

Harrisonburg—Rockingham



HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Shenandoah Valley Folk Art & Heritage Center

Volume 24, No. 2

Spring 2002

This newsletter is published quarterly by the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society, Dayton, Virginia.
Sherry Coakly, *Editor*, John Sellers, Wanda Painter, *Editorial Assistants*.

Calendar of Events

May 2: Lecture Series. *Virginia's Underground Railroad*. Presented by Stacey Schneider. Location: HRHS Lecture Hall at 7:00 PM.

May 9: *An Evening with James I. Robertson Jr. "The Stonewall Jackson Nobody Knew"*. Presented by Virginia Tech Alumni. \$10.00 per person. Location: Wilbur Pence Middle School. 6 PM Social—6:30 PM Program. Call 540-269-2098 for reservation.

May 10: Longrifle Show. Presented by *The Contemporary Longrifle Association*. Non members \$5.00. Location: HRHS Exhibit area. 10 AM to 7:00 PM.

May 19: Genealogy forum. *Documentation: A Legacy of Your Family History Research*. Presented by Dr. Gordon Miller. Location: JMU Carrier Library at 2 P.M.

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Brocks Gap Decides to Mark Old House Used by Washington

**143 Years Ago Father of Country Stopped in Gap -- short Route to Ohio
1,000 attend the road rally
Not enough barbecued meat to feed crowd -- A. M. Turner gives the history of Road**

Bergton, Sept. 30, 1927. — Today, the 143rd anniversary of the passing of George Washington through Brock's Gap—the first recorded instance of travel through this region—saw more than 1,000 people gather here to celebrate the opening of the main Brock's Gap route, and incidentally, to start a movement to erect a monument at the foot of Capon Run, two miles below here, to mark the spot where the Father of His Country spent the night on his memorable horseback expedition in 1784.

Strickler Makes Suggestion

Harry Strickler, eminent Valley historian, who was called upon to welcome the visitors to Brock's Gap for the big occasion today, inaugurated the movement to erect a marker at the stop where George Washington spent the night of Sept. 30, 1784, and the suggestion was greeted with great applause by the assembled populace in the river bottom here. The Fitzwater

house, which stands at the foot of Capon Run, is the house in which Washington spent the night, tradition says.

Mr. Strickler named A. M. Turner, Brock's Gap bear hunter and historian, to ascertain the spot where the Father of His Country spent the night and to take charge of the campaign for the erection of a suitable marker. Washington, according to his own diary, passed through Brock's Gap after a trip to Ohio and proceeded on horseback to Harrisonburg and thence on through Swift Run Gap into Eastern Virginia.

Largest Meeting in 43 Years

The gathering here today, which assembled in the river bottom, across the road from the Bergton post-office and at the base of Mount Pleasant, was the largest Brock's Gap has seen since that memorable occasion in 1884 when a huge flag pole was raised here to celebrate the election of Grover Cleveland as President of the United States. Delegate George B. Keezell told of that occasion when the tallest hickory that could be found was raised to carry the flag given to the Wittigs precinct by the Democrats of Harrisonburg.

Speech-making, music, the great activity of candidates of both po-

(Continued on page 5)

Hours of Operation

Monday— Saturday 10 a.m.—4 p.m. (Office is closed Saturday)
Office / Library (540) 879-2616 Museum: (540) 879-2681
Internet site: <http://www.heritagecenter.com>



President: Shelvie Carr
 Vice President: Pat Turner Ritchie
 Secretary: Dale MacAllister
 Treasurer: Seymour Paul
 Administrator: John Sellers

Telephone: 540-879-2616 Email: heritag1@shentel.net

NEW MEMBERS

Florence E. Portell
 Sun City, Az.

Mr. & Mrs. Allen Cline
 Dayton, Va.

Kenneth & Jayne Liskey
 Harrisonburg, Va.

Mac & Ruth Ann Hill
 Cleburne, Tx.

Dennis Guyer
 Waynesboro, Va.

Elizabeth Bakes
 Harrisonburg, Va.

Arlene F. Way
 Harrisonburg, Va.

Luella Boin
 Bel Air, Md.

Darrel Dawes
 Camino, Ca.

