



BATH COUNTY HERITAGE

Preserving the Past for Generations to Come

Bath County Historical Society
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DR. JAMES ROBERTSON, HISTORIAN, TO SPEAK AT SPRING MEETING



Dr. James Robertson, professor of history at Virginia Tech, and noted Civil War historian, will present "How the Civil War Still Lives" at our annual Spring Meeting.

Because our last event at The Homestead garnered such great reviews, we're repeating that venue. We'll meet **Sunday, May 1 at 2 p.m.** in the Commonwealth Room of The Homestead Resort in Hot Springs

We'll kick off things by voting on three new board members, say good-bye to two directors who've served us well, and, after Dr. Robertson's presentation, refreshments will be served.

James I. Robertson Jr. teaches the largest Civil War history class in America, with an average of 250 students per semester. He holds a bachelor's degree from Randolph-Macon College, a master's and a doctoral degree from Emory University, and three honorary degrees.

Dr. Robertson's award-winning books include General A.P. Hill, Soldiers Blue and Gray, Civil War!, America Becomes One Nation, The Confederate Spirit, and the 950-page biography, Stonewall Jackson: The Man, The Soldier, The Legend, a work that won an unprecedented eight national awards. His latest books include Stonewall Jackson's Book of Maxims and, with artist Mort Kunstler, Gods and Generals: The Companion Volume for the Movie.

A historical consultant for "Gods and Generals", the hit movie released in 2003, Robertson also has television and radio credits. He appears regularly in Civil War programs on A&E, the History Channel, C-Span, and public television. His weekly Civil War program is aired on 11 public radio stations, including WVTF, based in Roanoke.

We are very pleased to offer this exciting program to our members on Sunday, May 1 at 2 p.m. at The Homestead. The event is **free to Historical Society members**; non-members will be asked for a donation of \$10 per person. We hope to see you there!

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Betsy Byrd
Sarah Hagen McWilliams

2005 DUES ARE DUE!

If you have not already sent your dues for 2005, please do so at your earliest opportunity! Your dues are **IMPORTANT** to us; we rely on them to pay for our day-to-day operating expenses. Basic annual dues, individual or family, are \$25. Other levels include Friend, \$100; Associate, \$200; Benefactor, \$300; Grantor, \$400; and Lifetime, \$500. Please mail your dues to us at P.O. Box 212, Warm Springs, VA 24484-0212. **THANK YOU!**



WOULD YOU MAKE A DECENT DOCENT?

We are hoping to establish a docent program here at our museum and library this spring. While we have identified several resident members whom we think may be interested, perhaps we overlooked **YOU!**

Our goal is to build a league of dependable docents that will allow us to be open five or six days a week during summer and fall.

As a docent, you would greet and assist visitors and researchers and, perhaps, take on a special project that piques your interest. The protocol is not difficult; in fact, once you get the hang of it, a day here can be quite satisfying and a lot of fun!

If your interest in Bath's history is such that you could spend just one day a month, or every six months, here at the Society headquarters, we'd like to treat you to lunch!

On Thursday, April 28, we ask all those interested in learning more to join us here at the Historical Society museum for an orientation tour at 11 a.m. At 12:30, we'll head to The Inn at Gristmill Square for lunch.

After that meeting, if you decide to join the Docent League, a more in-depth orientation will follow in early May.

Please let us know if you'll be our guest by phoning 540-839-2543, or send us an email at:

bathcountyhistory@tds.net.

**TAKE AN ONLINE TOUR
OF THE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY MUSEUM AND
RESEARCH LIBRARY AT
www.bathcountyva.org**

RENOVATION PLANS MOVING AHEAD FOR RESEARCH CENTER



Ever since we built the addition and basement in 1995, we've dreamed about turning that basement into a genealogical research center. Now, it seems as if that dream could come true!

