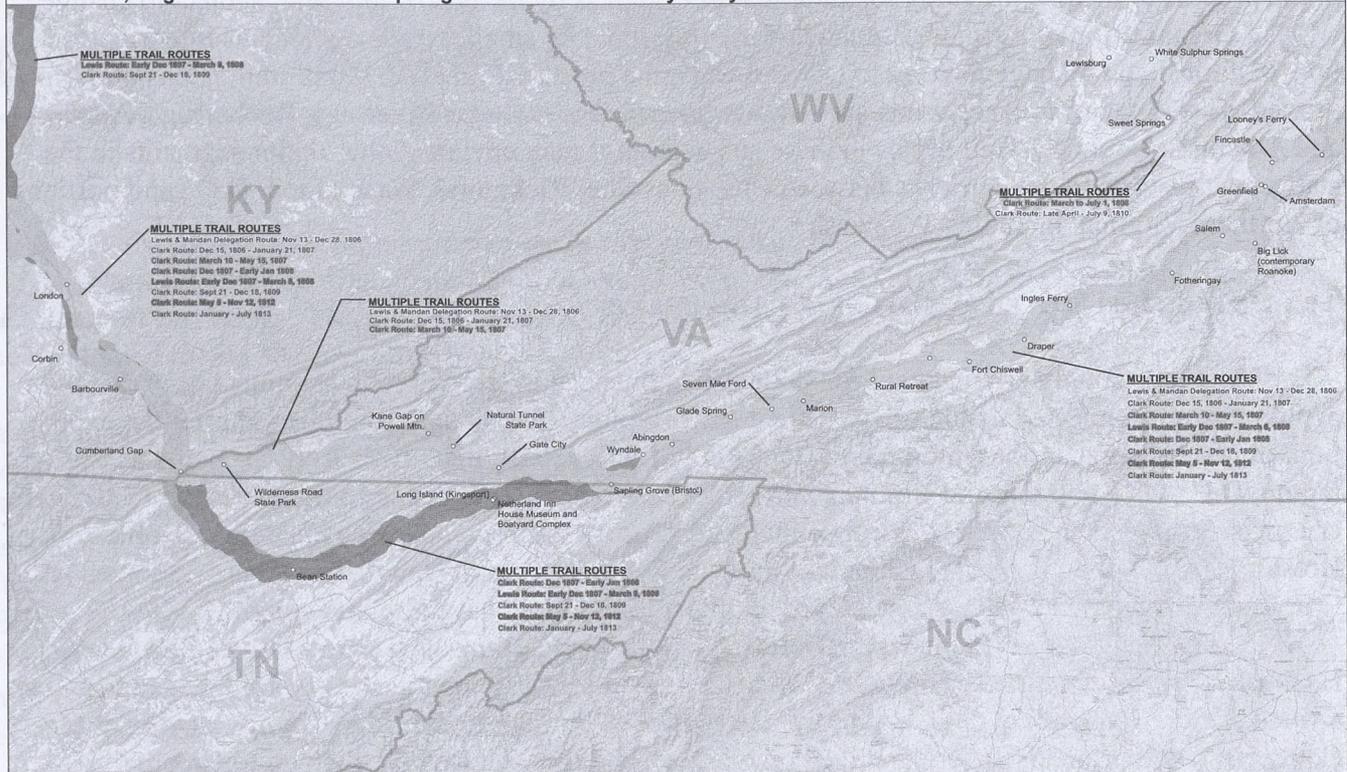
While Clark's well-documented travel journal does not always specifically pinpoint the exact route he used when leaving Botetourt County for his trip to Rockbridge, Augusta and Albemarle, his very detailed notes along his travel route provide specific information in a "historic connect-the-dots" manner that significantly narrows the range of exact paths to one or two routes for that time period. The fact is, there were multiple routes the explorers could have taken that depended on a variety of factors at the time, such as their departure location, planned personal and business-related stops, final destination, time of the year and weather. To single out one route to be designated an extended or continuation of the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail is a tedious process, requiring much research and yielding results that meet the criteria established by the National Trails System Act.

THE BOTETOURT CONNECTION: THEN AND NOW

The history of both Lewis and Clark in Botetourt County involves a variety of personal connections in addition to Clark's marriage to Judith Hancock in 1808. In 1798, Lewis and Clark both served in the Army with William Preston Jr. (Billy) of the historic Botetourt home "Greenfield," and subsequently became friends. In fact, Billy pledged the required \$150 security bond for the Clark/Hancock marriage license. Upon their return from the Expedition, the citizens of Botetourt County gave the men a welcome address with Clark giving the citizens his own address in response.

Other examples include Lewis' visits and fascination with Letitia Breckinridge of Fincastle, the Clarks' frequent visits to Fincastle after their marriage, Clark's second marriage after Judith's death at age 28 to another Fincastle female, Harriet Kennerly, first cousin of Judith, and the visit of Nicolas

4. Roanoke, Virginia to Cumberland Gap Regional View: Preliminary Study Corridors



A corridor roughly following Interstate 81 and Route 11, then bearing west in the vicinity of Route 58, comprises much of the potential Lewis and Clark heritage trail in southwest Virginia.

Biddle of Philadelphia to Fincastle to help Clark write the Expedition journals.

The visits of both explorers to, from and through Botetourt County have identified a corridor that includes both Rt. 630 and Springwood Road as a possible extension of the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail. A second possible corridor extends from Fincastle to the Kanawha River following the historic Kanawha Trail (U.S. Rt. 60 today) through Virginia and West Virginia to the Ohio River. As a result, this study and possible outcome has inspired a strong community interest in the proposed eastern extension trail project.

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail became a reality in 1978 when Congress passed the National Parks & Recreation Act that amended the National Trails System Act of 1968. Since then, thousands of visitors worldwide have traveled the trail wholly or partially to try and relive the experiences of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark and the Corps of Discovery.

The existing trail begins in Wood River, Illinois, and extends west for approximately 3,700 miles to the Pacific Ocean in Oregon. It commemorates the determination and courage of the diversified group of about 30 men who spent almost three years between 1804 and 1806 exploring and studying the vast, unsettled Louisiana Territory the United States purchased from France.

