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# Augusta Country

## Teens appreciate volunteer experiences

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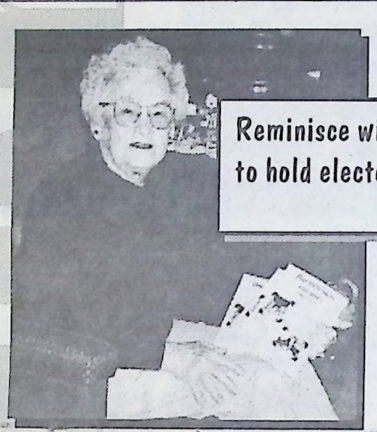
February 1999 Vol. 6, Issue 2 P.O. Box 51, Middlebrook, Va. 24459



Reminisce with the first woman to hold elected office in Staunton

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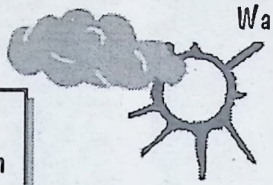
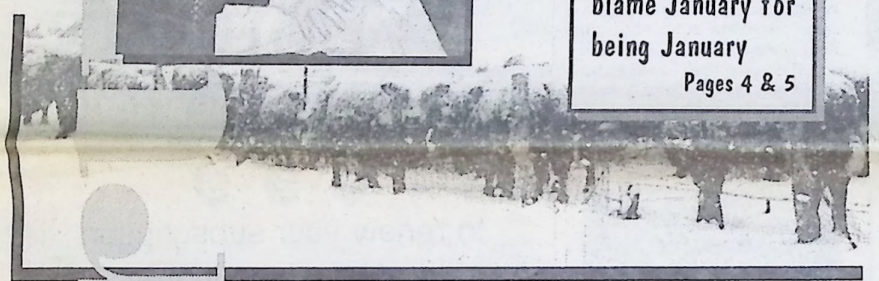


Wake up sleepyheads!!! Time for another issue of Augusta Country. And we're convinced -- without a shadow of a doubt -- that the stories in this issue will keep you entertained while you wait for spring to arrive.

Down on the farm, you can't blame January for being January

Pages 4 & 5




Join us for a visit with the folks in Stuarts Draft, the hub of Augusta County

Special Section, Pages 7-14

Feb. 1999

# Augusta folklore to be keynote of ACHS banquet

How many of us have heard family stories which were very entertaining and later wished we had taken the time to record them? It is from these conversations that folklorists learn the colorful details of individuals and cultures from the past.

The Augusta County Historical Society is interested in preserving local oral histories and, accordingly, has invited Bridgewater's John Heatwole, a local historian, folklorist, and author, to be the featured speaker at its annual dinner on March 1 at Tinkling Spring Presbyterian Church. The event is open to society members and guests.

The evening begins with a social hour at 6 p.m. followed by dinner and the program at 7. Heatwole's presentation, "The Folklore of Augusta County and its Offspring," will feature the folklore and stories of Augusta County as well as some of the surrounding region which was once part of Augusta.

Tickets are $15 per person. The cost covers both the dinner (vegetarian and non-vegetarian fare) and program. Snow date is March 8. To order tickets, write: Barbara Wright, 9 Bagby Street, Staunton, Va. 24401 or call 540-885-1315. Make checks payable to ACHS. Tickets also are available at these locations: in Staunton at The Bookstack, Wills and Terry Court Drug; in Waynesboro at Purple Foot and Waynesboro Heritage Foundation; in Dayton at Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society; in Bridgewater at Rebecca's Well; and in Harrisonburg at Red Front Grocery.

A popular speaker and radio personality, Heatwole's ties to the Shenandoah Valley stretch back to the 18th century when his family moved to Virginia from Pennsylvania around 1760. Some of his ancestors settled in Shenandoah, Rockingham, Augusta, Highland and Bath counties. Throughout those years, the family was noted for its craftsmen who included cabinetmakers, potters, weavers, long rifle makers, silversmiths and blacksmiths.

Heatwole followed family tradition and has pursued a career as a woodcarver and sculptor for almost three decades. In 1991 he became the first Virginia artist to be invited by the United States Senate to mount a solo exhibition of his work in the Senate Rotunda on Capitol Hill. Because of his interest in the history and culture of the people of western Virginia and West Virginia, Heatwole is actively involved in preservation work.

He was chairman of the Rockingham County Bicentennial Commission and is past president of the Shenandoah Valley Civil War Roundtable. He has written two books: *Shenandoah Voices: Legends and Traditions of the Valley*, and *The Burning: Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley*. Heatwole has also been a consultant for Time-Life Books. He and his wife, Miriam, have a son, David, who follows in the family footsteps as an artist. —

**This handmade cross-stitch quilt will be given away at the Augusta County Historical Society annual banquet to be held March 1 at Tinkling Spring Presbyterian Church in Fishersville. Banquet tickets are $15. Quilt tickets are *$1 each or a book of six for $5.***

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# Augusta Country

is published 11 times each year by
**See-KWA! Publishing**
P.O. Box 51 Middlebrook, Va. 24459
**Subscription rate: $16 per year**

Publisher & editor — Betty Jo Hamilton
Sales associate — Chris Marrs
Sales associate — Leslie Scheffel
RHS News advisor — Cherie Taylor
RHS News editor — Julie Grimm

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# Former Staunton court clerk turns memories into book of reminiscences

By NANCY SORRELLS

STAUNTON — When Edith Paxton puts her mind to something, it gets done, and it gets done right. So when the 77-year-old former Staunton Clerk of Court decided to write a book reminiscing about her life, there was no turning back.

Shortly before Christmas, with a stack of books in hand, that idea became reality. With the completion of *And then there was more: Reminiscences*, Edith became a published author. The 125-page volume takes readers on a journey back to the days when the 20th century was a lot younger and Augusta County was markedly different. It was edited and published by the local history publishing company, Lot's Wife Publishing.