Contractor Andrew Watkins (son of our dear departed treasurer Bill, and husband of our Board nominee Aimee) took an in-depth look at the basement last winter, and gave us an estimate. Our goal is to finish the basement (walls, ceilings, carpet, shelves), and then move our research library downstairs. That would free the vast and attractive upstairs space to expand our museum.

Then, we took a look at the façade of our 1875 museum, and deemed it in dire need of new paint. Right now, there are layers of paint that date back 130 years; to do the job right, that old paint would need to be removed before fresh coats are added. Then we realized that, once the old building was painted, the 10-year-old paint job on the 1995 addition would look rather shopworn. So, we decided to get bids on painting the entire exterior, 1875 and 1995.

Once we considered these projects, we knew we'd need to seek grant funding. We have thus far submitted two applications for partial grants (Alleghany Foundation and Gwathmey Trust), and will be submitting requests to the Beirne Carter Foundation, the Morgan Trust and the Lettie Pate Evans Foundation in the early fall.

TALE OF THE TERRILLS CONTINUES!

Who can forget the tragic tale of the Terrills of Bath?

Soon, those who were captivated by the story of Bath Commonwealth's Attorney William H. Terrill (1800-1890) and his Confederate and Union Army sons, will have much more material to pour through!

Thanks to a bequest from Ann C. Porterfield, our Society received almost 150 letters and papers from William Henry Terrill, his sons William Rufus, James Barbour, Philip, George, and John Allen, and his daughter, Emily Terrill Porterfield of Charles Town, W. Va.

As a result of the stunning bequest, we have become "sisters" with the Jefferson County, W. Va. Historical Society in Charles Town. That Society, too, was a beneficiary in Mrs. Porterfield's will; they received many letters, documents and photographs relating to the Porterfields. JCHS president Bill Drennen and archivist/JCHS board member Hugh Voress met in Charles Town with Margo Oxendine and Society Board nominee and Bath historian Richard Armstrong in February. It was a fascinating day, filled with wonderful discoveries.

The materials are now on their way to West Virginia University, where Dr. John A. Cuthbert, his staff and students will digitize and catalog them. When that task is completed in about three months, all the materials will be available on CD. Then, the Jefferson County Historical Society plans to donate its originals from the Porterfield bequest to the Bath County Historical Society.

We have recently applied for a \$500 grant from the Southwestern Virginia Genealogical Society; if approved, these funds will be used to purchase museum-quality archival materials for the Terrill collection.



FROM THE PRESIDENT..

Greetings! Spring has arrived and the change of season gives me the opportunity to provide our membership with several exciting announcements for the coming year.

The board join me in inviting you to our annual meeting Sunday, May 1 at 2 p.m. The Homestead Resort has generously offered the Commonwealth Room for our meeting and we will host noted Civil War historian Dr. James "Bud" Robertson, who will address the lasting legacy of that conflict. You may have listened to him on his weekly NPR program on the Civil War, or read his recent landmark biography of Stonewall Jackson. His contributions to Civil War research have been far-reaching, and should make our afternoon with him fascinating. Please join us!

On May 1, we will also be saying goodbye to two board members. With deep appreciation, we thank Kent Ford for his many contributions during his two terms. I have had the pleasure of serving with Kent in various capacities over the years, and will miss his institutional knowledge, calm demeanor and sense of humor on the board. We also bid farewell to the Society's acting Secretary after one term, Lila Behrens. As many of you know, Lila has taken advantage of career opportunities which have taken her (temporarily, we hope!) to Northern Virginia. Her active involvement on the board during her term has made our work not only easier, but also much more enjoyable!

The coming year holds several capital and fundraising goals for us. Thanks to the work of Vice President Theresa Damewood and Director Margo Oxendine, grant applications have been submitted to assist with repainting the outside of the museum and renovating the basement. After meeting with Bath County's board of supervisors over the winter, we are hopeful that they will continue the county's much needed and deeply appreciated investment in the Historical Society in this year's budget.