The popularity of the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail has boosted tourism and yielded a positive economic impact on many American communities along the westward trail. Studies show that

Americans alone spend approximately \$525 billion in travel a year, and that between 2005 and 2011, outdoor recreation has consistently grown annually by 5 percent. It is not surprising then that in 2004, Congress directed that a National Historic Landmarks “theme study revision” be conducted to identify, evaluate, and make recommendations about Eastern Legacy historic sites and other resources that were connected to Lewis and/or Clark both before and after the Expedition in the Eastern United States.

However, generating new tourism dollars in the east was not the only reason for the growing interest in continuing the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail. About 10 years prior, author Stephen Ambrose published “Undaunted Courage,” focusing on the Expedition’s leader, Meriwether Lewis, and giving attention to his eastern heritage, as well as to the personal lives and connections of both explorers to Virginia and to other eastern states. Since then, the book continues to be popular. “Undaunted Courage” and other subsequent like publications galvanized the need for better understanding the whole framework around the two explorers’ lives, not just the Expedition itself, but their experiences and relationships before and after as well. In 2008, The National Park Service was directed by Congress to conduct a “Special Resource Study” to assess the suitability and feasibility of adding Eastern Legacy sites and possible route segments to the existing Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail.

CRITERIA FOR NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL DESIGNATION

As outlined in the National Trails System Act, a trail must meet the following three requirements to qualify as a national historic trail. (A) It must be a trail or route established by historic use and must be historically significant as a result of that use ... A designated trail should generally accurately follow the historic route, but may deviate somewhat on occasion of necessity to avoid difficult routing through subsequent development, or to provide some route variations offering a more pleasurable recreational experience. Such deviations shall be noted on site. (B) It must be of national significance with respect to any of several broad facets of American history, such as trade and commerce, exploration, migration and settlement, or military campaigns. To qualify as nationally significant, historic use of the trail must have had a far reaching effect on broad patterns of American culture. Trails significant in the history of Native Americans may be included. (C) It must have significant potential for public recreational use or historical interest based on historic interpretation and appreciation. The potential for such use is generally greater along roadless segments developed as historic trails and at historic sites associated with the trail. The presence of recreation potential not related to historic appreciation is not sufficient justification for designation under this category.

SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY IMPLEMENTATION

The National Trails System Act places local communities in the driver’s seat with regard to planning, developing, maintaining, and managing national trails throughout the nation. The Special Resource Study being conducted by the National Park Service therefore encourages a partnership arrangement with local communities interested in exploring the possibility of participating in a Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail experience. It will assess the feasibility of such a potential trail extension based on the potential viability of likely partners and will engage the public and stakeholders for input regarding potential historic sites and route segments.

Funding for the Special Resource Study was appropriated in 2009-2010, and soon after, the National Park Service began holding a series of public workshops. On March 3 and 4, 2012, the Virginia Public Workshop was held at Natural Bridge.



Informational panels about Gainsboro are now installed in the sculpture plaza on Wells Avenue.

'A once-vibrant community' New panels tell of Gainsboro history

by Alison Blanton and Evie Slone

In February, in celebration of Black History Month, the Gainsborough Southwest Community Organization unveiled seven interpretive panels describing the history of Gainsboro and Northeast and Northwest Roanoke at a dedication event at the Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center. The panels, whose text is presented here, were installed in the Wells Avenue Plaza across from the Hotel.

In conjunction with the dedication of the Historic Gainsborough Walk Interpretive Panels, the neighborhood organization hosted a reception and a panel of guest speakers discussing the Tuskegee Airmen from Roanoke and others from the Valley who influenced the advancement of civil rights locally and nationally.

Evie Slone and Alison Blanton of Hill Studio in Roanoke, also with the Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation, along with Patrick Hughes, Hill Studio, retired teacher Charlene Graves and Margaret and Alice Roberts from the Gainsborough Southwest Community Organization, and former History Museum of Western Virginia director Kent Chrisman provided research for the Gainsboro information panels.

FROM FRONTIER TO URBAN COMMUNITY... A GAINSBORO PRELUDE

Gainesborough to Big Lick to Roanoke

The early settlement of Roanoke started along the Big Lick, a large salt marsh that attracted animals and hunters to the Roanoke Valley. The earliest roads through the valley followed Native American and buffalo trails. Later, Scots-Irish and German settlers traveled from the north along the Great Wagon Road, which connected to the Carolina Road to the south at Big Lick, and continued west toward the Wilderness Road in far Southwest Virginia. Early settlement near the intersection of present-day Williamson Road and Orange Avenue included a mill, tavern, store and post office. By 1835, the Town of Gainesborough was formally chartered on 68 acres and named after Major Kemp Gaines, who had helped develop the community. With the coming of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad to the valley in 1852, a depot was built about a half mile south of the Town of Gainesborough, near the current Shenandoah Avenue and Second



Megawick, a Gainesborough streetcar, is shown in the foreground with the present-day intersection of Orange Avenue and Williamson Road.

Street. The railroad named the new community Big Lick after the nearby postal station, and Gainesborough became known as Old Lick. The name Gainesborough remained in tax records, eventually shortened to Gainsborough and, later, Gainsboro in the 1970s. The Big Lick depot and tracks were destroyed in the Civil War, but the community rebuilt and prospered in the following years. In 1874, the new town of Big Lick was chartered along the railroad tracks, a one-square-mile town which incorporated the original town of Gainesborough to the north. While the area surrounding the depot developed with businesses and factories, Old Lick/Gainesborough grew with an influx of newly-freed blacks seeking job opportunities with the railroad. The Shenandoah Valley Railroad line arrived in 1881, and Big Lick was incorporated as Roanoke the following year, home of the new Norfolk & Western Railway headquarters.

An influx of newly-freed blacks seeking job opportunities with the railroad. The Shenandoah Valley Railroad line arrived in 1881, and Big Lick was incorporated as Roanoke the following year, home of the new Norfolk & Western Railway headquarters.