Born in Lexington to Emory and Daisy Hill, Staunton's newest author spent most of her youth growing up on a family farm just outside the village of Greenville. In addition to farming, her parents also ran a service station, store and, for a while, a tourist home along Route 11. Edith's stories of family life with her parents and younger sister Bertha are warm, inspiring and often humorous. There is the sad day the family's house burned to the ground... the time that Edith outsmarted some potential robbers at the family store... the funny story of the church-going matron who lost her bloomers one Sunday... and tales of city women who stopped in at the tourist home and needed to learn a thing or two about country life.

Lifelong residents of southern Augusta County might even recognize a few of the characters in the book including Dr. Thomas and storekeeper Howe Spitler.

The latter part of Edith's book talks about her wartime marriage to Hillary Paxton and setting up housekeeping in Staunton. There is also a chapter about her 27 years as clerk of the Staunton Circuit Court. She was the first woman to hold an elective office in the city. The book concludes with her retirement years and some reflections on life.

Edith Paxton of Staunton holds copies of her book, *And then there was more: Reminiscences*, which she recently authored. Mrs. Paxton is a former Staunton Clerk of Court and was the first woman to hold elective office in the city.

Photo by Nancy Sorrells

"I never thought I'd ever write a book. I had no idea I would write one," Edith said recently from her home where she resides with her husband of 56 years.

She admits that it took some time for the idea to germinate. "When I would be reminiscing with friends, sometimes they would say, 'Edith you should write a book.' But I gave it no serious thought until my cousin came to visit and he gave me a copy of his book (about growing up in Arkansas). It provided my inspiration and he said, 'Edith, you should write a book and we would know how you grew up.'"

She explains that the stories in her book were the product of a lot of sleepless nights over the past two years. "I would get up and make a note on those nights when I was lying awake reminiscing about my life and my experiences," she said.

The title for the book, *And then there was more*, was almost a given she adds. "In thinking back over my life, there has always been more of everything: more love, more work on the farm. If we would pick potato bugs off the plants and then look back on the row, there would always be more potato bugs. Even as a child, when we came back from visiting some less fortunate families in the mountains, I felt like there was oh-so-much more we could have done. Today there is so much more that needs to be done in the world. There are more lonely people who need comforting and more mouths to feed. There is always more of everything."

> *"I am just a simple, ordinary farm girl who has enjoyed a beautiful life, filled with many interesting experiences and, having reminisced before some of my friends, was encouraged to write."*
>
> *Edith Paxton*
> *Staunton*

Growing up in the 1920s and 1930s in the Greenville area surrounded by a loving family was wonderful, which is part of the reason why she decided to put those memories down on paper. "Greenville was a quiet area and a good place for my parents to raise children. We were exposed to a lot, but my parents saw that we had a good upbringing and were allowed to grow and mature in a quiet setting," she said.

She learned a lot from that upbringing she said. "I learned that hard work never hurt anyone and I learned to assume responsibility."

She also learned about love. "The word love is one of the greatest words in my vocabulary and it has so many different meanings. Love is one of the greatest things I learned growing up — how to be kind and thoughtful. A lot of that credit goes to my parents because the love they gave was true agape love — to be able to love and not expect anything in return, the way the Lord loves us. If we get that training when we are young, then we can't lose," she said with emotion.

Edith added that she was pleased to have written a book. As she writes in her book's preface: "I am just a simple, ordinary farm girl who has enjoyed a beautiful life, filled with many interesting experiences and, having reminisced before some of my friends, was encouraged to write. It is my hope that the readers will find conveyed in these pages something of what life had to offer some 70 years ago and continues to offer to a farm girl who grew up near the village of Greenville in Augusta County, Virginia. Life has been full of good things and beautiful people."

As for what she will do now that the book is finished and available for sale, she is not sure, but knows she will keep busy. "I don't like to be idle," she exclaims. There is probably some handwork, either sewing or crocheting, she says, as well as participation in her church, First Baptist in Staunton. And she has been thinking about doing some more writing.

Whatever it is she does, she will stay active. She refers to a favorite quote from Tennyson in *Ulysses*. "'How dull it is to pause, to make an end, To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!... Some work of noble note may yet be done... though much is taken, much abides.'"

"Tennyson gave encouragement to those of us going through the aging process," she says. Her book may not be "a work of noble note," she adds, "but it will show stubborn determination not to 'rust unburnished' and will be something I have wanted to accomplish. Age and responsibilities occupy many hours of the day, but 'Though much is taken, much abides.'"

Edith's book is availableat The Bookstack or from her for $12 plus $1.75 postage and handling. Call her at 540/886-2508 to order a copy. —

# Don't blame January for being January

DOWN ON THE FARM

BY

BETTY JO HAMILTON

Down on the farm we're thinking about how quickly things change. No, no. We're not setting out to reminisce about the good old days. It is, perhaps, appropriate to be more specific. We're thinking about how quickly the weather changes. Or, at least, how quickly it has been prone to change of late.

Winter is not an easy time for those of us down on the farm. It's not easy for the two-legged critters and it's not particularly easy for four-legged ones either. I'm not apt to spend a lot of time pondering how cold weather affects the animals, because it is likely to make me start thinking of them in terms other than those which are correct and proper for animals.

People often ask me how the cows or sheep are getting along in the cold weather. To me this question implies that cows and sheep have a sense of what cold weather is and how, for them, it differs from warm weather. Cows and sheep are concerned — if you can even call it that — about one thing and one thing only, and that is how they are to go about filling their rather vast stomachs. Making this task even more difficult is that, unlike humans, cows and sheep have several stomachs. So when a person gets hungry, it's because his stomach is empty. When a cow or sheep gets hungry, it's because any of a number of their stomachs are empty. This is an example of how hunger has an entirely different meaning for a cow or a sheep than it does for a person. So when someone asks me how the cows and sheep are getting along, it's hard for me to say since I can't identify with the problem of having several stomachs which might be empty at any given time of the day.

When the cows and sheep can't find naturally occurring vegetation to fill their multiple stomachs, they have to rely on two-legged creatures to supply the feed necessary to keep their bodies going. In the winter time, practically all we get done down on the farm is provide feed so the animals can keep their stomachs full.

