



Preserving Yesterday Enriches Tomorrow



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MADISON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
[http:// www.madisonvahistoricalsociety.org/](http://www.madisonvahistoricalsociety.org/)

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DR. HORTENSE HINTON- JACKSON SPEAKER FEBRUARY 25, 2018 MEETING

We are honored to have as our speaker for the February 25th Madison County Historical Society quarterly meeting Dr. Hortense Hinton- Jackson, a native of Culpeper and recently retired Provost of the Manassas Campus of Northern Virginia Community College. The subject of her talk will be the George Washington Carver School. In 1946 there was very limited secondary school educational opportunity for African Americans in Orange, Greene, Madison, Culpeper and Rappahannock Counties. In that year representatives of these counties asked for and received funds from the state to build a regional high school and George Washington Carver High School was opened in 1948. Until integration

occurred African-American students from these counties attended the George Washington Carver school.

Dr. Hinton-Jackson's career in higher education has spanned forty years. Prior to NOVA she held administrative positions at Germanna Community College, the University of Virginia, and the University of the District of Columbia. She is listed in "Who's Who Among African-Americans". Her leadership abilities were honored at the Harvard Institutes for Leadership in Higher Education, the American Council of Community Colleges' Leadership Institute and The American Council of Education's Office on Women and its Virginia Network.

The meeting will be held in the Madison County Administrative Offices auditorium at 3pm Sunday February 25th. Refreshments will be served in the Kemper Residence following the presentation. Everyone is invited to attend.

MEMBERSHIP

We have several new members this quarter.

Curt Weakley
Nelson and Jane Dodson
Rev. Richard Grendahl
Bruce and Ann Bowman

Welcome to the Society. Remember that Society membership is a wonderful gift any time of the year. A copy of the Society membership application can be obtained at the following link:

www.madisonvahistoricalsociety.org/application.pdf

MOUNTAIN MEMORIES II



Jim Lillard at the Mountain Memorial

The speaker at the November 19th 2017 quarterly meeting of the Madison County Historical Society was Jim Lillard and the topic of his presentation was Mountain Memories II. This was an updated reprise of his earlier presentation about the families who lived in our local mountains before they became a portion of Shenandoah National Park. The presentation began with two films, one from 1928 showing mail being delivered at Old Rag Post Office and the second being from 1930 of Ms. Hoover at a mountain school and the children singing "Carry Me Back to Old Virginia." Jim identified some of the children in the film. He then showed survey maps of properties before the Park was established, some 500 homes and 2000 people. There were photos of homes, mills, barns and fields, some of the farms being prosperous with many outbuildings. These farms were either purchased or burned to evict owners. All the farms had a horse or mule and sometimes several. Some even had Model A and T Ford cars. They had cows for milk and butter, chickens, and hogs (with families sharing butchering chores). And there was wild life for food such as deer and wild turkey. They grew mostly corn and apples and apples could be a cash crop for eating, brandy, apple butter, dried, cider, etc. There were big distillers until prohibition. Sorghum was grown for molasses

and many had bee hives. In essence these people lived off of the land.

There was also social life of course. The socials centered around church and the music would normally be banjo and fiddle. Jim showed pictures of his family members during the years before the Park in the 1930's.

The presentation was a wonderful overview of life in the mountains before the Park was established and the last family was moved out in 1939. This was a fine presentation of a rather sad but fascinating episode of Madison County history.

MYSTERY LADIES OF MADISON



Matriarchs of the County

Pictured above are:

Front Row, left to right: Fannie (Mrs. C. F.) Blankenbaker, Lola (Mrs. O. F.) Carpenter, Kate (Mrs. A. J., Sr.) Clore, Alma (Mrs. E. A.) Clore, Kate (Mrs. W. H.) Goodall, Ola (Mrs. M. F.) Weaver

Back Row, left to right: Mary (Molly?) Walston (Mrs. W. L.) Carpenter, Molly (Mrs. J. C.) Clore, Eutha (Mrs. Roy) Hawkins, Hattie (Mrs. Allan) Gardner, Virgie (Mrs. Lyle) Weaver, Ruth (Mrs. Wilkie) Daniel, Edna (Mrs. Gorrell) Weaver, Annie (Mrs. Edgar H.) Berry

This photograph of "Veterans In Home Demonstration Work" was taken back in the 1950s by LeRoy H Beckman, long-time photographer for the *Madison Eagle*. The newspaper caption reported that each woman had been active in extension work for 30 years or more. When the photograph appeared in the newspaper, most of the women were identified by their husband's names. That's just the way it was back then, alas. Widows, on the other hand, were

identified by their first names, with no mention of their late husbands.