Mixed Neighborhood to African-American Community

As Roanoke grew, its neighborhoods were referenced by quadrants, with Jefferson Street being the central divide between "Northeast" and "Northwest." At the turn of the century, the area was racially, socially and economically mixed. By the 1920s, the area was a self-sufficient, prominent African-American neighborhood with many black professionals and businesses located in commercial hubs on Gainsboro Road, Henry Street, and the first block of Gilmer Avenue. Surrounded by residential development, churches, and civic establishments that extended both to the west and the east, the neighborhood was prosperous and active in social, cultural and educational crusades of the times. Many black leaders – lawyers, doctors, teachers, diplomats – made indelible marks on civil rights and the lives of African-Americans, both in Roanoke and in the nation.



In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, dead-end streets prevented blacks (and other minorities) from living in Roanoke's new subdivisions. Henry is seen in the older neighborhoods, like the original portions of Big Lick, where black residents settled and established their businesses. The restriction above is from a 1923 deed in Roanoke's historic neighborhood.

times. Many black leaders – lawyers, doctors, teachers, diplomats – made indelible marks on civil rights and the lives of African-Americans, both in Roanoke and in the nation.

Impacts of Urban Redevelopment

At the end of the 1950s, there were two significant blows to the local economy: the closure of the American Viscose Plant and layoffs from the Norfolk & Western Railway. These two operations had been the top employers of residents of Northeast and Northwest. With the neighborhood declining and urban renewal funds as a potential solution, the area was targeted for redevelopment starting in the 1950s. What followed would disrupt the fabric of the community and further displace many of its residents and businesses. Large portions of Northeast were cleared and the landscape flattened to make way for the new interstate corridor, a civic center, and large industrial parks. By the 1990s, 1,600 homes, more than

200 businesses, and 24 churches had been removed. Street realignments altered the shape of the neighborhood, including the realignment of 2nd Street, Wells Avenue and Gainsboro Road.

The once-vibrant African-American commercial core on Henry Street and Gainsboro Road was gone, and much of the residential neighborhood was replaced with large tracts of land offered for new development. Ironically, the end of segregation helped hasten the loss of many long-established black institutions. With access no longer restricted, many African-Americans chose to live and do business in other areas. Today, neighborhood organizations work to preserve the heritage of Gainesborough and tell the story of this vibrant area. Gainsboro and Henry Street are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register to honor of the significant cultural and architectural heritage of the neighborhood.



The destruction of much of Northeast and Northwest during urban renewal replaced the core of black commercial and residential life. The streetcar, including Henry Street, was abandoned.

FROM FRONTIER TO URBAN COMMUNITY... A GAINSBORO PRELUDE

Gainesborough to Big Lick to Roanoke

The early settlement of Roanoke started along the Big Lick, a large salt marsh that attracted animals and hunters to the Roanoke Valley. The earliest roads through the valley followed Native American and buffalo trails. Later, Scots-Irish and German settlers traveled from the north along the Great Wagon Road, which connected to the Carolina Road to the south at Big Lick, and continued west toward the Wilderness Road in far Southwest Virginia. Early settlement near the intersection of present-day Williamson Road and Orange Avenue included a mill, tavern, store and post office. By 1835, the Town of Gainesborough was formally chartered on 68 acres and named after Major Kemp Gaines, who had helped develop the community.

With the coming of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad to the valley in 1852, a depot was built about a half mile south of the Town of Gainesborough, near the current Shenandoah Avenue and Second Street. The railroad named the new community Big Lick after the nearby postal station, and Gainesborough became known as Old Lick. The name Gainesborough remained in tax records, eventually shortened to Gainsborough and, later, Gainsboro in the 1970s.

The Big Lick depot and tracks were destroyed in the Civil War, but the community rebuilt and prospered in the following years. In 1874, the new town of Big Lick was chartered along the railroad tracks, a one-square-mile town which incorporated the original town of Gainesborough to the north. While the area surrounding the depot developed with businesses and factories, Old Lick/Gainesborough grew with an influx of newly-freed blacks seeking job opportunities with the railroad. The Shenandoah Valley Railroad line arrived in 1881, and Big Lick was incorporated as Roanoke the following year, home of the new Norfolk & Western Railway headquarters.

Mixed Neighborhood to African-American Community

As Roanoke grew, its neighborhoods were referenced by quadrants, with Jefferson Street being the central divide between "Northeast" and "Northwest." At the turn of the century, the area was racially, socially and economically mixed. By the 1920s, the area was a self-sufficient, prominent African-American neighborhood with many black professionals and businesses located in commercial hubs on Gainsboro Road, Henry Street, and the first block of Gilmer Avenue. Surrounded by residential development, churches, and civic establishments that extended both to the west and the east, the neighborhood was prosperous and active in social, cultural and educational crusades of the times. Many black leaders – lawyers, doctors, teachers, diplomats – made indelible marks on civil rights and the lives of African-Americans, both in Roanoke and in the nation.

Impacts of Urban Redevelopment

At the end of the 1950s, there were two significant blows to the local economy: the closure of the American Viscose Plant and layoffs from the Norfolk & Western Railway. These two operations had been the top employers

continued on next page

Prelude, continued

of residents of Northeast and Northwest. With the neighborhood declining and urban renewal funds as a potential solution, the area was targeted for redevelopment starting in the 1950s. What followed would disrupt the fabric of the community and further displace many of its residents and businesses. Large portions of Northeast were cleared and the landscape flattened to make way for the new interstate corridor, a civic center, and large industrial parks. By the 1990s, 1,600 homes, more than 200 businesses, and 24 churches had been removed. Street realignments altered the shape of the neighborhood, including the realignment of 2nd Street, Wells Avenue and Gainsboro Road.

The once-vibrant African-American commercial core on Henry Street and Gainsboro Road was gone, and much of the residential neighborhood was replaced with large tracts of land offered for new development. Ironically, the end of segregation helped hasten the loss of many long-established black institutions. With access no longer restricted, many African-Americans chose to live and do business in other areas.

Today, neighborhood organizations work to preserve the heritage of Gainesborough and tell the story of this vibrant area. Gainsboro and Henry Street are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register to honor of the significant cultural and architectural heritage of the neighborhood.