Rod Campbell/Janet Lore
 Waynesboro, Va.

Daley Craig
 Crozet, Va.

Nicholas MacNeil
 Staunton, Va.

Neil & Elsie Cox
 Harrisonburg, Va.

Dr. Betty J. Beckley
 Martinsburg, Va.

Evelyn H. Brill
 Elkton, Va.

Kathy Cline
 Gaithersburg, Md.

Hazel Simmons
 Elkton, Va.

Deborah Unger
 Athelstane, Wis.

Linda Lilly
 Dayton, Va.

Edward C. Kelchner
 Nazareth, Pa.

Christopher & Andrea
 Berry
 Shipman, Va.

Dennis R. Kruse
 Mendham, NJ

Jan Schultz
 Wichita, Ks.

Ken & Laurie Huffman
 Basye, Va.

Melani M. Moore
 Charlotte, N. C.

Peggy Kennedy
 Harrisonburg, Va.

Ron & Bev Bartley
 Fisherville, Va.

Jan Owsley
 Wichita, Ks.

Ralph Sanger
 Lebanon, Pa.

Betty Aber
 Hillboro, Oh.

Calendar of Events (from page 1)

May 23 through October 7: Exhibit. *Legend of Lineweaver: The Rockingham County Baseball League.*

June 6: Lecture Series. *Virginia Prepares for Revolution; the Committees of Public Safety.* Presented by Timothy Hack. Location: HRHS Lecture Hall at 7:00 PM.

The Legacy of Lineweaver: The Rockingham County Baseball League

This exhibit opens to members Wednesday, May 22 and will be on display through October 7. J.R. "Polly" Lineweaver, a sports writer for the Daily News Record in the 1920's, contributed to the inception of the league with other founders in 1924. Members from the RCBL who have been instrumental in the league's development have agreed to loan significant items. Richard Tysinger loaned uniforms, bats, and photos dating from the inception of the league to the present. Karl Olschofka, informal historian of the league, gave his knowledge, as well as photographs and mitts. Other contributors include Carl McNett and Ozzie Armentrout.

Baseball serves as a unifying force, not only at the National Level in the Major Leagues, but also in local counties such as Rockingham across the country. The sport appeals to a broad audience and has come to symbolize America for many. Join us as we explore the League's role in our area. Supplemental events include possible lecture or panels in September, as well as a "Day for Baseball" which will feature a pick-up game, interviews, and consignments.

CONTEMPORARY LONGRIFLE ASSOCIATION MINI-GUN SHOW TO BE HELD AT HRHS

The Contemporary Longrifle Association will hold their 3rd annual mini-show at the Historical Society on May 10th from 10 AM to 7 PM and May 11th from 10 AM to 5 PM. Mark Thomas, local engraver, silversmith, and builder of 18th & 19th century style firearms, will demonstrate engraving techniques used to decorate long rifles during the min-show.

In addition, Rick Guthrie will demonstrate 18th century techniques to forge iron hardware used on long rifles as well as forge welding techniques used to make axes.

This year Gordon Barlow will conduct appraisals on longrifles and their accouterments.

The public is invited to this show. Members of the Historical Society will be admitted free, while the entrance fee for non-members is \$5.00. For a better understanding of a truly American art form and to see some of examples of the finest Artisans working in the country today, come and visit this show. Questions: Contact Mark Thomas (540) 867-5829.

Acquisitions

The Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society is appreciative for the following acquisitions received since the Winter newsletter was issued:

LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS

- Glenn Huffman donated a cemetery lot map of the Pine Grove Church of the Brethren.
- Robert E. Alley donated a copy of a deed dated August 12, 1841 from William Wise to John Wise for property south of Bridgewater, Virginia.
- Jean Wine donated the book *Iron Horses in the Valley and Shenandoah Valley Railroads, 1866 - 1882* by John Hildebrand.
- Brent L. Rhodes donated a file on *The Family History of David Michael Rhodes and Naomi Ruth (Koogler) Rhodes*.
- William J. Hunter donated research on the John Hunter family in Rockingham County to be placed in the surname files.
- The estate of Viola Ritchie Sager donated yearbooks from Broadway High School dating back to the 1930's.
- Dr. Dorothy Boyd-Rush donated numerous books for either the enrichment of the library or for resale.
- The Massanutten Regional Library donated an index to the Bassford Books.
- Dr. James V.L. Kiser donated the book *Kiser, Kayser Family History* to the library.
- Debra E. Turner donated two books entitled *Marriages of Seneca County, Ohio 1841 - 1899* by Jean Seigley and *Seneca County, Ohio Cemetery Inscriptions 1987* compiled by The Seneca County Genealogical Society.
- William H. Sipe donated a research paper entitled *Sipe-Rothgeb Ancestry* by William Sipe to be filed in the surname files.
- Nina Mae Bibble donated a scrapbook entitled *The Shenandoah Mountain from Hall Spring to the Overly Hollow-Peru Road* and for resale the book *Memories along Brocks Creek*.
- Alpha Spitzer donated computer printouts of *Descendants of Johann Heinrich Spitzer and Cyrus Spitzer*.
- Faye Witters donated a 3 ring binder of Pleasant Valley Alms Cemetery Association information.
- Herb Warble donated 32 issues of the Rockingham Magazine from 1988-92.

MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS

- Kiblinger Estate; Spectacles, knife in case, pepper gun box, gun powder pouch, two machine cut nails, tintype photograph, anvil.
- Lois Emswiler; Bench from Linville Methodist Church.
- C.S. Kiracofe; Nvy Captain's WWII uniform.

ARCHIVAL ACQUISITIONS

- Jan Lotz donated papers relating to John F. Lewis and the Lewis family of Rockingham County.
- Charles and Mary Sue McDonald donated five Rockingham County store ledgers and photocopies of birth/death/marriage pages (in German) from the Jacob Wenger family bible.
- Frank Blatt donated a postcard sent to General John E. Roller in 1884.



Trisha Maust-Blosser

Trisha, our curator, has decided to attend the Coopers Town Graduate Program and Museum Studies. She will be leaving us in July and we wish her the best of luck in her new endeavors.



Virginia Tech Alumni Association
Massanutten Chapter

The Massanutten Chapter of the Virginia Tech Alumni Association

An Evening With James I. Robertson, Jr.

Alumni Distinguished Professor of History

Thursday, May 9, 2002

6:00 PM Social • 6:30 PM Program

Wilber Pence Middle School

375 Bowman Road • Dayton, VA

\$10.00 per person



Please join us for a wonderful evening with Professor James Robertson from Virginia Tech. Dr. Robertson's presentation is titled "The Stonewall Jackson Nobody Knew." Proceeds will benefit the Massanutten Chapter scholarship fund. After the program, the Shenandoah Valley Folk Art and Heritage Center will be open for tours.

Please **RSVP** by **Friday, May 3, 2002**, by phoning **Jim or Leslie Fries** at **(540) 269-2098**. Admission will be collected at the door. If you have any questions, or need further information or directions, please contact **Jim or Leslie** at 2hokies@shentel.net or **(540) 269-2098**.

Book Review

Known by the Work of His Hands

Claire Messimer. Kutztown, PA: The Pennsylvania German Society, 2000. 231 pages, approx. 155 illustrations. \$65 (hb). www.pgs.org

Given the importance of German heritage to our region, members of the Harrisonburg/Rockingham Historical Society should be interested in several books published recently by the Pennsylvania German Society. Volume XXXII in their annual publication catalog, *Known by the Work of His Hands* presents an in-depth look at the gravestone carvings of the Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, stone cutter Joseph Brownmiller. With dates that span most of the nineteenth century (1807-1895), Brownmiller lived through a century of change that included not only tremendous technological advances but sweeping cultural adaptations as well. Working in a community of Lutheran and Reformed Christians, the carver's early works demonstrate the ethnicity of his clients in both design and language. In the book, however, Claire Messimer demonstrates how both had changed by the end of his life.

