## Preserving Our Heritage

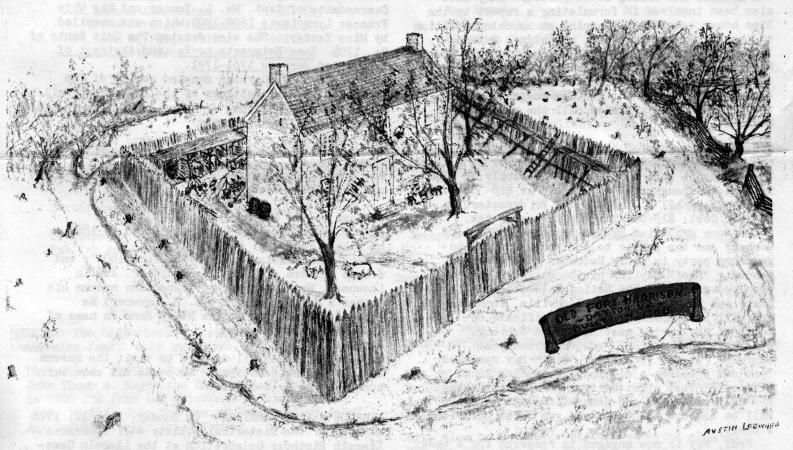
## ROCKINGHAM COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. Box 1141

HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA 22801

## NEWSLETTER

Bicentennial Edition — January, 1978



FT. HARRISON, in Dayton. Va., was built by Daniel Harrison (1701-1770) sometime between 1746 and 1749. He had come to the Shenandoah Valley from Delaware about 1738 with other members of his family, including his brother, Thomas, the founder of H'burg. Daniel Harrison developed numerous enterprises, chief among them farming. He was a very large landholder in the region. Altogether, he and his sons were granted some 4,294 acres of land between 1739 and 1766. His home plantation on Cook's Creek contained 1,1292 acres Here, Harrison established a grist mill, a distillery, a general store and an ordinary. The Vestry of Augusta Parish authorized a "Chapel of Ease" at his plantation with Anglican services held initially in his house and later in a framed wooden chapel on his land. He seems to have done some building as well: he submitted the low bid to construct the Augusta Co. Court House but for unexplained reasons did not receive the contract.

The mid 1750's was a time of considerable danger for Valley residents because of the French and Indian Wars Marauding bands of Indians frequently roamed the area, threatening the settlers. Daniel Harrison's solidly built house was a natural fort to which he added a stockade and an underground passage to the nearby spring; loopholes for firing rifles may have been set in the stone walls as

During these troubled years Harrison served in the Augusta Co. militia as Captain, a military Fort Harrison is a beautifully situated structure on high ground above Cook's Creek. The front portion is the original Daniel Harrison house, built of stone but covered with stucco in more recent times. Originally, there were a number of outbuildings: in Daniel Harrison's will there is mention of the dwelling house, a storehouse kitchen and other structures. The brick extension on the back of the house probably dates to the early 1800's and other alterations such as the wider windows were made by the Solomon Burtner family after 1866.

After Col. Benjamin Harrison's death in 1819, his son, Dr. Peachy Randolph Harrison, sold the property to John Allebaugh in 1821. In 1856 the house was sold to J N. Liggett, and 10 years later, in 1866, the Burtner's purchased it. In 1916, the property came to the ownership of the Koogler family.

DAYTON TOWN COUNCIL VOTES \$2500 TO FORT HARRISON:
The Board of the Rockingham County Historical
Society is negotiating the purchase of Fort
Harrison in Dayton. Va , with the aim of stabilizing
the structure, preventing further deterioration
and its destruction. An effort to raise money for
this project will begin in another few weeks
which will require a great deal of the resources
of the Society and effort by its membership. The
initial contribution of \$2500 has been made by

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During these truubled years Harrison served in the Augusta Co. militia as Captain, a military tradition carried on by his son, Benjemin(1741-1819), who inherited the house after his father's death. Benjamin's distinguished military career began in 1763 when he joined the Augusta militia. He commanded a company at the Battle of Point Pleasant in 1774. During the American Revolution, as a Colonel, he led troops against suspected Tories in what is now Hardy Co. West Va. and against hostile Indian tribes on General Lachland McIntosh's expedition further west, and he commanded a regiment at Yorktown.