A ONCE-VIBRANT AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Older than the new City of Roanoke developing to its south, Gainesborough ("Old Lick") was growing as a racially-diverse neighborhood that was the center of the African-American community by the 1890s. Businesses serving the community were located on Gainsboro Road, from Gilmer Avenue north to Rutherford Avenue, and along First Street (later Henry Street) north of the railroad tracks. Doctors, lawyers, ministers, educators, industrial laborers (mostly at the railroad), domestic workers, and self-employed residents lived together as a cohesive community where residents looked after one another.



By the early 1920s, the neighborhood became a self-sustaining African-American community. Strong churches, schools, social institutions, and professional and commercial services developed to serve the growing black population, otherwise denied services in the segregated South. Consequently, skilled black leaders emerged to become locally and nationally influential in social, civic and business affairs.

From the early 1900s through the 1960s, there was a vibrant business district and various social activities for the black community on Henry Street and Gainsboro Road. The area bustled with restaurants, hotels, and a theater; insurance companies, law offices, financial institutions, and medical offices/pharmacies; barbershops, undertakers, tailors, dry cleaners, and a shoemaker; as well as many other businesses. The weekly *Roanoke Tribune* was first published in 1939 from Gilmer Avenue. Ten black-owned grocery stores operated throughout the neighborhood, but there were also white-owned grocery stores, including one now restored at the corner of Gilmer Avenue and Jefferson Street.

MILESTONES IN EDUCATION

The first known school in the area for African-Americans was the 1872 Old Lick Colored School, located in a modest log building on Diamond Hill, where the Civic Center now stands. Other schools for blacks included the Gainsboro School (at Gainsboro Road and Rutherford Avenue) and the Gregory School operating in Northeast through the early 20th century. In 1916, the Roanoke School Board authorized the construction of the Harrison School, which opened the following year on Harrison Avenue. It was the first school in Southwest Virginia to offer a secondary education for blacks.

MILESTONES IN EDUCATION

The Gainsboro Library

The first known school in the area for African-Americans was the 1872 Old Lick Colored School, located in a modest log building on Diamond Hill, where the Civic Center now stands. Other schools for blacks included the Gainsboro School (at Gainsboro Road and Rutherford Avenue) and the Gregory School operating in Northeast through the early 20th century. In 1916, the Roanoke School Board authorized the construction of the Harrison School, which opened the following year on Harrison Avenue. It was the first school in Southwest Virginia to offer a secondary education for blacks.

Following a petition from black leaders, the Gainsboro branch of the Roanoke library system opened in 1921 in the Odd Fellows Building on Gainsboro Road; it was one of only four black libraries in the South at the time. Twenty years later, a new library facility opened on Patton Avenue, on land acquired from St. Andrew's Catholic Church. This historic library still serves the community and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register.

Lucy Addison came to Roanoke from Northern Virginia in 1887 and taught in Roanoke City Schools for forty years. She was the first principal of the Harrison School, which grew to become the largest black school in Virginia. Addison served on the Library Committee and was instrumental in convincing the Roanoke Library Board to open a library branch on Gainsboro Road. She was vice president of the Burrell Memorial Hospital Association and the Sunday School superintendent of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church. In 1928, a new high school for blacks was built and named in honor of Addison; the building still stands northwest of the I-581 and Orange Avenue interchange.




Following a petition from black leaders, the Gainsboro branch of the Roanoke library system opened in 1921 in the Odd Fellows Building on Gainsboro Road; it was one of only four black libraries in the South at the time. Twenty years later, a new library facility opened on Patton Avenue, on land acquired from St. Andrew's Catholic Church. This historic library still serves the community and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register.

Lucy Addison came to Roanoke from Northern Virginia in 1887 and taught in Roanoke City Schools for forty years. She was the first principal of the Harrison School, which grew to become the largest black school in Virginia. Addison served on the Library Committee and was instrumental in convincing the Roanoke Library Board to open a library branch on Gainsboro Road. She was vice president of the Burrell Memorial Hospital Association and the Sunday School superintendent of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church. In 1928, a new high school for blacks was built and named in honor of Addison; the building still stands northwest of the I-581 and Orange Avenue interchange.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHURCHES IN GAINSBORO

In addition to religious activities, the churches in Northeast and Northwest were instrumental in providing community leadership, childhood education, and information on public and social issues. By 1900, there were nine black churches in the area, and many more would follow. Four of the earliest churches are still active in the community.

The Big Lick Colored Baptist Church was established in 1867, developing out of Bible study classes for black residents taught by Dr. Charles Cocke, founder of Hollins College. Later known as the First Baptist Church (Colored), the congregation bought a lot and built a new structure in 1898. The *Roanoke Times* reported that the new building "impresses the visitor as being the handsomest colored church in the city. One of the longest-serving ministers of the church was Reverend A.L. James. Pastor for over thirty years, James

also served on the library committee, the Burrell Memorial Hospital Association board, and was Vice President of the Negro Organization Society of Virginia, a grassroots organization that promoted community self-improvement for African-Americans during the Jim Crow era. He founded, edited and published *The Church News*, the only black newspaper in Southwest Virginia at the time. In 1982, the church built a new sanctuary; the old church was listed on the National Register of Historic Places until it was destroyed by fire in 1995.

St. Paul Methodist Church moved in the early 1880s to a church on the corner of Henry and High Streets, in a building that was once home to Greene Memorial Methodist Church (which had relocated to downtown). After 35 years on Henry Street, the church moved to its current location on Fifth Street, in the former St. James Methodist Episcopal Church. The entire congregation celebrated the move in a

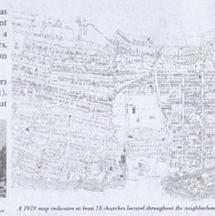
procession from the old church to their new one. Like many church ministers of the day, St. Paul's Reverend D. W. Harth served in many capacities, including as principal of the Gainsboro School and as a practicing attorney.