The book is divided into two sections: one that details, as much as possible, the life of Brownmiller, and a second that explores his works. Additionally, Part I looks briefly at the history of the region, pointing out Brownmiller's connections to the region both ethnically and physically. The second section, entitled "His Life's Work," provides the real meat of the book. Here Messimer offers her analysis of the work left behind by the carver, detailing its place in Pennsylvania German culture, and demonstrating how Brownmiller's work reflects changes in the community's outlooks toward death and dying along with its willing acceptance of the changes introduced by mass American culture. The section moves chronologically through the various phases of Brownmiller's career, comparing his work with that of his competitors, and occasionally exploring the sources of his gravestone designs. Chapter 16, "A Closer Look," is perhaps the most informative from a material culture point of view; here Messimer delves into the stones and their designs, looking specifically at gravestone designs and their relationships to other handmade pieces within the region. Here is where the story of change shines through the brightest. Messimer's arguments are supported throughout the work by many photographs of Brownmiller's carved stones. Most often these are clean and crisp, although occasionally the printing process has distorted an image. This is not a significant problem, however, and the large number of examples makes up for the few distracting views.

This book builds on a growing number of studies that delve into the lives and motivations of craftsmen who lived and worked in the transitional period of the nineteenth century. Often seen simply as a time when traditional craft was replaced by mechanized techniques, studies such as this one demonstrate the complex series of changes that took place over time, leading to gradual changes instead of an all encompassing sweeping away of traditions. Messimer's work should encourage others to explore the life of a single craftsperson to find the deeper meanings behind the works that have been left behind. Readers from Rockingham County may find inspiration here to study not only the genealogical information recorded on gravestones, but also the significant cultural features revealed by the carved stones themselves.

--Reviewed by Dr. Scott H. Suter

HRHS received grant from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities

The Virginia Foundation for the Humanities has generously offered a grant to HRHS for an African-American oral history project. This initiative is a combined effort of JMU scholars, volunteers from the community, and HRHS staff to preserve valuable information.

Gabrielle Lanier and Olen Burkholder, both of JMU, are providing a training program to teach volunteers how to conduct an oral history interview. Lowell and Ruth Toliver have generously contributed their time and energy to planning this project and plan to also conduct interviews. The grant will cover the cost of transcribing the recordings as well as training for volunteers.

HRHS hopes to record the memories of elder members of the community who can contribute to the limited knowledge of the African-American presence in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County.

Information & Volunteers Needed

HRHS is currently re-walking all the cemeteries in Rockingham County. They were last walked and recorded in Swank's and DAR's work done in 1960's. We are getting the records up to date for the shelf and in the searchable database on the computer in the genealogy library.

We need to find all the private "family" cemeteries. If you know of a cemetery back in a woods or pasture or would like to walk or help walk a cemetery or have burial information that may not be documented please call the HRHS in Dayton at 879-2616 and refer to the Cemetery Project. We will then make sure the cemetery hasn't been done by someone else and will give you a copy of the old lists to use for the walk.

If you have no information but would be willing to type the information obtained we also need your help.

(Brock's Gap continued from page 1)

litical parties in hand-shaking, the big bonfire in the evening and last, but not least, the feasting upon barbequed beast, and other delicacies prepared by the Brocks Gap folk, made today's occasion one long to be remembered. Every section of Rockingham county was represented in the throng which descended upon Bergton all afternoon long and into the evening.

New Road on High Land

The occasion of the celebration was the completion of the fifteen miles of the main Brock's Gap highway. Residents of this community have fought and plead to have the road built on high, dry land to the north of the river bed rather than travel up the river-bed road, which was impassable in the winter time and in wet weather, for the past decade and today marked the triumph of their endeavors.

Bergton now is connected with Broadway and the county seat at Harrisonburg with a good hard-surfaced road, with the exception of the few miles of first-class dirt highway. Bergton residents assert that the new road marks the beginning of a new era in their relationships with the outside world. The celebration attracted many people to Bergton who had never been here before and many who had not been here for years. The old-timers contrasted their hour-and-a-quarter's trip by automobile from Harrisonburg today with the two-day horseback journey to cover the same route not too many years ago. The determination and grit of the Bergton people in obtaining for the new road was lauded by the many speakers.

Harrison to Fight the Dam

Congressman Thomas W. Harrison, the chief speaker of the occasion, declared that he would do all in his power to prevent the erection of a dam at the entrance of Brock's Gap, converting the whole country here into a vast lake, for the purpose of producing electricity, by "Chicago interests." It is up to the people of Brock's Gap and Virginia, he said, to utilize this vast waterpower project if it is to be done at all. There is no reason, he added, why "outsiders" should come in and deprive Brock's Gap of its natural resources for their own profit.