This chore, of course, is directly affected by winter weather conditions. When temperatures are mild and precipitation is light, getting feed to the animals is not too difficult. When the weather gets nasty — frigid temperatures, snow, sleet, freezing rain, wind, you know what I mean — getting feed around to the animals becomes difficult and, sometimes, nearly impossible.

When the weather is consistently nasty — that is, when we have day after day of freezing weather and precipitation — we get accustomed to these conditions and seem to cope with them in routine fashion. However, we run into trouble when weather conditions change almost daily — and sometimes moment by moment. Weather conditions have been changing so rapidly of late that if you hear a weather forecast at noon, by 1 p.m. the noon forecast no longer applies. Not that the weather forecasters manage to always give an accurate prediction. They take a shot at it, sure. But I still find the best way to figure out what the weather is doing is to look out the window.

Yet weather conditions have been changing so rapidly of late that even the window weather forecast method fails. One night recently I noticed the stars shining brightly with no hint of trouble on the horizon. Within the next hour I looked out to see it snowing, which it did all night and into the next day — oddly enough. There had been no forecast for the snow. All the powers of modern science and satellite technology had failed to spot conditions which gave rise to the brief winter storm. But there it was just the same.

This was the snow which fell on top of the two inches of ice and snow which had frozen hard into a solid sheet of ice just days before. This made it treacherous for two-legged creatures to walk in a reasonable fashion. I found myself taking tiny baby steps and walking with my arms outstretched ready to grab hold of anything which might help break an inevitable crash to the ground. I was successful in this save for two occasions when I slammed down on the ground hard. There's just nothing worse than the sensation of feeling one's feet fly in all the wrong directions knowing that in a matter of milliseconds one's body is going to hit the ground hard. UMPH!

In this vein, too, folks have asked me about the cows and the sheep. How do they manage to get around on the ice and in the snow? They ask this and I think they must be joking, then I see the serious expressions on their faces. I don't worry too much about the cows and sheep, because they have four-wheel drive and I don't.

In the case of sheep, they're much closer to the ground than me, so even if they fall — and because they're enrobed in great woolly cushions — they don't stand nearly as much chance of getting hurt as I do.

I will say I got a sort of wicked chuckle out of seeing some yearling ewes have a train wreck on the ice recently. They were on their way to feed troughs — cancel that — they were stampeding toward feed troughs — for their morning feed, when they hit an icy patch. Oh baby, did those ewes go sailing across the barnyard, one right after another. It was like one of those videos you see on TV of people's most embarrassing moments. Seeing the sheep crash into one another was pretty comical. But they just jumped up and headed on to the feed troughs. So I have to assume they don't care much about falling down, but they do care a lot about filling their empty stomachs.

Maneuverability is a little trickier for cattle than it is for sheep. They're much larger than their woolly pasture mates, so cattle take a bit more care in walking on ice than sheep do. Cows, in particular, have to take special care because they can get hurt quite badly if they fall on ice. But then, again, they do have four-wheel drive capacity, so if one foot slips, they have three other legs and feet on which to steady themselves. Meanwhile, if we folks with two-wheel drive lose traction on one foot, we're pretty much goners from a standing up perspective.

The way the weather has been changing so rapidly lately hasn't given two-legged or four-legged critters very much time to adjust. Take the weather conditions of just a few weeks ago, for instance. One day we're teetering around on two inches of solid ice. The next day the ice is covered with six inches of snow. The snow actually helped a little bit with traction but once it got packed down on top of the ice — look out — we're talking wipe-out city.

Then the next day it rained — not just a drizzle, we're talking serious downpour — and the temperature climbed up into the 40s. Now 40 degrees might not sound very warm but when there's six inches of snow on the ground which is covered with two inches of solid ice and it warms up and rains, water goes everywhere.

During winter in Upstate New York they have what is called "lake effect snow," when moisture rising off the Great Lakes turns into snow and blows inland often piling up in substantial quantities. Well, down here when it snows six inches then it warms up and rains, this condition is simply called the "lake effect." Anywhere water can accumulate it does, which turns entire pastures and meadows into lakes.

This is what we faced the morning it rained after the day it snowed. Paddocks used for some sheep were completely underwater. Outside of fitting the sheep with flotation devices, it then became necessary to find somewhere else for the sheep to spend their day about which they were not keenly content. Their preference is to frolic about in the meadow during daylight hours and when this activity is restricted, the sheep get real cranky and complain to me. Then I get cranky, but there's no one to whom I can complain, so I just have to stay cranky until I can find a way to get the sheep out where they can frolic on a normal basis.

But then, just getting them out — that is out of the shed where some of them have been overnighting of recent — is less than simple nowadays since one of the shed doors has been frozen shut for more than two weeks. This also makes me cranky. I can still get the sheep in and out of the shed but it means I (and the sheep) have to walk all the way around the barn across great expanses of ice to get the sheep to their daytime pasture.

With the weather in its January frenzy, pastures which were under water one day were turned into vast skating rinks when the temperature plummeted into the teens the night after the warm up and rain. Although the rain washed

See *WARM UP*, page 5

Cows huddle together while waiting out an early morning January snow storm.

Photo by Betty Jo Hamilton

## ◦Warm up

*Continued from page 4*

away all the snow, it did very little in the way of removing that two-inch crust of ice. So then we had not just the two inches of crusted ice but pastures frozen rock hard with standing water.

And water froze around gates which have to be routinely opened and closed but now won't because the bottom of the gates are frozen solid in ice and somebody has to get a big iron bar and whack away at the ice in order to break it up so the gates can be opened and closed. The animals don't get too cranky about this, but I do.

I'm telling you, the groundhog has got this whole winter business figured out — eat a lot of food, crawl into a hole and sleep until April. I'm convinced that's the ticket. Just go to sleep after New Year's and wake up in time for April Fool's. It's an idea whose time has come. If I can just figure out a way to get the cattle and sheep to go along with the same program, I'll be in good shape.

I haven't said much about how the wind figures into all these weatherly fluctuations. The least that can be said about the wind is that I could just do without it altogether in the winter time. I can abide low temperatures. I can abide snow or sleet. But when that wind starts to blow, it's practically like fingernails on a chalkboard. It sends literal chills along one's spine and cuts through heavy layers of clothing like a sharp knife.