The original Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church (constructed in 1898) featured a stained-glass window dedicated to Confederate General Stonewall Jackson. The window was designed in 1906 by Reverend Lyburn Downing, the church pastor; it honors Jackson's legacy of teaching Sunday school to blacks, including Downing's parents, in Lexington, Virginia. When the original church burned in the 1950s, the congregation built a new church at the same location (Patton Avenue, which was formerly Fifth Avenue). The window was salvaged from the burned structure and is the centerpiece of the new sanctuary.

Reverend Downing served as the pastor of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church for over forty years, until his death in 1937. He was a probation officer, supervisor of a home for delinquent youths, served on the Library Committee and was a member of various social organizations. For twenty years, he was the only black member of the Roanoke Republican Committee.

Park Street Baptist was established in 1892 by five members who met in a building on Park Street (now Fifth Street). Four years later, the congregation built a new structure at the corner of McDowell and Peach Road, and changed the name of the church to Hill Street Baptist. The church was remodeled and expanded in the mid-1970s, but was later demolished during urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. In 1980, the congregation built a new church in the neighborhood on Madison Avenue, where they continue to worship.





THE INFLUENCE OF CHURCHES IN GAINSBORO

In addition to religious activities, the churches in Northeast and Northwest were instrumental in providing community leadership, childhood education, and information on public and social issues. By 1900, there were nine black churches in the area, and many more would follow. Four of the earliest churches are still active in the community.

The Big Lick Colored Baptist Church was established in 1867, developing out of Bible study classes for black residents taught by Dr. Charles Cocke, founder of Hollins College. Later known as the First Baptist Church (Col-

continued on next page

Churches, continued

ored), the congregation bought a lot and built a new structure in 1898. *The Roanoke Times* reported that the new building "impresses the visitor as being the handsomest colored church in the city." One of the longest-serving ministers of the church was Reverend A.L. James. Pastor for over thirty years, James also served on the library committee, the Burrell Memorial Hospital Association Board, and was Vice President of the Negro Organization Society of Virginia, a grassroots organization that promoted community self-improvement for African-Americans during the Jim Crow era. He founded, edited and published *The Church News*, the only black newspaper in Southwest Virginia at the time. In 1982, the church built a new sanctuary; the old church was listed on the National Register of Historic Places until it was destroyed by fire in 1995.

St. Paul Methodist Church moved in the early 1880s to a church on the corner of Henry and High Streets, in a building that was once home to Greene Memorial Methodist Church (which had relocated to downtown). After 35 years on Henry Street, the church moved to its current location on Fifth Street, in the former St. James Methodist Episcopal Church. The entire congregation celebrated the move



Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church today

in a procession from the old church to their new one. Like many church ministers of the day, St. Paul's Reverend D.W. Harth served in many capacities, including as principal of the Gainsboro School and as a practicing attorney.

The original Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church (constructed in 1898) featured a stained-glass window dedicated to Confederate General Stonewall Jackson. The window was designed in 1906 by Reverend Lylburn Downing, the church pastor; it honors Jackson's legacy of teaching Sunday school to blacks, including Downing's parents, in Lexington, Virginia. When the original church burned in the 1950s, the congregation built a new church at the same

location (Patton Avenue, which was formerly Fifth Avenue). The window was salvaged from the burned structure and is the centerpiece of the new sanctuary. Reverend Downing served as the pastor of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church for over forty years, until his death in 1937. He was a probation officer, supervisor of a home for delinquent youths, served on the Library Committee and was a member of various social organizations. For twenty years, he was the only black member of the Roanoke Republican Committee.

Park Street Baptist was established in 1892 by five members who met in a building on Park Street (now Fifth Street). Four years later, the congregation built a new structure at the corner of McDowell and Peach Road, and changed the name of the church to Hill Street Baptist. The church was remodeled and expanded in the mid-1900s, but was later demolished during urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. In 1980, the congregation built a new church in the neighborhood on Madison Avenue, where they continue to worship.

HEALTH CARE AND MEDICINE

Segregation in the early 20th century kept black doctors and nurses from working in the white hospitals of Roanoke, and black citizens were denied treatment in these facilities. By 1914, a committee of doctors led by Isaac Burrell and including J.B. Claytor Sr., J.S. Cooper, S.F. Williman, L.C. Downing, and J.H. Roberts was working to establish a hospital to serve the region's black residents. Later that year, Dr. Burrell became gravely ill, but was denied medical service in Roanoke's white hospital. Burrell had to travel to Washington, DC, for treatment; he made the trip on a cot in the baggage car of a train, but died following surgery. The remaining group of doctors purchased a building at 311 Henry Street and renovated it to meet hospital standards.

Named in memory of their colleague, Burrell Memorial Hospital opened in 1915, with ten beds and modern equipment in a minor and major operating room. Soon outgrowing the building, Burrell Hospital relocated to the former Allegheny Institute on McDowell Avenue in 1921. A new four-story facility was built in the 1950s; the building remains, but no longer serves as a hospital.

In 1913, the first black dentist in Roanoke, Dr. Edward R. Dudley, located his office on Gilmer Avenue. His talents were not limited to dentistry. He served as a probation officer and helped organize the Magic City Building and Loan Association, the first black savings institution in the area.

In 1907, Dr. John B. Claytor Sr. established his medical practice on Gainsboro Road. He influenced medical care and community life in Roanoke for over forty years. In 1947, he and his family built the Claytor Memorial Clinic in honor of his deceased wife, Roberta, who wanted her husband and sons to practice together. The Clinic was one of the earliest group practices in the city. The building still stands, but was damaged by fire in 1995.



SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

Social organizations and activities unified the community and boosted black leaders' influence.

The Roanoke Chapter of the NAACP was founded in 1916. Other organizations included the Freemasons, the Association of Colored Railway Trainmen and Locomotive Firemen (and its Ladies Auxiliary), Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, the Magic City Medical Society, and the Magic City Literary and Political Club. Women were also active, forming the Magic City Business Club in 1937, and establishing garden clubs dedicated to improving private properties, civic grounds, and public streets. In addition, there were branches of the YMCA and YWCA on Wells Avenue.

