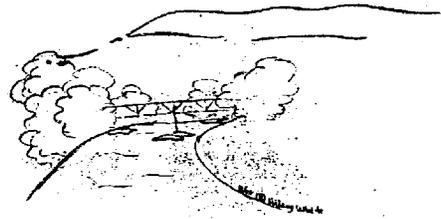


Strasburg Heritage Association



Volume 2, Issue 2

Summer 2002

Strasburg, Virginia

Sunday, June 30th General Meeting

4-6 p.m.

Stonewall Jackson Museum, Hupps Hill

Judy Bogner

Strasburg Heritage Association will hold its next general meeting on Sunday, June 30th from 4-6 p.m. at the Stonewall Jackson Museum at Hupps Hill.

Norman L. Baker author of "The French & Indian War in Frederick County, Virginia" will discuss the French & Indian War on the northwestern frontier of Virginia, highlighting the events of what was a brutal and savage war conducted against the inhabitants.

This almost forgotten war forged the leadership of our nation's first president, George Washington. Here in our immediate neighborhood, Washington rallied the Virginia forces against the terror of the invasion of the French and their Indian allies. The role that he and his troops played and the forts they commanded as well as those built by the hearty settlers will be highlighted.

Mr. Baker will also discuss the establishment of the French & Indian War Foundation here in our area. Begun in the Spring of 2002, the foundation is dedicated to the education of the public about the significance of the war in the development and expansion of the nation.

The group is interested in the identification and preservation of landmarks and sites that played a significant role in the war and hopes to collect historic documents and materials from that time and illuminate the roles of the men and woman who participated.

HISTORIC BUILDING PLAQUES

Carla Wallen

As you walk or drive around town, be on the lookout for historic building plaques! Bob and Kay Borden's home, on the corner of High & Holliday Streets is the first Strasburg residence to have one; and the first business is Bygones, owned by Richard Seelbach. The oval pottery plaques with the buttermilk glaze really stand out against the buildings, and the cobalt blue and iron brown lines of Signal Knob and the Shenandoah River remind us of our rich heritage and the beautiful area in which we live.

Just a reminder that anyone in Strasburg or Davis District who has a historic property which is at least 60 years old can apply for a plaque. There are two scenes to choose from and the sample plaques are on display at the Chamber of Commerce office next to First Bank. Once your application is received, it usually takes about 6 weeks for Orr-Miller Studio to complete the order, for each step in the pottery-making process requires a certain amount of time and cannot be rushed!

Your plaque will be one-of-a-kind, handcrafted in the tradition of Strasburg potters and we hope you will be very proud to have it on your home or business.

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Historic District Signs

Mary Jane Adams

To highlight and define the areas and boundaries of historic Strasburg, SHA initiated the historic district sign project. With the Town's blessing and generous assistance, SHA funded the cost of creating the signs. Chuck Morris of the Street

Committee took on the rest of the project by supplying the metal posts, painting them black and installing the signs. We appreciate the Town's efforts in implementing this project. With board approval, Doug Cooley, Strasburg native and historian, identified the 12 locations of the signs.

How Fort Hill Got its Name

Doug Cooley

During some of the fighting in and around Strasburg during the Civil War in 1862, Federal General N. P. Banks constructed a fort on the north end of Strasburg. While no buildings were constructed, a great amount of earth was moved to make a place for cannons and soldiers who were assigned there.

Because of changes due to attacks made by the Confederate Army in the Shenandoah Valley, General Banks vacated the fort, so it was never used for a very long period of time.

The home nearby was built by Darius and Agnes Hinkins Finley in the late 1800's.



This picture was made after the Strasburg water tank was constructed on the exact site of Banks Fort. So if people inquire as to the whereabouts of the fort, the answer is "under the water tank."



This small picture was made around 1900.

WORD OF MOUTH

Barbara Adamson & Kathy Kehoe

Would you say the best folk tales you ever heard came from your neighbors, your relatives, the elders of your church or someone you've known all your life? Do you find yourself repeating stories that have been handed down in your neighborhood? Do you get a kick out hearing stories about how things used to be?