The photograph appeared again on page 23 in *Images of America Madison County*, published in 2011 for the Historical Society by Arcadia Publishing. This time, the women were not identified individually, but were called “charter members of Madison’s [Home Demonstration] club”, erroneously said to be started in the 1950s. As readers looked at the photograph, questions naturally arose about the identity of the ladies. For several years, Judy Mahanes has been on a quest to come up with everyone’s first name. Nan and Dennis Coppedge also participated in the research and were able to confirm names that Judy had already identified. But two ladies remained who were known only as Mrs. So and So. This past December, Judy finally got around to showing the picture to Mr. Everette Weakley during one of his frequent visits to the Madison Museum. He had to think for a few minutes, but within the hour had supplied those last two first names. Thank you, Everette!!

(If any reader has information about the exact date of the gathering photographed, please contact us at the Museum.)

YEAR ONE AT THE MADISON MUSEUM

A highlight of 2017 for the Society was the opening of the Madison Museum in the Kemper Residence. In February 2016, the Board of the Historical Society voted to move the museum from the Arcade Building to the basement at Kemper. After many months of planning, renovating, moving, and unpacking, the Museum opened in its new quarters on Tuesday, April 4, 2017. The Grand Opening festivities with County officials and Tracey Gardner of the Chamber of Commerce took place on Friday, May 19, 2017. During this season, museum volunteers welcomed 518 visitors on the 114 days that the Museum was open (generally Tuesday, Thursday, Friday from 10 AM until 2 PM). Visitors included faithful supporters of our work and regular attendees at the Kemper Teas along with people who were on their first trip to the Museum or even to Madison. Group visits included several Woodberry Forest students, three busloads of folks attending the Germanna Reunion in July, and Seniors groups from

Madison and Zion X-Roads. Visitors viewed museum exhibits, shopped at our Gift Shop, toured the upper floors of the Residence, and visited the Servant Cabin and Law Office on the property. If you have not yet visited the museum we hope you will this year. The Museum reopens on Thursday, March 1, 2018 with some new and refreshed exhibits..

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

An important task during last winter was recruiting and organizing volunteers to staff the expanded Museum. Curator Beppy White and President Max Lacy worked their magic and added approximately a dozen new names to the list bringing our total up to 28 volunteers. Most of these men and women work one day/month but some work 2 or 3 days plus a few will fill in when called upon. The Historical Society, including the Museum, has no paid staff so everything we do relies on our team of dedicated and loyal volunteers. Thanks to both the recruiters, and to the recruited! The Madison County Historical Society has no “staff”. Everything we do relies on the efforts of a team of dedicated volunteers.

We also want to recognize our dedicated group of Kemper Tea ladies and gentlemen led by Mary Haught. This group put on two teas each year as well as clean and maintain the upper floors of our beautiful Kemper Residence. These teas are our only fund-raising events, so we truly appreciate and depend on their contribution.

We would like to thank all of these volunteers by name:

Museum Volunteers: Arlene Aylor, Bettie Berry, Mary Blow, Martha Breeden, Phil Brockman, Jean Busboso, Marise Craig, Joyce Gentry, Bill Graham, Mike Hale, Dona Hutchinson, Linwood Imlay, Brad Jackson, Jayne Jackson, Dink Kreis, Max Lacy, Jim Lillard, Judy Mahanes, Bill McDermott, Carole Milks, Pam Nelson, Jim Nelson, Rosa Page, Charles Slaughter, Eilene Smith, Fay Smith, Susan Theiler, Joan Weaver and Beppy White.