Henry Street developed as the entertainment hub from 1900 to 1960. A central gathering place was the Strand Theatre. Built in 1923 as a cinema and small performance venue, it was later the Lincoln Theater, then the Ebony Club. Major black performers of the era, including Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Fats Waller, Ethel Waters, Cab Calloway, Lionel Hampton, Fats Domino, Dizzy Gillespie and the Harlem Globetrotters, gave their shows in the City's bigger segregated venues (such as the Star City Auditorium, Hotel Roanoke, and the American Legion Auditorium), but were excluded from staying in whites-only lodging. This brought them back to Henry Street

continued on next page

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

Social organizations and activities unified the community and boosted black leaders' influence.

The Roanoke Chapter of the NAACP was founded in 1916. Other organizations included the Freemasons, the Association of Colored Railway Trainmen and Locomotive Firemen (and its Ladies Auxiliary), Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, the Magic City Medical Society, and the Magic City Literary and Political Club. Women were also active, forming the Magic City Business Club in 1937, and establishing garden clubs dedicated to improving private properties, civic grounds, and public streets. In addition, there



The black chapter of the Elks of the World, at their lodge on Wells Avenue, circa 1930.

were branches of the YMCA and YWCA on Wells Avenue.

Henry Street developed as the entertainment hub from 1900 to 1960. A central gathering place was the **Strand Theatre**.

Built in 1923 as a cinema and small performance venue, it was later the Lincoln Theater, then the Ebony Club. Major black performers of the era, including Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Fats Waller, Ethel Waters, Cab Calloway, Lionel Hampton, Fats Domino, Dizzy Gillespie and the Harlem Globetrotters, gave their shows in the City's bigger segregated venues (such as the Star City Auditorium, Hotel Roanoke,



The Lincoln Theater in the 1930s

"The Ebony Club had a great deal of entertainment going on during the late 50's and early 60's. During those days there was no air conditioning, just big floor fans to cool the building down. The side doors were also where you could find me and my friends. We had no money to buy a ticket, so we made our way to the side door and watched the show. Sometimes a door man would run us away, but we would always come back. The people inside would be dancing and wiping sweat. You could feel the heat coming through the open door. But no one paid the heat no mind. The music was good, the drinks were great, and the party was live; seemed like they danced all night."
David Ramsey, Sr., recalling his memories of the Ebony Club as a child.
From *The Times and Life on Henry Street*

and the American Legion Auditorium), but were excluded from staying in whites-only lodging. This brought them back to Henry Street hotels. Band members frequently held **jam sessions and parties after hours**, often with residents in attendance.



Duke Ellington at the Dumas Hotel in the 1950s

Oscar Micheaux, one of the nation's first African-American film producers and distributors, established a corporate office and the Congo Film Company in the Strand Theatre in the 1920s. He produced at least six films from this location. His 1921 movie, *The House Behind the Cedars*, featured local actors and scenes in the neighborhood, including a garden party shot in the 400 block of Gilmer Avenue. Unfortunately, no print of the film survives. A marker on Henry Street highlights the Strand Theatre and the work of Oscar Micheaux.

Social, continued

hotels. Band members frequently held jam sessions and parties after hours, often with residents in attendance. Oscar Micheaux, one of the nation's first African-American film producers and distributors, established a corporate office and the Congo Film Company in the Strand Theatre in the 1920s. He produced at least six films from this location. His 1921 movie, "The House Behind the Cedars," featured local actors and scenes in the neighborhood, including a garden party shot in the 400 block of Gilmer Avenue. Unfortunately, no print of the film survives. A marker on Henry Street highlights the Strand Theatre and the work of Oscar Micheaux.

CIVIL RIGHTS TRAILBLAZERS

Some of the most significant contributions made by Northeast and Northwest residents were in the advancement of civil rights.

A.J. Oliver was a 19th century pioneer in law and the first black attorney in Roanoke. Born during the Civil War, he began his legal career in West Virginia as one of the first black attorneys in the state, passing the bar in 1887. After relocating to Roanoke in 1889, he quickly established himself as a community leader, often preaching at St. Paul Methodist Church and joining the Freemasons and Odd Fellows. Oliver spent his life advancing civil rights in Virginia. In 1900, he was a delegate to the Virginia Conference of Colored Men Convention in Charlottesville that met to petition the white men of the state for racial equality and justice, especially in education. Two years later, he led a group of black Roanoke citizens objecting to the school board's use of only white teachers in black schools.

Born in 1901 and raised in Northeast Roanoke, Belford Lawson Jr. was a key national civil rights attorney. As a lawyer in Washington, D.C., he cofounded the New Negro Alliance, which actively challenged discrimination by organizing protests against retail stores to demand employment for black workers. In the 1938 case *New Negro Alliance v. Sanitary Grocery Company*, Lawson became the first African-American to argue and win a case before the U.S. Supreme Court, securing the right of the Alliance to picket. He later served on the defense team in a second Supreme Court case, *Henderson v. Southern Railway Company*, which successfully challenged discriminatory seating policies. In his later life, Lawson served on the NAACP Executive Board and as General President

Trailblazers, continued

of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. He was also the first black man to address the Democratic National Convention in 1956.

Attorney Reuben Lawson was a decisive legal figure in Virginia's civil rights landscape. He argued the case *Ingram v. Virginia* in 1946, which addressed the exclusion of blacks as jurors in state cases. He served as an attorney for the NAACP, arguing several school desegregation cases in Southwest Virginia in the 1950s and 1960s. He built the Lawson Law Building, which remains on Gilmer Avenue.

Oliver White Hill was a civil rights lawyer who grew up in the house at 401 Gilmer Avenue, which still stands. During his legal career he fought the "separate but equal" policies of the segregated South and argued more than 75 segregation cases in the State of Virginia. In the 1940s, his legal accomplishments included successful court cases ordering equal pay for teachers. In 1954, he served as the trial lawyer for *Davis v. Prince Edward County School Board*, one of five U.S. Supreme Court cases included in *Brown v. Board of Education*, ending segregation in public schools. He also represented Rufus Edwards, a Gilmer neighbor, in a Supreme Court case that required white union officials to represent black union members as part of their bargaining unit. He was active in civil rights as an attorney until his death at 100 years of age.