In this connection, Mr. Strickler, in his address of welcome, stated that nowhere in the land could a mountain valley be found like Brock's Gap, which could be converted into a lake ten miles square by damming up the gateway between two mountain ranges.

Representative Harrison's related that he would oppose the project of outside interest for the erection of the Brock's Gap dam brought pounds of applause.

A. M. Turner Gives Road's History

A. M. Turner traced the history of Brock's Gap from the first settler in 1739 down in the present. The Brock's Gap country, he pointed out, was first settled only seven years after Winchester was founded and was developed as early and as speedily of more favorable sections of Rockingham.

A family of West's were the first to settle in the upper end of the gap. A family of Trumbo's settled in the lower end about the same time. First known as West Gap and later as German Gap, the country took its present name of Brock's Gap.

Mr. Turner gave a detailed account of the roads laid in the Brock's Gap country from the first surveyed around 1777 to the present highway completed today. Hugh Wittig, he said, was the first man to advocate placing the highway on the high and dry side of the river and that was in 1868. The bill for building the Brock's Gap highway was passed by the Virginia Legislature in 1910. The 15 miles from Broadway was built by means of a bond issue and these were retired a year or two ago.

Charles Souder is Chairman

Charles L. Souder, regarded by many as the originator of the movement to celebrate the road opening, was master of ceremonies. On the platform with him were: J. M. Hilbert, former supervisor; Dr. J. E. Lincoln, who made a few remarks; Judge Harrison, George B. Keezell; John C. Myers, Supervisor Tom Helbert, J. C. Myers, E. D. Ott, S. H. Marsh and A. M. Turner. The Hinton band, playing between speeches, did much to enliven the occasion.

Soon Ate Up "Fatted Bull"

Chairman Souder called a halt on the speech-making shortly before five o'clock and the assembly gathered on the river bank for a group photograph. In the meantime, the long table had been laden with everything good to eat and when the crowd completed the picture-making everyone pitched in and ate to his heart's content of the good things that Brock's Gap women had prepared for the occasion. In greatest demand was the barbequed beef which was cooking in a row of open kettles as the first arrivals reached the scene. It was not long until the hungry mob had made the most of the layout and late arrivals found that they had postponed their coming too long.

The celebration seemed to be the occasion for the gathering of candidates for county and district offices. Practically all of them were there and no doubt many of them had tired hands last night from the round after round of hand-shaking.

For years, travel from the Brock's Gap area of Rockingham County to the county seat of Harrisonburg depended on the weather and the level of the river. The original roadbed was alongside the river and crossed the river in many places. If the water was up, the road was impassible. Even in good weather the trip took two days.

About 1919, work began on a new road to Broadway which was built on high dry ground, and bridges were added in many places. When the 15-mile long road was completed from Broadway to Bergton in 1927, it was the cause for a major celebration. On September 30, 1927, one thousand people from all over the county flocked to Bergton for speeches, a group photograph, and good food.

The preceding article, from the Oct. 1, 1927 "Harrisonburg Daily News" newspaper article about the celebration. In addition to celebrating the road, which reduced the trip to Harrisonburg from a 2-day horseback ride to an hour and 15 minutes by auto, they celebrated George Washington's stay in Brocks Gap and vowed to fight a dam across the Gap.

This article was contributed by Pat Ritchie.

Society Receives a Major Collection of Shenandoah Valley Tools

Melvin Armentrout has generously donated approximately 120 important examples from his extensive collection of tools to the Shenandoah Valley Folk Art and Heritage Center. He has collected tools over time, supplementing his family collection with objects from estate auctions, yard sales, and people he chanced to meet.

The majority of the tools date to the early 19th century. The collection represents a variety of tools including woodwork-ing axes and planes; a tinner's forge; shoe-making tools; and cooper's tools. However, the tools also cover agricultural pursuits such as a flax break, a ginseng hatchet, and a harness maker's bench. Mr. Armentrout's knowledge and expertise have been very helpful as the collection is identified and accessioned. His love of tools is apparent, especially when he points out a rare item such as the large herb cutting blade. The collection contains many unusual items including an axehead likely made by a close relative of Daniel Boone and a possible water pipe auger.