This leaves you, our members, to continue to help make ends meet. Our annual operating expenses total \$36,000, the bulk of which is underwritten by dues and donations. We hope to follow-up on our successful 2004 fundraising campaign by raising \$25,000 in 2005. We will be contacting you this summer, and hope you will consider the Bath County Historical Society as you make your annual giving plans. There are many ways to contribute - please feel free to contact Margo, a board member or myself to learn more.

Thank you!

Jay Batley, President 2004/2005

NEW DIRECTORS PROPOSED

At the annual Spring Meeting on Sunday, May 1, members present will be asked to approve three new directors slated for service on the board. They are Richard L. Armstrong of Hot Springs, Aimee Watkins of Millboro, and Michael Wildasin of Alexandria and Millboro.

Mr. Armstrong is a noted Civil War author and local historian; he has served on the board in past years. Mrs. Watkins is a stay-at-home mother of two with another scheduled for Fall delivery. She resides in Millboro. Mr. Wildasin is a history educator, retired from Fairfax County Public Schools.

Directors of the Bath County Historical Society serve a three-year term, and are limited to two successive terms. After a year's hiatus, former directors may return to the board for another term or two.



Welcome New Members!

Horton and Mary Ann Beirme
Covington, VA
Daniel Bouton
Ruckersville, VA
Dr. Lanier and Faye Cauley
Theodore, AL
Custer LaRue Haws
Millboro, VA
Ryan and Cathy McKay
Warm Springs, VA
Anne and Keith Patterson
Winston-Salem, NC
Ron and Norma Schnakenberg
Hot Springs, VA

New LIFE Members

Bill and Peggy Benton
Hot Springs, VA
Mary H. Mustoe
Hot Springs, VA

Honor Those Departed

Carolynn Beach
Millboro, VA
James Clark
Millboro, VA
Kay Ellis
Hot Springs, VA
Edna Helmintoller
Hot Springs, VA
Merrill Mays
Covington, VA
Ann Sams
Millboro, VA



In Passing ...

We note with sorrow the passing of former board member Carolynn Beach, in November 2004, and founder and long-time director Edna Johnson Helmintoller, who died in January 2005. As her final gift to the Society, we received \$430 in donations in memory of Mrs. Helmintoller.



FROM THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOOK CELLAR

- Abstracts of Bath Co. Va. Will Books 5 & 6 1843-1875, H. W. Cochran \$25, postage \$3 Index to The Valley Road, (Fay Ingalls), Sam Hileman, \$2.50 (0)
- Alexander Hamilton 1725-1796 of Augusta and Bath Counties Virginia: His Descendants.. Vol II, Thomas Bird Hamilton, W Clay Hamilton, Jr., \$46.80 (\$4)
- Annals of Bath County, Virginia, Oren Morton \$25, (\$3) Bath Co. Marriage Bonds & Ministers Returns-1791-1853 \$25 (\$3)
- Bath Co. Personal Property Tax List Vol. 1. 1791-1801, D.R. Jones \$20, (\$3) Snapshot before the War-Census of 1860, Bath Co., Holly W. Cochran \$26 (\$3)
- Bath County Va. 1850 Census, Patricia & Ashley Viellenave, \$13 (\$3) Bath County, Va. Death Records, 1853-1867, P.G. and A.R. Viellenave, \$25 (\$3)
- Bath County, Va. Deaths, 1868-1895, Patricia and Ashley, Viellenave, \$32 (\$3) Bath Co. Wills & Inventories, 1791-1842 Jean Bruns, \$25 (\$3)
- The Bicentennial History of Bath Co. Virginia 1791-1991 \$50 (\$5) Henry Wise Hoover of Carlover, Bath Co. Va., Hoover B. Lide \$15 (\$3)
- French Harding: Civil War Memoirs, Dr. Victor Thacker, \$16 (\$3) Highland Co., Va. 1860 Census and Marriages 1853-1860, Holly Cochran, \$19 (\$3)
- Historically Speaking: True Tales of Bath County, Virginia Hugh S. Gwin \$27.50 (\$5) Bath County in the Civil War Richard L. Armstrong, \$6 (\$1)
- Alleg. Highlands VA Manuscripts: A Guide to US Collections C.A. Bodie, Ed. \$22.50 (\$3) Early Western Augusta Pioneers, George W. Cluck, \$40 (\$5)
- Parkway Byways: 5,000 Miles of Scenic Drives, James R. Hinkle \$19 (\$4)
- NEW! NEW! NEW!** Images of America: Bath County, Virginia by Margo Oxendine \$20 (\$4)
- Sunsets Over the Gap: Stories about the Family of Charles and Jennie Hodge from Bath County, Virginia by Jimmy Hicks \$75 (\$5)
- First Resorts: An 1804 Visit to Virginia's Springs \$6 (\$1)
- Traveling Through Time: An Illustrated Guide to the Historic Mountains of Virginia and West Virginia, written and illustrated by Porte Crayon (David Hunter Strother 1816-1888) \$8 (\$1)
- Healing Waters, Tranquil Valleys Anne McClung, Ellen Martin, \$30 (\$5)