One recent day the temperature actually was rather moderate — O.K. it was 35 degrees but that felt pretty warm compared to single digits from the day before — but with the wind blowing, the temperature might as well have been 20 degrees. I would prefer it to be 20 degrees with no wind than 30 degrees with strong winds. Calm conditions are much more readily endured than windy conditions — the wind stalks a person and, like a playground bully, shoves and pushes all weaklings in its path. Spending several hours out of doors being buffeted by the wind completely wears a person out.

Even the cattle demonstrate some discomfort with the wind. When conditions are particularly bad, the cattle huddle in a mass and shelter one another from the brunt of the weather. I'm not sure how they decide which ones have to be on the outside of the huddle. Maybe they take turns. They've never volunteered the information and I've never taken enough interest to determine how they figure it out. But they do.

If there's anything the cattle and sheep have to do during the winter that perhaps is just a little aggravating for them, it is wait for the tractor or the feed truck to deliver the goods. The animals spend a lot of time waiting at the gate for feed as they see other animals in nearby pastures accept delivery of the daily feed ration.

The cattle are patient enough for the most part, the sheep less so. A pasture full of hungry sheep bleating at full volume is enough to ensure that they are always the first to get fed in the mornings. But perhaps the cattle, like those of us delivering the feed, just want the sheep to quit all that racket and are just as happy for them to be fed first so the sheep will cease and desist their bleating. It's a noise that's enough to drive a person a little more than stir crazy.

If you're among those who are wondering how things are going down on the farm these days... well, from my perspective, things are just about routine for a typical January — it's cold, we're trying to keep warm and we're trying to keep the animals fed. We'd like it a little better if the weather was less changeable. But we can't do much about the weather, down on the farm. That's just the way it is. You can't blame January for being January. —

# Va.'s Right to Farm Act faces peril in Assembly

**AC staff report**

RICHMOND -- Virginia Farm Bureau's legislative services reports that Virginia's Right to Farm Act is coming under fire in the current session of the General Assembly.

According to Farm Bureau reports, a bill under consideration by the Senate Agriculture Committee would eliminate Right to Farm protection for certain farms. Farm Bureau is encouraging farmers to contact members of the Senate Agriculture Committee as well as local representatives to voice support for the Right to Farm Act.

Virginia's Right to Farm Act, sponsored by Sen. Frank Nolen, D-New Hope, was passed by the 1994 Assembly. It went into effect April 1, 1995 and eliminated the requirement that special use permits be obtained for agriculture facilities being built within areas zoned for agriculture use.

Senate Bill 733, presently before the Senate Agriculture Committee, would -- if passed by the Assembly -- remove Right to Farm protection of all farms with more than 300 animal units, according to Farm Bureau reports. The current wording of the legislation includes all farms of this size, even pastured livestock.

Sen. Madison Marye, D-Shawsville, is chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee. Farm Bureau reports indicate that Marye is willing to negotiate on the pending legislation; however, Farm Bureau supports the Right to Farm Act only in its original form. Farm Bureau has been lobbying members of the committee to prevent the new legislation from being approved, however VFB officials are warning that "the downside is that every legislator we visit has a two-inch stack of letters and contacts regarding how poorly all farms are operated."

Farm Bureau is seeking the support of all Virginia farmers to save the Right to Farm Act in its original form. VFB is urging farmers to

See RIGHT TO FARM, page 17

# Middlebrook landowners set sights on preserving farmland

By NANCY SORRELLS

MIDDLEBROOK — There's something a little special about the land around Middlebrook in southern Augusta County. Maybe it's the sweeping farm fields that push up toward Little North Mountain or the bubbling springs and creeks, some splashing toward the James River and others gurgling northward to the Shenandoah. Maybe it's the animals, both the horses, cattle and sheep grazing in the fields, and the deer that skim over fences without a moment's hesitation. Could be it's the historic brick and log farmhouses that speak of a heritage tied to this land.

Whatever it is that's unique about this area — and that "something" is probably different for each person — made enough of an impact that 25 or so landowners, in the area on both sides of the Middlebrook Road (Va. 252) from Middlebrook south to the Augusta County line, have voluntarily created the Middlebrook Agricultural/Forestal District. By placing 5,620 acres in such a district, the owners have made a collective statement concerning their feelings about their homes and the land on which they live and work.

More than six years of hard work and planning finally paid off when the district became a reality in late 1998. It is only the second such district in the county, the first being the Middle River District in the northern part of the county.

> *"We just think this is a particularly attractive rural area. If you drive slowly from Middlebrook south, it's as nice as anywhere around. We think it's unique, has good forests, pretty terrain, and Moffett's Creek which runs along the road is a real pretty little creek."*
>
> *Jim Bundy*
> *Newport*

Such districts are rural zones reserved for the production of agricultural products and timber. They are established according to state guidelines with the approval of the local governing body, in this case the Augusta County Board of Supervisors. A district constitutes a voluntary agreement between landowners and the government that no new, non-agricultural uses will take place in the district. It provides a stronger protection for farmers and farmland than does traditional zoning.

The district was the result of the area's landowners working together voluntarily to form the protected land tract. During the organizational process, they received help and advice from the Valley Conservation Council (VCC), a group working to promote land use that sustains the farms, forests, open space, and cultural heritage of the Shenandoah Valley region.

Some of the new district participants are life-long Middlebrook residents, others are relative latecomers to the relaxed pace of life in the Augusta countryside, but all like what they have and where they have settled. Lt. Col. Jim Bundy and his wife Polly represent both extremes of those who live in the area — she was born and raised here and his family hailed from New York state. Jim was the inspiration behind the district's creation, and he and his wife were the first paid members of the Valley Conservation Council.

"We just think this is a particularly attractive rural area. If you drive slowly from Middlebrook south, it's as nice as anywhere around," Jim said. "We think it's unique, has good forests, pretty terrain, and Moffett's Creek which runs along the road is a real pretty little creek."