CIVIL RIGHTS TRAILBLAZERS

Some of the most significant contributions made by Northeast and Northwest residents were in the advancement of civil rights.

A.I. Oliver was a 19th century pioneer in law and the first black attorney in Roanoke. Born during the Civil War, he began his legal career in West Virginia as one of the first black attorneys in the state, passing the bar in 1887. After relocating to Roanoke in 1889, he quickly established himself as a community leader, often preaching at St. Paul Methodist Church and joining the Freemasons and Odd Fellows. Oliver spent his life advancing civil rights in Virginia. In 1900, he was a delegate to the Virginia Conference of Colored Men Convention in Charlottesville that met to petition the white men of the state for racial equality and justice, especially in education. Two years later, he led a group of black Roanoke citizens objecting to the school board's use of only white teachers in black schools.

Born in 1901 and raised in Northeast Roanoke,

Belmont Lawson, Jr. was a key national civil rights attorney. As a lawyer in Washington, D.C., he cofounded the New Negro Alliance, which actively challenged discrimination by organizing protests against small stores to demand employment for black workers. In the 1938 case *New Negro Alliance v. Sanitary Grocery Company*, Lawson became the first African-American to argue and win a case before the U.S. Supreme Court, securing the right of the Alliance to picket. He later served on the defense team in a second Supreme Court case, *Henderson v. Southern Railway Company*, which successfully challenged discriminatory seating policies. In his later life, Lawson served on the NAACP Executive Board and as a General President of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. He was also the first black man to address the Democratic National Convention in 1956.

Attorney Reuben Lawson was a decisive legal figure in Virginia's civil

rights landscape. He argued the case *Ingram v. Virginia* in 1946, which addressed the exclusion of blacks as jurors in state cases. He served as an attorney for the NAACP, arguing several school desegregation cases in Southwest Virginia in the 1950s and 1960s. He built the Lawson Law Building, which remains on Gilmer Avenue.

Oliver White Hill was a civil rights lawyer who grew up in the house at 401 Gilmer Avenue, which still stands. During his legal career he fought the "separate but equal" policies of the segregated South and argued more than 75 segregation cases in the State of Virginia. In the 1940s, his legal accomplishments included successful court cases ordering equal pay for teachers. In 1954, he served as the trial lawyer for *Davis v. Prince Edward County School Board*, one of five U.S. Supreme Court cases included in *Brown v. Board of Education*, ending segregation in public schools. He also represented Rufus Edwards, a Gilmer neighbor, in a Supreme Court case that required white union

officials to represent black union members as part of their bargaining unit. He was active in civil rights as an attorney until his death at 100 years of age.

Edward R. Dudley was the son of Roanoke's first black dentist and grew up at 405 Gilmer Avenue. After achieving his law degree in 1941, he served as assistant Attorney General in New York. In 1943, he joined the legal staff of the NAACP fighting for blacks to be admitted to Southern universities, equal pay for black teachers, and an end to discrimination in public transportation. In 1948, President Truman appointed him as America's first black ambassador, to the country of Liberia. Later, he was a justice on the Domestic Relations Court for New York City, president of the Manhattan Borough, and a member of the New York City Council, before becoming a justice on the New York State Supreme Court.

The neighborhood also produced four pilots of the "Tuskegee Airmen," a distinguished group of black airmen during World War II. Before the 1940s, black service members were banned from skilled training and service as pilots. Civil rights groups and the black press pushed for changes, leading to the War Department training a select group of nearly 1,000 black men at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama. The men joined four all-black squadrons, becoming the first African-Americans to fly combat aircraft. During the War, the Tuskegee Airmen, also known as the "Red Tails," achieved one of the lowest loss records in escorting bombers and won more than 850 medals. LeRoi Williams, his brother Eugene Williams, Ralph Claytor and Theodore Wilson were pilots with the Tuskegee Airmen, proving themselves to be as skilled and brave as their white counterparts. Though the Airmen proved their worth as military pilots, they were still forced to operate in segregated units and did not fight alongside their white countrymen.







Edward R. Dudley was the son of Roanoke's first black dentist and grew up at 405 Gilmer Avenue. After achieving his law degree in 1941, he served as assistant Attorney General in New York. In 1943, he joined the legal staff of the NAACP fighting for blacks to be admitted to Southern universities, equal pay for black teachers, and an end to discrimination in public transportation. In 1948, President Truman appointed him as America's first black ambassador, to the country of Liberia. Later, he was a justice on the Domestic Relations Court for New York City, president of the Manhattan Borough, and a member of the New York City Council, before becoming a justice on the New York State Supreme Court.

The neighborhood also produced four pilots of the "Tuskegee Airmen," a distinguished group of black airmen during World War II. Before the 1940s, black service members were banned from skilled training and service as pilots. Civil rights groups and the black press pushed for changes, leading to the War Department training a select group of nearly 1,000 black men at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama. The men joined four all-black squadrons, becoming the first African-Americans to fly combat aircraft. During the War, the Tuskegee Airmen, also known as the "Red Tails," achieved one of the lowest loss records in escorting bombers and won more than 850 medals. LeRoi Williams, his brother Eugene Williams, Ralph Claytor and Theodore Wilson were pilots with the Tuskegee Airmen, proving themselves to be as skilled and brave as their white counterparts. Though the Airmen proved their worth as military pilots, they were still forced to operate in segregated units and did not fight alongside their white countrymen.

Help us preserve our history

Dear Friends of History,

Here is another cornucopia of local and regional history in the form of Volume 21, No. 1, of our annual Society Journal. Here you read about men and women and the events in their lives through more than two centuries in western Virginia.

You read recollections of early times on Roanoke's city market, the work and play of a Catawba Valley farm family during Depression years, trends in architectural history, the interesting railroad career of Al Holland, the location of the 1775 Fincastle Resolutions, the passion of Lyman Draper for collecting early, valuable manuscripts, a Salem maker of modernist furniture, a sad shooting on Bent Mountain, and a new program to mark the Virginia travels of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark.