Kemper Teas: Mary and Bob Haught, Pat and Christ Latin, Heidi Sage, Maryvonne Longley and Katy Cashman.

SPRING TEA PLANS UNDERWAY

Plans are well underway for the Spring Luncheon Tea on Wednesday, March 28, 2018, at 12:30 p.m. in the Kemper Residence. Reservations are being accepted now from members of the Historical Society and friends. If spaces are still available, the public will be offered the opportunity to attend after March 1.

Guests will be served a varied menu including warm scones with homemade lemon curd, tea sandwiches and tempting sweets, accompanied by unlimited pourings of delicious Kemper Tea.

You may enjoy this generous menu of tasty goodies in return for a \$25 donation to the Madison County Historical Society. We have held that price for the past several years, but any additional contribution is always welcomed by the Historical Society. The food is prepared, donated and served by volunteers, so all proceeds are contributions to support projects of the Society.

Make your reservations right away by calling 540-547-4398 and leaving a message including your name, telephone number and the number of reservations you are requesting. You will receive a return call to confirm. We welcome singles or groups up to six. You may also call the number above with questions, or email maryhaught@hughes.net.

In response to many requests, containers of popular Kemper Tea will be available to purchase for your own enjoyment or for gifts.

If you have not yet visited the new Madison Museum on the lower level of the Kemper Residence, this will be a convenient time to do so. Docents will be available after the tea for you to visit.

The following is an article written by Ann Ferguson which appeared in the August 2003 copy of the Historical Society newsletter.

THE ROLE MILLS PLAYED IN COUNTY HISTORY

by Ann Ferguson

Life in the 21st century offers conveniences we take for granted with little thought to how the everyday needs for food, shelter and clothing were met in the past. During the late 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries mills, built along various rivers and tributaries in Madison County were an

important step towards meeting those needs for residents. The millwheel, turned by the flowing water, powered grinding stones that converted grain to flour, operated saws that transformed tree trunks into board lumber for buildings, and ran machinery that processed raw wool into yarn and fabric. In this article we take a look at one mill site that operated on the banks of the Robinson River.

First a grist mill and later a woolen factory existed at a point on the Robinson River called Port, located on Route 618, two and one-half miles north of Oak Park. The last private owner was Hamilton (Hamp) Berry and it stayed in the Berry family until 1926 when the property was sold for development of the Madison Power Plant.

Research documents show that a grist mill was built by Simeon Utz in 1812, made of hand hewn timbers and weather boarded; it had a fifteen-foot rock wall on its south side. The mill race was about 600 yards long and the front wheel was a steel overshot. In addition to a few small windows and a door leading to the cellar, this mill had a rock chimney and a fireplace and included a small room that was used as an office. The roof was slab and the door hinges and box locks were wooden; floors were wide boards with pegs instead of nails.

In 1849, the mill with seven acres was conveyed to Alexander Swan and in 1867; it again changed hands when it was conveyed to John W. Taylor. Hamp Berry began operating the mill in about 1881 when it was inherited through his wife, Lucy Collins (Lucy Collins and Hamilton Berry were married in February 1866.).

Investigation of records regarding the factory building at this site leaves some unanswered questions. In 1870, the record shows that a Mr. Larkin operated a woolen mill on the Robinson River that was later owned and operated by Hamp Berry. As John W. Taylor owned the property in 1870, it is possible Mr. Larkin leased land from him for a separate building or that the original mill building was converted for use as a woolen mill.

An article in the Richmond Times Dispatch in 1959 quoted Mrs. James E. Ford (nee Ella Berry) daughter of Hamp Berry, as she recounted her memories of her father's woolen mill. Mrs. Ford said that she and her seven brothers and sisters were the labor force in the mill: "We made material, men's clothes, yarn, linsey and blankets

for my hope chest." (A few days before the story was published in the Richmond newspaper, Mr. and Mrs. Ford celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary). Mrs. Ford said that farmers sheared wool from their sheep and brought it to her father's mill to be made into goods for their family's needs until the next shearing time. Hamp Berry would buy all of the surplus wool and use it to fashion stock that he then would sell as he traveled around to a variety of court day markets. Some housewives preferred to have the wool converted to yarn that they would spin at home while others chose to have material from which they made clothes. Mrs. Ford said linsey was an important material processed in her family's mill - a rough, loosely-woven fabric, she said it was made into checked patterns that people used for children's clothes. One of Mrs. Ford's sisters was an expert tailor who made clothes for men including a special suit for a Culpeper man. He owned an angora sheep and Ella Ford's mother, Lucy Collins Berry, 75 years-old at the time, wove the material for the suit.