After the Revolutionary war. Benjamin Harrison became a justice for the newly formed Rockingham Co. Court; indeed he supervised the building of the first court house in H'burg. He was also very active in the establishment of the Methodist Church in H'burg and was appointed to the first Board of Trustees by Bishop Asbury.

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the Dayton Town Council.

For further reading about Fort Harrison, consult Mr. C. E. May's book, Life Under Four Flags in the North River Basin of Va. and John W. Wayland's, History of Rockingham County.

Many thanks are in order to Mr. Austin Loewner, for his research and sketch of Fort Harrison. We are very fortunate to have such an artistic member in our Society. Mr. Loewner is Chairman of the Museum Committee which includes Mr. Grimes Heneberger, Chief Julius Ritchie. Mr. Jack Baugher, and Mr. Peter Mullen.

THIS PAST AUGUST the Society was fortunate enough to have acquired funds in which to hire three researchers. They are Mr. John M. Holmes, Mrs. Mary T. Mullen, and Mr. Michael L. Allain. These researchers are provided through government CETA funds. Since the beginning of their jobs, John, Mary and Mike have been working diligently on indexing the court minute records, doing genealogical research, cataloguing artifacts in the museum, and filing loose photos. They have also been involved in formulating a report to the Sipe house committee, planning an upcoming addition to the Rockingham Recorder, planning a walking tour of H'burg and producing a movie for the county bicentennial. They have also collaborated with the Daily News Record on articles for the bicentennial. Anyone who has any suggestion or would like to help please call the museum at 434-4762,

DID YOU GET a copy of "Life Under Four Flags in the North River Basin" by Society member C. E. May? If not, don't wait too long as the supply of 1000 is almost exhausted. Call "Prof" at 828-3864 or write him at 421 E. College St. Bridgewater, Va. 22812. Cost: \$18.00 plus 72¢ Va. sales tax.

We were gratified by the response of Society members and the public to the reception & autographing party in early December at the Museum honoring "Prof" May for his book. Also, he has been recognized by the National Association for State and Local History of Nashville, Tennessee and will be presented with a certificate of merit at the spring meeting of the Society. Congratulations "Prof". you've earned your laurels! At the reception "Prof" May remarked "you don't become a millionaire writing local history." That might be true "Prof" but think how much richer we and generations yet unborn will be because you cared and you dared to write a book!

Prof. May is now engaged in research for a book on the life of Jed Hotchkiss. Hotchkiss. described by many as "a self-instructed genius" served as first principal of Mossy Creek Academy, was the foremost map maker of the Civil War. and pioneered the geological & industrial development of Va. and West Va during the reconstruction era. Let's encourage him in this undertaking.

THE OLD HOMES TOUR held last October, co-sponsored by the Society and the Extension Homemakers Clubs of Rockingham County was a tremendous success. Public response far exceeded our plans and expectations. More than 15,000 registered with many unable to register because of the crowds. Our special thanks to the homeowners for opening their hearts and lovely old homes. also, to the Daily News Record and WKCY radio for helping inform the public of their event commemorating the bicentennial of Rockingham County. We look forward

THE SOCIETY has received several new items for its museum and library: Mrs. Ruth Firebaugh Taliaferro donated a copy of her Grandfather's Civil War Diary. Samuel A. Firebaugh 1862-1864. Mr & Mrs Donald Huffman donated a copy of The St. Michael's Story 1764 1964. Mr. C. E. May donated a copy of his book Life Under Four Flags. Miss Reba Yancey donated a book, Ancestors & Descendants of Capt. Wm. L. Yancey and His Wife Frances Lynn Lewis 1600-1900 which was compiled by Miss Yancey She also donated The Quit Rents of Va 1704. Some Emigrants to Va and Abstract of Land Grant Surveys 1761-1791. Mr. & Mrs. C. J. Carrier donated copies of The Paynes of Va. and Settlers by the Long Grey Trail. A number of photographs of Harrisonburg were donated

by the Lupton Kaylor family.

Mr. Adrian Sonn donated some business papers from
the Shacklett Hardware Store, in the 1850's.

Mr. Fred Cooper donated a number of copies of old Daily News Records.