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*Where History Keeps
on Happening!*

Tennessee Troops March Through Bath

Contributed By Richard L. Armstrong

In late July 1861, when additional troops were called for in Western Virginia, it was decided to send several regiments of Tennessee Infantry to that section. The first of these, the 14th Tennessee, arrived by rail at Millboro Depot on the afternoon of July 28, 1861. After unloading, the Tennesseans pitched their tents and camped until July 30. They spent their leisure time resting, writing letters home and enjoying the scenery. At least one of the soldiers worried about their safety, writing "...the enemy is all about here ... [they] are lurking over these Mountains and I would not be surprised [sic] if we was in an engagement by 12 tomorrow."

The correspondent from the 14th Tennessee signing himself as Phonax, described the countryside for his friends at home: "This is the wildest looking county I ever saw, and more adapted for Indian warfare than that of civilized nations. Hills and hollows, rocks and ravines, snakes and snags, and every other thing ever before heard of, except "something good to eat," abound." Phonax added "We have near the camp, a tremendous wealth of pure water, and the general health of the camp is better than ever before. The fine breeze from the mountains, and bracing, pure air of the morning, is much relished."

The 1st Tennessee arrived next, on July 30th, followed by the 7th Tennessee, which arrived on the morning of July 31st. Surgeon William P. Parker was not so complimentary about Millboro, confiding to his diary "This place is as near no where as any in existence."

Others of the 7th Tennessee spent their brief stay in Millboro by exploring the countryside, going through the tunnel and picking huckleberries. When their train of wagons arrived, the men packed their baggage and commenced their westward march. After going about three miles, the regiment went into camp along the Cowpasture River. Surgeon Parker noted in his diary that the night was spent at "Falls" church, sleeping on the ground in the pouring rain. Other than the mention of camping near a church or school house along the Cowpasture River (or creek, as they sometimes called it), the exact location of their camp has been lost.

A total of five Tennessee Regiments entered Bath County during the latter part of July and the first few days of August, 1861. All but one of these arrived by rail, the 8th Tennessee Regiment marched from Staunton to Millboro.

Captain George W. Higgins, of Company G, 8th Tennessee Infantry, recounted his journey by stage coach from Millboro to Warm Springs for the readers of the *Fayetteville Observer*. "I took the stage at Millboro, a depot on the Staunton and Jackson River r. r. [rail road], for the Warm Springs, distant 15 miles, across the mountains. Nothing of particular interest occurred during the trip. We were not halted but once; this was caused by a snake crossing the road and completely blockading it. But it only stopped us for a few minutes. Going at a rapid rate it crossed the road in 15 or 20 minutes, and we again went on the uneven tenor of our way, and reached the Warm Springs about daylight next morning."