The Bundy family moved back to Polly's home turf in 1966 when Jim, an army artillery officer, retired after learning that his next assignment would be the Pentagon. The family had been living in Utah and while there had acquired five horses, animals that would present a real problem in the suburbs of Washington, D.C. "I knew it was either feed the horses or feed my family," Jim recalled with a touch of humor. So the family bought their farm, complete with an 1840s brick farmhouse, and moved to the country. The farm purchase came first, and eventually they learned to farm as did their children.

"After 25 years in the army living in government housing and knocking around the world, you can't imagine how delightful it was to get out of the army and settle in this area," exclaimed the retired lieutenant colonel. They have done much to improve the farm, including Polly's work of hand planting 500 tulip poplars which now make an impressive grove. "I guess you could say that we are dug in here now, literally," he said.

Others who have signed up for the district have come to the land differently. Waller Callison, for instance, is a lifelong resident of the area and his family runs a farm operation. He placed a 293-acre tract in the ag district as a "future investment." "We use the property to graze cattle," Callison explained. "Land's a commodity, there's not going to be any more of it made." He added that he hoped such districts would prevent some development and the subdivision of farmland. "I hate to see all this farmland disappearing and being busted up into four or five different tracts. The way I see it that's the real purpose of this district, to deter the farmland from being split up."

Alex Sproul feels the same way. Situated right on Middlebrook Road, his farm, Locust Grove, has been occupied by a Sproul since 1771. That's a tradition that he doesn't want to see change. Which is why he teamed up with Col. Bundy to get the district in place. He did a lot of the computer work, he explained, while the Colonel did the door knocking.

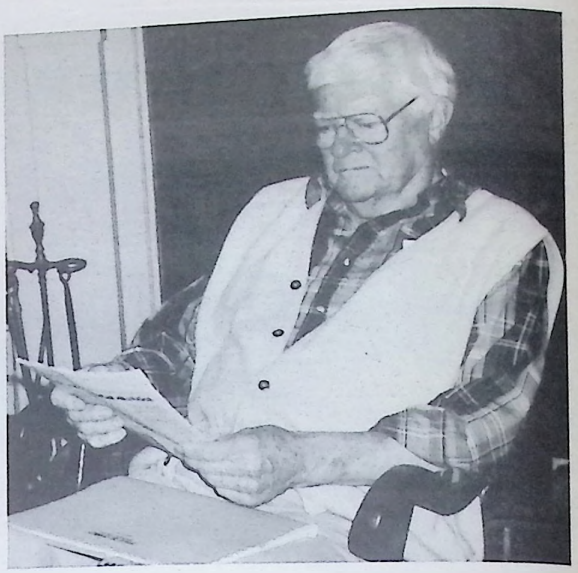
Sometimes Alex admits that his work with the district made him feel slightly hypocritical. "I have what a lot of people want — a house in the middle of the country with land around it. But if too many people want that then we will lose it and lose too much farmland," he said wryly. "I am not against growth, I just don't want it here."

Like most of the people who live in the corridor, Alex speaks of the beauty of the land. "I think these are some of the prettiest roads in the United States from Middlebrook to Lexington. I have lived out west and have enjoyed some spectacular scenery, but this has a much deeper, calmer beauty. The beauty is all the green you see, the grassy hills, the trees, the woods. I don't like seeing a bunch of trees cut down and houses put on top of the hills."

As the organizers of the ag district, both Bundy and Sproul point to members in the Augusta County planning office as well as the VCC as being integral to the district's ultimate formation. "For a long time it seemed like we were shooting at a moving target," the Colonel said of the early work on the project back in 1992 and 1993. "I can't say enough about Faye Cooper and the VCC and Dale Cobb, Becky Earhart and Michelle Comer in the planning office. Toward the end there were a lot of nitty gritty details that had to be taken care of and they helped put the finishing touches on it," he added.

"The people in the planning office in Verona tried to make it as painless as possible," said Alex. "And the VCC did some legwork for us. They are there as a help organization."

See *VCC*, page 17



**Jim Bundy of Newport looks over a clipping which chronicles the progress of establishing an agricultural/forestal district south of Middlebrook to the Augusta County line. The Augusta County Board of Supervisors recently approved the designation for the 5,600-acre block of land.**

Photos by Nancy Sorrells

**Alex Sproul of Middlebrook is among landowners whose farms lie within the boundary of Augusta County's newest ag/forestal district south of Middlebrook.**

# STUARTS DRAFT

Special Pull-out Section Pages 7-14

## THE HUB OF AUGUSTA COUNTY

# Stuarts Draft holding true to its rural roots

Not so many years ago, Stuarts Draft wasn't much more than a speck on Augusta County maps -- a wide place in the road west of Waynesboro and east of Greenville on U.S. 340. Six traffic lights, five schools, four manufacturing plants, three strip malls, two grocery stores and one distribution center later, Stuarts Draft has become a nucleus bustling with commerce. Once known as "the hub of Augusta County," it appears "The Draft" has become the whole wheel that is moving Augusta County along the road of economic development. But Stuarts Draft residents and retailers say the village hasn't gotten too big for its britches. Although it appears to be bursting at the seams, Stuarts Draft continues to maintain strong ties to its agricultural heritage and small town atmosphere. This month Augusta Country writers Nancy Sorrells, Vera Hailey, and Mark Gatewood take a look at Stuarts Draft -- its past, present, and future -- and the people who make The Draft "the hub of Augusta County."

By NANCY SORRELLS

STUARTS DRAFT — In a place where cornfields and chocolate candies are equally abundant, Stuarts Draft — located in the heart of the Shenandoah Valley — is a community engaged in a balancing act between industry and agriculture. Some of the residents would say it is an uneasy balance that has created an amazing amount of growth and change in the last 20 years, but most would agree that the down-home spirit of the area's people have helped "The Draft" retain its small-town, rural atmosphere.

Probably nobody is more qualified to reflect on change and continuity in the village than 57-year-old Larry Cohron who owns and operates an appliance and hardware store on main street. "Great Granddaddy came here in the 1870s as an apple salesman for Stark fruit trees. It was the classic story; he met a girl and stayed. He opened up a big cider mill and an apple brokerage," Cohron said of family patriarch, C.H. Cohron. Cohron's grandfather continued the business, and then Ward and Hilda Cohron, Larry's parents, branched out in 1939 to start their own business. The couple began with a gas station and gradually added hardware, animal feed, furniture and appliances.