On Loan to the museum are:
A book The Christian Harp, published in 1865
by Joseph Funk- Mr. Raymond Cyzick.
Several Band instruments of the late 1800's and
a band uniform of 1926, loaned by Mr. Austin
Loewner. Mr. Loewner also loaned the museum his
father's wedding hat (Mr. A. M. Loewner) He
donated a drum from Cootes Store Band in name of
his brother Doc Loewner.

THE SOCIETY urges all members to visit the museum and view these donations. We could all show our appreciation by doing so.

LINCOLN DAY CELEBRATION- On Sunday, Feb. 12, 1978 at 2 p. m the Historical Society will sponsor a Lincoln Birthday Celebration at the Lincoln Cemetery on Rt. 42, 3 miles south of Broadway. Society members Phil Stone and Judge John Paul will be in charge of the program. Tentative arrangements call for Senator Nathan Miller to make a few remarks.

Since Abraham Lincoln's great-grandparents are buried in the Lincoln Cemetery, and since both his grandfather Abraham and his father Thomas lived within a few hundred yards of the Lincoln Cemetery. it seems quite appropriate for our Society to celebrate Lincoln's birthday here. In 1850, when President Lincoln was in Congress, he wrote some of his relatives on Linville Creek and asked them to give him background information about his family since he knew they came from Rockingham County. While there is no known copy of the reply to the President, the activities on Feb. 12 in the Lincoln Cemetery will include a presentation of the information sought by the President. The public is invited without charge.

to another tour next year for the City of Harrisonburg.

MISS REBA YANCEY has published a genealogy of the Yancey family which is the result of 15 years research. Allied families included in the book are: Armentrout, Brown, Davis, Durrette, Garth. Gibbons. Graves, Harnsbarger. Harrison. Hopkins, Jarmon, Jones, Lewis, Mauze Mauzy. Rodes, Shafer, Shipp, Sipe, Taliaferro, and White. The cost: \$15.00 plus sales tax in Va. You may get your copy at the museum or call the museum at 434-4762

JUST A REMINDER! Have you paid your dues (\$5.00 individual \$7.50 per couple?) An alarming number of members are in arrears on their dues. Do you care enough to support the Society's ongoing program (records restoration, publications, programs, etc.) in addition to the acquisition of Ft. Harrison? We believe you do. After all Ft. Harrison is the most ambitious project we have ever embarked upon and hopefully, we will not be forced to put other activities on the "back burner". We'll keep you informed as plans progress. We received about 40 new members in the Society last year.

NOAH D. SHOWALTER sent this letter to the editor of the Daily News Record " Editor,

Answering numerous inquiries regarding the purposes and workings of the Rockingham County Historical Society, probably the best way to begin is to liken it to a bank. The bank is a repository for money. The depositor places his money in the bank for safekeeping, and in turn the bank uses it to finance others. The Rockingham County Historical Society is a repository into which historical data is collected for safekeeping on one hand, and a source of information to everyone, on the other hand Old papers books, letters, records diaries and family relics serve more people when they are placed with your Historical Society, rather than being scattered here and there in houses and attics where they will be seldom seen or mentioned. And they are more likely to be burned or lost when they are stored in such fashion. Everyone having in their posession old letters. papers or other old documents are asked to get in touch with the Historical Society office. ... People are asked not to burn old papers until the society can examine them." Please call the society at 434-4762 if you have anything to donate

loard of Trustees by Edwing Ambury

## TREASURER'S REPORT 1977

RECEIPTS:		DISBURSEMENTS:	
Bank Balance Dec. 31, 1976	\$2451.83	To: State Registration	\$ 10.00
		Museum Hosts	655.00
From: Membership Dues \$ 497.	50	Postage & Box Rent	125.10
City of Harrisonburg 500.0	00	Record Restoration	569.00
County of Rockingham 500.0	00	Binding Recorders	24.54
Switzer Memorial Fund 126.	36	Daily News Record	48.25
Record Restoration 50.0	00	Steel Storage Cabinet	299.95
Museum Admissions 132.	30	Map Repair	80.00
From Savings Account 1359.9	95	Storage Cabinet	14.17
Sale of Publications 622.1	47 I to 0 . A . 194	Research Supplies	67.00
Interest from Trust Fund 35.3	36	Old Homes Tour	44.00
West and all the dealer shades and	\$3792.67	Reprint Recorder	450.00
	\$6244.50	Newsletters	72.28
		Museum Brochures	41.70
		Stationery, etc.	103.89
		Architect (consultant)	
		Miscellaneous	23.09

Bank Balance December 31 1977
\* Includes \$89.50 for Lincoln Cemetery

\* \$3576.53

Certificate of Deposit V.N.B.