The topic of snakes fills the later correspondence of the Tennessee Soldiers to their loved ones back home. From their comments, along with Captain Higgins' account, you would think they had never seen a snake.

As the other Tennessee troops marched toward Huntersville, the 16th Tennessee arrived at Millboro on August 4th. Immediately after their arrival, they cleared a place to camp and pitched their tents. That chore completed, the officers called their companies to order and began drilling them. At least one company engaged in target practice, firing at targets one hundred yards distant.

A number of sick men from the 16th Tennessee were left at Millboro on August 5th, under the charge of Doctor Thomas Black. By the following day, the number of sick increased and they were all consolidated at the Bath Alum Springs, where a regular hospital was established. Other sick soldiers were brought here, until more than a hundred were lodged at the hotel.

The march across Warm Springs Mountain took its toll on the as yet untried soldiers. One of the 1st Tennessee noted that the march took place on "an awful hot August day," and that many of the boys threw away their knapsacks along the way. Another member of the 1st Tennessee wrote about the mountains and his comrades: "It seemed that mountain was piled upon mountain. No sooner would we arrive at a place that seemed to be the top then another view of a higher and yet higher mountain would rise before us. From the foot to the tip of the mountain the soldiers lined the road, broken down and exhausted. First one blanket was thrown away, and then another; now and then a good pair of pants, old boots and shoes, Sunday hats, pistols and Bowie knives strewed the road. Old bottles and jugs and various and sundry articles were lying pell-mell everywhere. Up and up, and onward and upward we pulled and toiled, until we reached the very top, when there burst upon our view one of the grandest and most beautiful landscapes we ever beheld. ... A glad shout arose from those who had gained the top, which cheered and encouraged the others to persevere."

The soldiers made their way up Warm Springs Mountain along the winding road, making for easy grades, but lengthening their trip. The men became tired as the early August heat took its toll and they soon used up all their water. The prospect of refilling their canteens was bleak on the eastern side of the mountain, but upward they continued. Many of the weary soldiers took refuge in the shade by the side of the road.

A member of the 14th Tennessee described the scene that greeted them at the top of the mountain: "... when in the late afternoon the summit was reached by those in advance there was presented to their view such a grand Panorama of Nature that the heat, thirst, and fatigue of that terrible [terrible] march was for the time forgotten in the contemplation of one of the finest to be had in all that section, in front as far as the eye could reach arose the great ranges of the



Continued...

Tennessee Troops March Through Bath By Richard L. Armstrong

Aleghaney [sic] Mountains rising one above the other until the highest peaks seemed lost in the sky. And just beneath (as it seemed at first – only a mile or two) lay the beautiful Warm Springs Valley; With its fields of wavering Grain, green pastures, with herds of fat cattle grazing; and the cozy farm houses nestling in the shady groves; With the courses of many rippling brooks marking their way from the springs across fields and wood to the main stream that naturally drained the valley: And like a gem as a setting to the view. Was the village of Warm Springs, the great Hotel, surrounded by the bath & spring houses and many other buildings. It was only for a few minutes that Nature and the sight of the flowing streams in the Valley below called the wearied stragglers [stragglers] to Move on, and the Mad rush in which it was hard to control the now weak and wabbling [wobbling] legs on the thoroughly disorganized mob, driven by a raging thirst to reach the water they had glimpses of in the valley below.”

The residents of the Warm Springs area turned out to greet the strangers in a manner most acceptable – with a nice, warm dinner. Phonax, writing of the march and their reception at Warm Springs, noted: “We found the people at the Warm Springs kind, social, and liberal. I stopped at a house on the roadside with a friend, and ate the best and healthiest meal I have had the pleasure of enjoying since I left camp Quarles, and the best of it was, no remuneration would be received by the hostess, although insisted upon.” The Warm Springs seemed to be quite a curiosity to the Tennessee soldiers, one of them noting in his diary that the “... boys have a fine time bathing in warm water.” Another member of the 7th Tennessee noted: “Warm Springs was a great summer resort, and at the spring they had a large house built over the pool, which the warm water ran through. The pool of water must have been about 40 or 50 feet square, and 4 or 5 feet deep. On the side of the pool were little dressing rooms. We all went down there and went in, it felt so good, that some of the fellows stayed so long that when they got out they were so weak they could hardly walk.”