A photo from the early 1940s in Stuarts Draft shows a grocery store on main street operated by Ward and Hilda Cohron. The store was originally a service station.

Photo courtesy Cohron family

"We raised our kids in the store," Hilda Cohron said of the main-street enterprise which gradually phased out the gas station, feed and furniture. Although her husband has passed away, she now works in the store with her son and the first of each month still sees her sitting in a chair neatly folding up bills and sticking them in envelopes. In earlier days many customers paid their accounts "in kind," recalls the mother-son team. "Daddy's hobby was curing hams and in the fall people would pay their bills with hams. Daddy then cured them and sold them. We still have a table that is all dark and salty from that," Larry recalled.

Back when C.H. Cohron arrived in the area, Stuarts Draft was little more than a dot on the map with barely 50 souls living in the village. The agricultural community got its name from an early settler family (the Stuarts). The fact that South River, a branch of the Shenandoah River, runs through the area, carving out the land as it rolls along, is what was once known as a draft. But the word "draft" is so little used in 20th-century English that its meaning has all but disappeared. In fact, this region of the country is about the only place on

See *THE DRAFT*, page 8

Larry Cohron and his mother, Hilda, proprietors of Cohron's Hardware, stand among the multitude of products which are retailed in the store. Cohron manages to compete with discount department stores by offering his own particular brand of customer service.

Photo by Nancy Sorrells

# So... whence THE DRAFT?

By MARK GATEWOOD

It would take someone from "away" to ask a question like this, and I hadn't been here long before I started asking: What is a draft?

The first person I asked, a lady with broad interests in history and nature, said she thought is was something about a wind that blew through Stuarts Draft.

This wasn't quite what I was looking for, so I approached *Augusta Country* writer and history source Nancy Sorrells. Sorry to say, Nancy didn't have anything better to offer. She passed the question on to one of her contacts, a university linguist who sent back a reply that draft was some sort of archaic usage still in place in this area. Nancy also gave me two property deeds, one for 1811, one for 1825, where the term draft is used in describing the bounds of the properties.

Fair enough, but still, what's a draft?

And, you're probably asking, what's the fuss about? Well, let me put it in perspective. My-Wife-the-Biology-Teacher and I have poked around these Appalachian Mountains from Vermont to the Smokies and from the Blue Ridge to the western edges of the range in Ohio and Kentucky. We've seen rivers and runs, creeks (and cricks) and brooks, forks, prongs and branches, but never have we seen any land form called a draft.

Yet, if you spread out all your Geological Survey or Forest Service maps covering western Augusta and Highland and Bath counties, you'll find the mountains peppered with drafts: Back Draft, Hamilton Draft, Briary Draft, White Oak Draft, Ramsey's Draft and Stuarts Draft. The name appears to be restricted to this three-county area. Not even West Virginia,

See *WHENCE*, page 13


**Another 1940s photo of Cohron's Grocery shows a special promotion the store was holding to guess the weight of "the largest bag of flour in the world." Among items advertised for sale in the window are 3 pounds of bananas for 20 cents and 10 pounds of sugar for a nickel.** Photo courtesy Cohron family

## • THE DRAFT

*Continued from page 7*

a map of the United States where you'll find "drafts" dotting the countryside.

*The sleepy village of Stuarts Draft woke up in 1881, when the Norfolk and Western Railroad* came through and changed the character of the small farming community. By the 1920s there were more than 400 people in the town, and the railroad became the link for shipping fruit and poultry products to the big city markets.

"There were a lot of apple orchards in this area, and even as late as the 1950s I remember seeing vehicles backed up over the hill waiting to sell apples to the cider mill in the fall of the year. But that's all gone now," Cohron said.

Gone indeed. The last two decades have seen much of the area's prime farmland converted to factories. And, although the industry has certainly changed the character of the land, particularly in creating new subdivisions to house all the employees, there are no smoke-belching, noisy companies to be seen. Perhaps the best-known industrial citizen of The Draft is Hershey Foods where chocolate candies roll off the assembly line in a building still surrounded by cornfields.

**Connie Almarode displays some of the Hershey treats that make Stuarts Draft a sweet place to visit. She and her husband own The Candy Shop. The locally made furniture on display outside the store also is for sale.**

Among the other companies are Hollister, a medical supply company; McKee Foods which makes Little Debbie snack cakes, and Target, which chose Stuarts Draft as the place to erect a distribution center which is the second largest building in the state of Virginia (only the Pentagon beats it for square footage).

All that growth is bound to change an area, but the farmers have also managed to carve out a niche for themselves alongside industry. One example is the Amish-Mennonite family of Tim and Treva Yoder and their five children who range in age from 15 to 1. Tim was a contract poultry farmer for more than 20 years until he canceled his contract in January 1997 to go the organic route. The family now raises natural chickens, eggs and some beef. "We have had a good response. A lot of people appreciate the farm fresh natural products raised with no drugs and hormones," Tim said.

"We enjoy Stuarts Draft as a whole and appreciate the morals of the community. The crime rate is low and it still has a lot of the small town friendliness it used to have," he said. He pointed out that their fresh brown eggs are available right on the farm through a "self-serve honor system." "We appreciate being able to do that," he said of the honor system that allows the family to keep at their farm tasks.

Virginia and Ken Harris also appreciate Draft's agricultural traditions and try to promote as many of the locally grown products as possible in their fruit and produce stand. Virginia, who was raised on a farm in Stuarts Draft, has been selling produce since 1982 but recently realized how ridiculous it was to buy local produce and haul it 15 miles into Staunton to sell.

The upshot was that the couple now has a stand next to their house and operate as late into the

See *IT'S HOME*, page 9

**Work continues in the renovation of the old elementary school in Stuarts Draft into what will be Stump Elementary School. The old school was closed and a new one opened in 1994, however population growth in The Draft area requires additional space for students and the need for another school facility.**

# Draft schools have seen many changes

By VERA HAILEY

In the mid 1800s, students in the Stuarts Draft area attended small schools consisting of one or two rooms. These schools could usually accommodate only a few pupils. During this time period, it was common for parents to set aside a room in their home and hire a private tutor. By 1860, the closest organized schools were Hall School, located near Springdale Mennonite Church; and the Kindig School, located near Mount Vernon Church of the Brethren. Some children attended a school in the Barterbrook area.