\$2500.00

Commitments and projects for 1978: Publication of Recorder, \$987.00; Museum Attendant, \$600.00; Publish reference book \$491.00; Map repair, \$512,00.

Respectfully Submitted, Nelson Alexander, Treasurer

QUERIES: The Historical Society receives many requests from all over the country concerning families of this area. If you have any information on these names please contact the people listed.

Phil Thuma. 2005 N. 2nd. Ironton 0 45638, Info: John Thuma m. Magdalena Brown(dau of Peter Brown) in 1801 and John and Elizabeth Dinkle Thuma m. 1827. is this John the son of the previous John? Any information of these Thumas.

Mrs. Mildred Yancey Diffley, 960 Anchor St. Morro Bay, Ca. 93442. Info on Layton Yancey son of John Yancey (moved from Culpepper to Rock. Co.) who was a son of Lewis Davis Yancey from Culpepper. son of John from Wales? Also. journal by Margaret Synn Lewis wife of "Pioneer" John Lewis who settled in Staunton "The Common Place Book of Me" printed by Toledo Ohio Hist. Soc.

Mrs. Richard Art 3000 Thayer St. Evanston III. 60201 Wants info on Blazer Blasar-Blosser, parents or descendants of Christian, Jacob and John Blazer all in H'burg or Rock. Co. census of 1810.

Mrs. Myra Abernathy, 11425 Old St., Charles Rd., Bridgeton Mo 63044 Who were the sons of Handel Vance Jr. who had served in the War of 1812? Any info on Handel Vance Jr. & Sr.

Sgt. Alan L. Hensley. FR565960533 1946 Comm Sq. PSC Box 939 APO N.Y. 09611 Wants info. re: the Hensley Baugher & Lam families. Specific info. of the marriages of Catherine Eppard to David Hensley ca 1900 & Harriet Dean to Stephen Hensley ca. 1865.

DID YOU GET your copies of The Rockingham Recorder? These books containing many interesting articles concerning local history are still on sale; prices are Vol. 1 No. 1 \$3 00 and the other seven volumes \$2.50 each. Come by the Society's Museum or call 434-4762.

W. D. Coplin. 325 Mellow Lane, La Canada, Ca. 91011 desires info re: Benjamin Copeland w. Ann who as a widow married David Ralston in 1753. Also on Henton, Hinton family

Enola G. Retherford Rt. 2 Box 78 Stony Point N. C. 28678. Info on Isaac Newton Whitmore b. Nov. 29. 1839 at Mt. Crawford. parents unknown Mother was Ann? raised by German speaking family (maybe Uncle Sam Whitmore?) I. N. Whitmore m. Susan V. Thompson Sept. 20, 1866. Moved to Gilman Illinois in 1880 with seven children.

Donald Rhinehart 341 Fairgrounds Rd., Painesville Ohio 44077. Info re: Isaac Newton Rhinehart d.1870, Christian Kratzer d. 1859 Jacob Baxter d. 1867 Benjamin Bowman d. 1829 Jacob Moyers d. 1851 all died in Rock. Co. John J Miller. d. 1879 in Iowa.

Pam Anderson, Two Lynnwood Place. Apt. 1, New Haven Ct. 06511. Info on Martin Baker w. Mary, dau Margaret who married Thomas Ransbottom 2-11-1812. Also Peter Dairey.

Lettie Bond Box 254. Golden City Mo 64748. Info: Michael Howdyshell b. 1760 and Barbara Rader b. 1766 dau. of Adam Rader needs proof Jacob Howdyshell b. 1784 is son. Jacob married Polly Robinson in 1807(b. 1789) daughter of Chas.& Nancy Hendricks Robinson.

THE ELECTRIC MAP of Stonewall Jackson's campaign, is no longer working. If you are thinking of visiting the museum or have friends who are planning to see the map please be informed of this misfortune. However, our other displays are well worth the visit!

MR. AUSTIN LOEWNER has been kind enough to agree to have another viewing of his slide show of old Harrisonburg. Anyone interested in seeing this historic presentation please call the Society's Museum at 434-4762 from 9-5 Mon.- Fri.

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