Sam Watkins, 1st Tennessee, recalled: “They had a large bath-house at Warm Springs. A large pool of water arranged so that a person could go in any depth he might desire. It was a free thing, and we pitched in. We had no idea of the enervating effect it would have upon our physical systems, and as the water was but little past tepid, we stayed in a good long time. But when we came out we were as limp as dishrags. About this time the assembly sounded and we were ordered to march. But we couldn't march worth a cent. There we had to stay until our systems had had sufficient recuperation.”

Surgeon Parker, 7th Tennessee, as usual, was somewhat critical of his visit to the pools. He wrote: “Have been in and took a bath. The water is pleasantly warm and was it not for the sulphuric acid gas, it would be delightful indeed. Made some of the boys very sick, by staying in the water too long a person should not stay in the bath over 5 minutes on account of the gas. I suffered a little from a headache after being in too long.”

The soldier-turned-correspondent for the *Clarksville Jeffersonian*, described the curiosity of the springs. “This spring is one of the strangest freaks of nature I ever saw. It runs from the side of a large mountain, is blood-warm, and smells strongly of sulphur. One of our boys so soon as he tasted it, said he wished to return home, and in strong language, which for fear of shocking your readers, I will not mention, remarked that his Satanic Majesty's domains were surely near, and he wanted to go and see “mammy.” They have a delightful bathing room, and the water has the best effect upon a tired man of anything I ever tried.”

A letter written by a soldier identified only as “Pro Aris Et Fidis” appeared in the *Fayetteville Observer*, on August 29, 1861, described the pools and a visit on August 4th to another nearby curiosity – Flag Rock. “About one mile from the springs, is an exceedingly high peak of the mountain, and almost destitute of vegetation. Upon this pinnacle the citizens have erected a tall Hickory pole, upon the top of which is a large and beautiful Confederate flag that can be seen to float for miles around. Beneath this flag you may stand and gaze at nature's sublimity and grandeur until you are lost in wonder and amazement. In any direction you may turn your eyes, you can behold peak after peak, rising one above the other with rugged cliffs and rocks hanging in grand silence around them, until they are lost in the distance. At the base, and between the peaks are the deepest gorges, and occasionally a rich and verdant valley, dotted with a comfortable white cottage building. The Springs are to me, one of the “world's wonders.” It presents a phenomena [sic] in nature that the most scientific Geologist has never yet explained satisfactorily – perhaps never will. There are three large springs, about fifty feet distant from each other, and from the three springs there emerges enough water to turn almost any kind of machinery. One of the springs is in a round gum about three feet in diameter, and the same depth. The others are twenty and thirty feet square respectively and from three to six feet deep. The water, I think, is a little more than milk warm, and as limpid and clear as crystal. The walls of the springs are carved out of solid sand rock. The bottoms are covered with small fragments of broken rock, which are of a blue appearance, in consequence of the sediment from the water gathering upon them. The greatest curiosity to me, of all, is the fact that, ten thousand times ten thousand bubbles, from the size of a small shot to that of an egg, are constantly rising from the bottom to every square inch of the surface. Why is this? He who can explain this, is far better versed in the mysteries of earth, than I am, and the problem will be left for them to solve. Near by these Warm Springs, is as fine a spring as I have ever seen, the water of which is almost ice-cold. The proprietor has expended vast sums of money, in preparing this place for the accommodation of the public.

END OF PART 1, PART 2 WILL APPEAR IN THE NEXT EDITION