The earliest known school building in Stuarts Draft was a log cabin, located on land owned by the Turk family, which served the community until 1915. At one time it had an enrollment of 100 students. Miss Celeste Boyd taught subjects of math, reading, spelling, English and writing. The site is the present-day location of Finley Memorial Presbyterian Church. Around the school there grew up a small community which *included a* general store *and an unofficial* post office where mail was delivered by horseback.

In 1870, Augusta County established a public school system under a new state code and opened a school in Stuarts Draft. Unless there were at least 25 stu-

See *SCHOOLS*, page 12

# •It's home

Continued from page 8

year as weather permits. "We feature everything in season that we can from Stuarts Draft farmers and producers, including jams, apple butter, cider, plants, tomatoes, cantaloupes, honey and even homemade bread," she said while reeling off the variety packed in the bins and shelves of the small store.

"If we can't get it from Stuarts Draft then we get as much from Virginia as possible, but it is our goal to support locally grown produce because to us, Stuarts Draft is still an agricultural community," she added.

Yet another lifelong resident of Stuarts Draft is businesswoman Marsha Mitchell Wampler who, together with her parents Harry and Betty Mitchell, owns the Stuarts Draft Antique Mall. The spacious building, which has been open four years, houses 45 antique dealers with booths chock full of an endless variety of treasures including everything from license plates and jewelry to beds and dressers.

When asked why she chose Stuarts Draft as the location for her business, Marsha appeared slightly puzzled. "I just like it here, it's home. I never would have considered anywhere else, and, really, why not here?" She added that sometimes it takes a trip away from the area to appreciate what the Draft has offered all along. "Once you go away and come back, you realize how beautiful it is here."

Much, but not all, of the local farming culture lies with the several very traditional religious sects which have settled in the area including the Amish-Mennonites, Amish, and Mennonites. One such farmer, Herman Kinsinger, moved here with his family when he was a youngster in 1950. He now runs a welding shop, is active in the volunteer fire department and continues to farm. "I just like farming and I guess I ain't got sense enough to quit. I enjoy it," he said with a shake of his head.


Marsha Mitchell is among a number of Stuarts Draft natives who have opened retail establishments in their home town.

Photos by Nancy Sorrells

The change in the rural crossroads community from the 50s until the present has been nothing short of amazing, he added. He reminisced about sitting in the schoolhouse, located on main street, and hardly ever seeing a vehicle go by. "It was so bad that if somebody'd go by you would stand up in the schoolroom to see who it was and get in trouble!" These days seven cars a minute pass by the old schoolhouse and that number soars to 15 at shift changes.

The growth has affected everything, including the local volunteer fire department where Kinsingers and Cohrons have been active for years. The company was founded in 1950 and soon had two used firetrucks to its name. "They got their first new truck in 1954 and it was a big deal when it came to town. Everybody closed up and they had a parade," remembers Cohron.

Today the fire company owns a number of buildings and has a fleet of trucks, including Herman Kinsinger's pride and joy, a fully restored shiny red 1963 ladder truck. The retired truck was a gift of sorts from a nearby city fire company, but it was so far gone in 1989 that it had to be towed to Stuarts Draft. Three men in the department, Kinsinger, Richard Cohron and Jerrel Suter went to work rebuilding the body and engine and repainting and rechroming it. When he gets behind the wheel of the red beauty today, Kinsinger can't wipe the smile off his face. A former chief of the company, Kinsinger is proud of the way the department of about 50 members has served and continues to serve the community.

Anna and Amos Beiler, owners of The Cheese Shop, offer up just a few items for sale in their store which sells cheese, bulk foods and deli items.

Despite the growth, the small-town atmosphere pocketed with locally-owned businesses has continued to thrive here. The old high school — state-of-the art when it was built in the 1920s — now operates under the moniker "Old Schoolhouse Restaurant" and is renowned for lunch buffets and seafood dinners. Just up the road is The Candy Shop, a business that was launched a few years back in the schoolhouse but has since moved to a quaint little log cabin. Owners Tom and Connie Almarode have stocked the store with every kind of Hershey product imaginable but also offer greeting cards, handmade quilts, locally-made outdoor furniture, and craft items for those without a sweet tooth.

"I'm very content here," said lifelong resident Connie of her shop and the community. "I don't need all the hustle and bustle. People here are friendly and the local people support the shops."

She added that the business really picks up in the fall when local shoppers are supplemented by tour buses filled with people looking at the fall foliage. Leaf peepers also give a shot in the economic arm to Amos and Anna Beiler's Cheese Shop which specializes in bulk foods, deli meats and snacks. "We are blessed with good customers and the tour buses," said Amos, who is a member of the local Amish-Mennonite community.

The friendliness of the community is what impressed Jeff Huss

See TOURS, page 10

## Area proves to be fertile ground for retail trade

**While the area of eastern Augusta County is known for its agriculture production, it also has become fertile ground for retail trade. Population growth in the Stuarts Draft area has brought with it the establishment of numerous businesses including:**

**—The Candy Shop is located at 10 Highland Drive, hours M-Sat. 9:30-5.**

**—The Cheese Shop is located on 2366 Tinkling Spring Road, hours M-F 9-5:30, Sat., 9-5.**

**—Fern's Fabrics, located behind The Candy Shop, handmade Mennonite quilts as well as fabrics and supplies, hours M-Sat., 9:30-5.**

**—Fruit and Produce Stand, located on U.S. 340, open seasonally.**

**—Milmont Greenhouses, U.S. 340, This greenhouse started as a Mennonite housewife's hobby 25 years ago and now offers over 800 varieties of flowering annuals, perennials and vegetables, hours M-F 8-5:30, Sat. 8-5.**