These diverse articles are placed on your reading desk by the Historical Society, as well as providing fascinating exhibits, lectures, school projects, collections, publication of regional histories, our virtual library and history tours, made possible through the work of many people — volunteers and staff. They require time and money. A new book, "Cotton to Silk," preserving the oral history of black Norfolk and Western Railway employees who worked their way up from the bottom, will be published with the help of a foundation grant this spring.

This Journal appears through the generosity of one donor. Corporate or individual sponsors are welcomed; in fact they are essential, to continue offering quality articles on the rich history we are trying to preserve for our members, their children and future generations, as well as the public. Please consider contributing to the Kegley Publication Fund, honoring my uncle who wrote a frontier history, to sponsor a Journal. Thank you.

George Kegley, Editor

Journal of the Historical Society of Western Virginia

Historical Society of Western Virginia

YES, I want to support the Society's Kegley Publication Fund with the following gift:

\$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other: \$ _____

Name _____
(as to be listed in print)

Address _____

Phone/Email _____

I will fulfill my/our gift with:

An enclosed check (make payable to Historical Society of Western Virginia)

A credit card payment

Card Number _____

Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Additional Items:

My/our employer will match my gift (please provide paperwork to process)

I would like my/our gift to be recognized as a memorial or tribute to a loved one as noted here:

(as to be listed in print)

Please remove this page and send, along with donation, to:

Historical Society of Western Virginia
P.O. Box 1904 Roanoke, VA 24008

Thank you for your support!

Historical Society of Western Virginia

Dear Friends of History:

Here is money for the following gift:

of our annual Society journal. (as to be listed in print)

You read the journal and play a

Catawba Valley and its history.

ing railroad and its history.

Lyman Deane and his history.

a sad history of...

Lowell and his history.

How as a result of...

to give you a...

Exp: past year to show...

— "Silk to World"...

ing the past year...

Additional items...

— book published...

— this is the first...

as how as announced...

— for the first time...

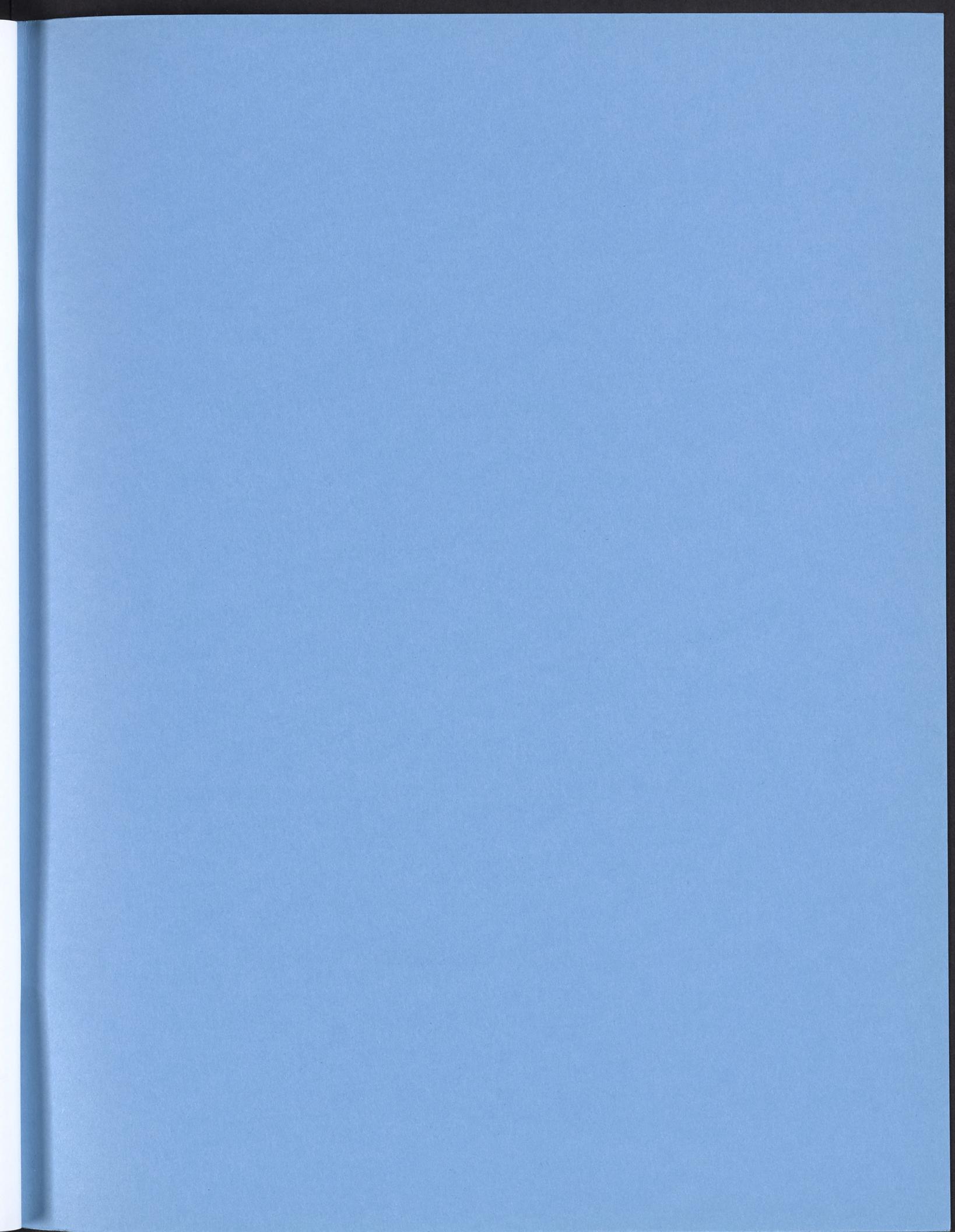
— with a copy of...

Please remove this page and send along with donation to:

Historical Society of Western Virginia

P.O. Box 1804 Roanoke, VA 24008







Kegley 
PUBLICATIONS

ISBN: 978-0-9816251-6-4

\$10.00

0-9816251-6-9