The hope chest blankets made at the mill on the Robinson were white with colored stripes woven into the borders; hand bound with yarn. "I fluffed them by hand and I climbed up and down the frame they were fastened to, combing the fluff out of the yarn with a special card," Mrs. Ford said with pride.

Five blankets made at the Berry family woolen mill were donated to the Society by Vee Tull. These blankets, showing a few decorative touches such as stripes and large squares, are on display in the Museum at Kemper. There is also a picture of the mill hanging in an upstairs bedroom.

Grist and saw mills were vital to the local economy in the early days of the County. Grist mills made it possible for farmers to convert their grain to flour for home use and sale and sawmills meant homes, businesses and outbuildings could be constructed more easily than the hand-hewn process used until then. The later advent of woolen mills was a boon to housewives who were able to make assorted household items and a greater variety of clothing for their families with much less effort than the spinning and weaving process previously required.

Mills served another purpose important to the society of Madison County. Each mill became a

gathering place for nearby residents - it was a place to catch up on the news and delivery of mail was often arranged at a mill site (mail was distributed at the Berry family mill twice each week according to available documents).

The Virginia Historical Inventory Survey of Madison County Mills, Compiled and Edited with Additional Research by Charles L. Perdue, Jr. and Nancy J. Martin-Perdue, (1937) lists 22 mills in the County. Repton's Mill is listed as the only mill that remained in its original condition. Some of the mills described in the survey have been dismantled and others have fallen under their own weight as nature has taken its toll. At some sites, the largest millstones can be seen resting in the water's depth - a silent reminder of the days long ago when the churning millwheel provided power to meet the needs of the people of Madison County.

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Our Museum year was just completed in December and it was an overwhelming success. We had more visitors and sold more products in the gift shop. The people that toured were really impressed with the new look. We even had the Paranormal Group from Culpeper come to the Grand Opening and were very impressed with what we had done. Thanks to Beppy White and all of the many volunteers for a job well done.

We have had some great programs this past year and are expecting some really good ones this coming year. Thanks to Penn Bowers we always have an interesting program.

The Mountain Museum in Criglersville is beginning to take shape as plans are being made to get it ready for the public to see this spring. Kristie Kendall is getting some maps together for us to display there.

Thanks to Arlene, Phil, and Judy for taking on new jobs within the Society. A special thanks to Roger Schreiner for all of his years of hard work as Treasurer and Membership Chairman. It shows how valuable he has been when it takes two people to take his place. Arlene Aylor will be the new Membership Chairman and Judy Mahanes will be the new Treasurer. Phil Brockman will take over as Secretary.

Thanks to all of the volunteers that made the Museum a success.

The Madison County Historical Society is a non-profit organization founded and operated for the perpetuation and preservation of Madison County heritage and traditions. The mission of the Society is to record, preserve, and stimulate interest in the history of Madison County, its families, occupations and way of life. Memberships [expire at the end of the calendar year](#). Membership and other contributions to the Society are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Types of Membership:

Sustainer.....	\$500 or more	Business	\$50
Benefactor	\$250 to \$499	Family	\$30
Partner	\$100 to \$249	Single	\$20
Friend	\$50 to \$99	Student	\$5

Membership applications are available at Kemper Residence and Museum, and on-line at the Society's web page - www.madisonvahistoricalociety.org. (Click on "ABOUT US", and then on "application"). For more information, call the Society Office at 540 395-5119. Please leave a message if no one answers. We will return your call. You can also email us at madisonvahistory@gmail.com

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