The museum is currently deciding how to present the tools to the public. Mr. Jay Ganier of Colonial Williamsburg has recommended possible theme displays and a temporary exhibit planned for 2003 may integrate these ideas. In the near future, many of the tools will be incorporated into the permanent exhibit *Invincible Spirit*. The historical society appreciates this rare collection valued at over \$46,000 and its contribution to preserving the history of the Shenandoah Valley and continuing to educate the public about this history.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2001-2002

I am pleased to report to you that our Historical Society is active, growing, and financially sound. Thanks to the efforts of our staff and many, many volunteers, the Society has sponsored numerous events, exhibits, and projects since last year's spring banquet. Regrettably, brevity requires that this report outline the activities of the Society without naming all those persons whose efforts have made them possible. However, please know that your contributions are known and appreciated by this organization.

We have continued the tradition of providing informative and attractive exhibits for our members and the general public. In February of 2001 we told the story of black education in Rockingham County and in the state of Virginia during the "Jim Crowe era." This exhibit displayed the photographs of Jackson Davis on loan to us from the University of Virginia special collections library, as well as a collection of photographs showing black education in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County.

In cooperation with the contemporary Kentucky Long Rifle organization and its membership, we hosted an exhibit entitled "Four Generations of Kentucky Long Rifles." This exhibit was followed by the very popular exhibit "Remembered Treasure, Rockingham's Belle Grove", and the current exhibit, "Vignettes of the Mary Spitzer Etter Collection."

Our very popular lecture series continued under the guidance of Dr. Clive Hallman and included among others, presentations by Billy Kennedy from Northern Ireland, Mr. Dan Stickley, and Dr. Katharine Brown, and Professor John Stewart. Our genealogists have been extremely active. They held four genealogy roundtables, either at our facility in Dayton or at James Madison University. They have worked with L. Wayne Harper, Clerk of the Circuit Court, and volunteers from the Carrier library to preserve records at the Courthouse, including copying early 20th century birth and death records and preparing an inventory list of Courthouse records to be microfilmed.

The management of the Society's collection of documents has continued to be improved. Patricia Maust-Blosser has fully digitized our collection of over 3,500 photographs, and developed policies to protect and preserve these photographs and yet make them available to the public. Mr. & Mrs. Dale Harter continue working to index and preserve other documents in our archives.

Our organizational by-laws and policy manuals have been revised under the leadership of a committee headed by Mr. Dan Stark. Recommendations will be presented to the Board at its next meeting.

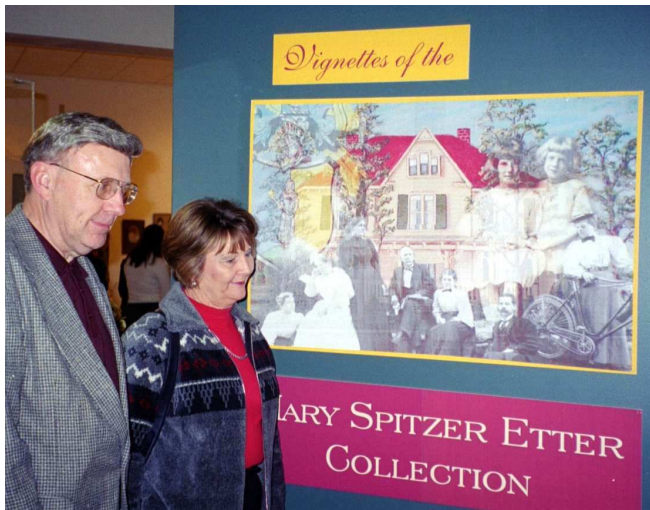
Perhaps the longest running project was completing the modernization and improvement of the Stonewall Jackson Electric Map. Thanks to the efforts of Mr. George Erdman and the engineers at Eren Corporation, our electric map was re-dedicated in February of 2002. It has been enhanced by a new sound system, new lights, and the addition of a wide screen television set which presents additional photographs and maps to illustrate the narration. This project represents approximately \$90,000 in donated time.