Well, that's what we said at our first Heritage Association Meeting. And we wanted to preserve local history by recording memories and stories from our senior citizens. We all know someone who has so much to share about life in Strasburg and Davis District as it used to be. We're delighted to announce that SHA is entering into a collaboration with the Strasburg Museum to begin this Oral History Project, which will include audio taped interviews, still photography and perhaps videotape. We envision that we will make the interviews accessible to the public through an exhibit at the museum. We intend to produce written transcripts of interviews which may be stored in a library archive. If anyone has suggestions as to who we may want to interview, please contact Tim Taylor, Gloria Stickley, Kathy Kehoe or Barbara Adamson. We would also appreciate any information and insight you may have if you have visited museums that have presented Oral History projects of their own. We're looking for ideas.

PRESERVATION LEAGUE AWARDS

The Shenandoah Preservation League recently honored two of our own at their annual luncheon and awards ceremony marking the beginning of National Historic Preservation Week. Virginia H. Cadden was presented with a lifetime achievement award for her work in historic preservation. Gin has been a leader in promoting interest in our local history and its preservation and has written extensively about it. C. Douglas Cooley was also presented an award, along with several other county residents who have written about local history, for his book "Strasburg Community Memories". Congratulations to both Gin and Doug for awards very much deserved.

I Remember

by Eunice Ritenour

Kathy Kehoe

For those very few of you who don't know Ms. Ritenour, she's the lady who lived in the same house on the tail end of B Street (now Branch Street) for 55-1/2 years. She and her husband Burlie Ritenour moved to Strasburg all the way from Waterlick in 1943 where she "loved living in town".

She remembers downtown Strasburg as it was when she moved here. Ms. Ritenour can describe the many restaurants that once served main street customers. The Virginia Restaurant is perhaps the most well known on the corner of King and Holliday where Sager Realty is now located. Across from the Fire Hall sat Crystal Restaurant. Massanutten Restaurant was on the corner near the newly opened Daily Grind. The Moose Club for many years was located in the upstairs of the Emporium. She remembers when the Hotel Strasburg was called the Strasburg Hotel. Across the Town Run, on the same side of the street as the Dollar Store, "Jimmy the Greek had a hamburger place in there--he sold hamburgers and hot dogs. Granville Bly's mother worked there." she recalls.

On Saturday night, Ms. Ritenour's family would sometimes take in a movie at the theater on main street, but usually they stayed home and made doughnuts, popcorn or homemade ice cream. They didn't have a TV in those days, but she remembers sitting around the radio and listening to Amos & Andy or to Ernest Tubb, Roy Acuff or Little Jimmy Dickens on the Grand Ole Opry. "I still like country music" says Ms. Ritenour, who still watches Austin City Limits on Saturday nights.

Eunice was born on a Powell's Fort Valley farm on September 19th, 1918, daughter of David and Nellie Brown Ritenour. She remembers shocking wheat, thinning corn and picking huckleberries in the mountains. They sold the huckleberries for fifteen cents a gallon and "it took almost a day to pick a

gallon!" she said with a chuckle. She married Burlie Ritenour in 1936. Though they had the same surname, they were Ritenours from two different "tribes" says Eunice. You wouldn't have to live in the Shenandoah Valley long to recognize the name Ritenour as a local name. The newlyweds moved to Waterlick in 1937 where she met her future Strasburg neighbor Leo Cameron who was then delivering ice at the Waterlick Store. She and Burlie had 5 children, Mapha, Delmus "Moe", Deanna Donaldson (SC). Linda Holsinger and Alta Purvis (TX). She has nine grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

When she first moved to the little house she loved, there was no bathroom inside the house. They had an outhouse in the back yard like all the other neighbors. B Street was a dirt road then, and they were proud to have electricity and water piped into a kitchen faucet and drain. She remembers it cost her \$25.00 to hook onto town sewer when they brought it out on the Branch in 1952.

Eunice lived a few doors down from Marie Williams. Marie was the first person Eunice "got to know" when she moved to Strasburg and she remembers Marie worked in Royston's Ten Cent Store for Mr. Durham. Other stores in her memory were Zea & Wright's Department Store (was Lloyd's Dept. Store and now First Bank offices), Griff Racey's Grocery Store. (which was located across from People's Drug Store) and Kaplan's Grocery (located in what is now the corner parking lot for the Hungry Dog Cafe). The Kaplan Building burned when it was a video store in 1998. She remembers more about Grove Clothing Store (located where Arthur & Allamong law offices are now.) "I still remember," recalls Eunice, "a little pink straw hat my mother bought me to wear to church for Easter one year," that came from Grove's.

Eunice will be 84 on her next birthday on Sept 19th. You can write her at 379 North Main Street, Timberville 22853 and thank her for sharing her memories of our town.