The Society continues to receive donations of money and artifacts from members and the general public, but two are particularly significant and should be mentioned in this report. The first is the bequest from the estate of William H. Kiblinger in the amount of approximately \$50,000. The Board of Directors has voted to set these funds aside for long-term building maintenance, the installation of a security system for our exhibit space, and fire protection for our collections. Secondly, Mr. Melvin Armentrout and his wife Betty have made the extremely generous donation to the Society of a wonderful collection of 19th Century Shenandoah Valley tools. We have been working with Colonial Williamsburg to evaluate how best to use these tools in display and for educational purposes.

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Vignettes from the Mary Spitzer Etter Collection

This exhibit was displayed from February 21 through May 1.



Mrs. Etter generously bequeathed a significant portion of her collection to the historical society so that it will be safely preserved and remain accessible to the public.

We appreciate her generosity, and admire her respect and love of history. At this point, the museum plans to utilize the first floor of the Cromer-Trumbo house on an appointment-only basis.



Mrs. Etter (Right) attended the opening, and recounted the object's histories with visible pleasure. We were quite saddened to learn of her death.

Civil War Battle Map Rededicated



George Erdman presented the history of the map which was first designed in 1962. With the support of his company, EREN Corp., and many others, the map was completely redesigned and upgraded.

The audience was impressed with the new sound and visual effects. The map is now very simple to run for visitors.

We encourage you to come and enjoy the presentation.

A WSA radio broadcast from the Society provided good advertising of our events and activities. The cost of the three hour broadcast was donated anonymously by a member.



Shown at left is Jim Britt of WSA radio and Larry Bowers during the broadcast.

In addition, Larry Bowers was a guest on a noon feature on HRHS at WHSV Television

(President's Report continued from page 6)

This collection is valued at almost \$50,000.00, and has made a significant addition to the holdings of your Society.

On a personal note, we have been very pleased to have as a part-time employee, Mrs. Amy Kiracofe. Her services have been made available to us through a Federal grant program. Amy started in July of 2001 and has been a terrific asset.

It has been my distinct privilege to serve as your President for the past five years. I have learned to know many of the talented people who make this organization work, and to share with you numerous exciting and rewarding projects. With the election of Shelvie Carr as our new President, I know that I leave the organization in very capable hands.

Respectfully submitted, this 18th day of April, 2002.

Lawrence D. Bowers, Jr.

HRHS Spring Banquet held at JMU

The Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society held their annual spring banquet at Chandler Hall on the JMU campus Thursday, April 18, 2002. Approximately 100 members attended the dinner. For the program, Dr. James Kelly spoke. His slide presentation and lecture centered on the westward expansion of Virginia.



Part of the program consisted of recognizing people who have made outstanding contribution to the Society as volunteers. Larry Bowers awarded the Volunteer Award of the Year to Harold Wood, Seymour Paul and Linda Bowers for their outstanding volunteer work performed over the past year. In addition, Gordon Miller recognized three individuals that worked in the Genealogy Room at the Courthouse to preserve many of the volumes located there. These awards went to Mary Wilson Stewart, Peggy Dillard, Shirron Ballard and Wayne Harper.

Also recognized at the banquet were Melvin and Betty Armentrout for their generous donation of their 19th century tool collection. This tool collection will eventually be placed on permanent exhibit at the Historical Society.

Newly elected President, Shelvie Carr, recognized Larry Bowers, the outgoing president, for his outstanding service to the organization (Above, left). The banquet concluded by conducting a drawing for a quilt that was being raffled off as a fundraiser that was donated by Earl and Janet Downs. The raffle raised approximately \$1,000 for the organization. Natalie Saufley Swirdovich was the lucky winner, her father Al Saufley (Right), received the quilt for her.

Eight Board of Directors were elected for the class of 2005 during the business portion of the banquet. Those elected were: William Blair, Dorothy Boyd-Rush, Janet Downs, Rodney Eagle, Dale MacAllister, Neal Menefee, John Sipe, and Judy Warren.



The Harrisonburg — Rockingham Historical Society
P.O. Box 716
Dayton, Virginia 22821

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