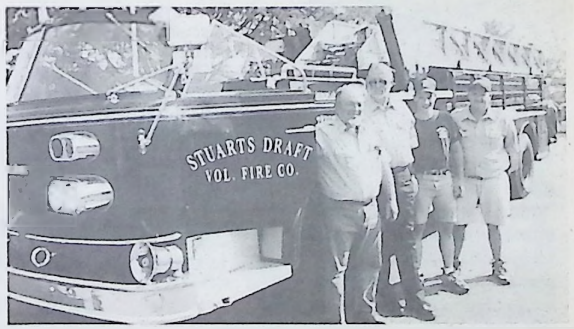
**—Old Schoolhouse Restaurant, on Draft Avenue, lunch buffet from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Tuesday and Friday; seafood buffet 4-9 p.m. Thursday, 4-10 p.m. Friday and Saturday.**

**—Stuarts Draft Antique Mall, U.S. 340, M-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-5.**

**—Yoder's Bread Basket, 27 Wayne Ave., homemade breads, desserts, and other delicious foods. W-Sat. 10-6.**

**If you're looking for a place to stay in Stuarts Draft, there is one choice, Shenandoah Acres Resort, a spring-fed lake that has operated as a vacation getaway for more than 60 years. It is the only place with overnight lodging in The Draft. Shenandoah Acres calls itself "America's Finest Inland Beach" and offers horseback trail rides, outdoor grills, a variety of outdoor activities for three seasons. Camping and cottages are available year round. For more information, call 1-800-654-1714.**

**If you are an outdoors person there is plenty to do right around Stuarts Draft. The George Washington National Forest and St. Mary's Wilderness Area are about 10 minutes drive and the Blue Ridge Parkway is just a few minutes more. Sherando Lake, in the national forest, has fishing for ambitious anglers. —**




Lots of sweat, hard work, and community spirit turned this 1963 ladder truck -- once in such poor repair it had to be towed to the firehouse premises -- into the gleaming beauty it is today. Four members of the Stuarts Draft Volunteer Fire Department show off the company's crown jewel. They are (from left) Herman Kinsinger, Walter Robertson, Greg Gitchell, and Mark Kirby.

Time to renew?
See page 2

## •Tours

*Continued from page 9*

and Mark Dalton when they moved their guitar workshop to the village. In an unobtrusive building a stone's throw from the main street, the two men and two other employees turn out about 10 high-end acoustic steel string guitars a month. The quality instruments are prized across the country by musicians in the know.

"Stuarts Draft is a good little town and we've enjoyed it. The people are nice," said 35-year-old Mark who is a native of Gretna. Forty-year-old Jeff, who hails from North Dakota, echoes his remarks. "We like the small town atmosphere. We came here and walked over to the hardware store and opened an account right away. They didn't even need to check our credit."

The Huss & Dalton pair don't mind having big business neighbors either. "It smells sweet when Hershey roasts the nuts and you can smell the Little Debbie chocolate when the wind blows right, and now we have a Mennonite bakery across the street," said Mark.

"I guess you could say that Stuarts Draft smells sweet from one end to the other!" added Jeff with a laugh.

Across the street at the hardware store, Larry Cohron has just helped a neighbor fix an ice maker with some million-dollar customer service that belied the eventual $1.14 bill. "There is no place I'd rather live than here," said Cohron with a smile. "It is quite different than what it was, but as far as I'm concerned there's no place else like it." —

Mark Dalton, left, and Jeff Huss show off some guitars in progress in the Huss & Dalton Guitar Company located in "downtown" Stuarts Draft.

Photos by Nancy Sorrells

Yoder's Country Farm is a family enterprise. Here 15-year-old Mark Yoder gives his grandfather, Eli Yoder, a hand unloading some vine-ripened watermelons. The farm is owned and operated by Eli's son and daughter-in-law, Tim and Treva Yoder.

# Howardsville Turnpike ran through The Draft

By VERA HAILEY

Road-building in the latter stages of the 18th century and much of the 19th century was marked by the development of many turnpikes or toll roads. Toll financing provided a means of building highway facilities which were needed, but were too complex and costly to be constructed by the individual localities. The turnpike era offered a new way of meeting road needs.

The turnpike got its name from its toll gate. When first designed, the gate was a turnstile consisting of two crossed bars, or pikes, pointed at their outer ends and turned on a vertical bar or pole. When the proper toll was paid, the pikes were turned to allow traffic to pass through.

The Howardsville Turnpike has a history that goes back long before its actual construction. Soon after the Staunton area was settled in 1732, a group of 100 settlers came to the area by a pack trail over Rockfish Gap. In 1795, a canal was completed near the Falls of Richmond, opening up the James River to Lynchburg. The James River and Kanahwa Canal, as it was called, was completed to Howardsville in 1834. A turnpike from Rockfish Gap to Scottsville on the canal was completed in 1830, but it would take 18 years for the term Howardsville Turnpike to be noted around the state.

Stuarts Draft lay in the route of the turnpike, a road first proposed in 1846 in order to link the James and Rockfish Rivers. In 1848, an act of the legislature was passed authorizing the extension of the "Howardsville and Rockfish Turnpike" from Martin's Mill in Nelson County to Greenville, in Augusta County.

The Howardsville Turnpike was completed through Stuarts Draft in the early 1850s. A stockholders meeting was held at John P. Wilson's Tavern, a local establishment, in 1854.

See *TURNPIKE*, page 13

# Halls of Stuarts Draft led illustrious lives

By VERA HAILEY

One of the earliest families to make their home in the area now known as Stuarts Draft was the Hall family. A map of the Beverley Land Patent, *dated 1736, lists Edward Hall as the* owner of three parcels of property.

Edward was the son of Irish immigrants Dr. Isaac and Sarah Allison Hall. The Hall family migrated from Armagh county, Ireland and came to Virginia in 1736. As a teen, Edward had "received the rudiments of education in the schools of Ireland and his mother, a very talented woman, was able to supervise and direct him in his reading and studies on the Virginia frontier."

Eleanor Stuart was the daughter of Archibald and Janet Brown Stuart, early pioneers who owned a large amount of land in what is now known as Stuarts Draft. Eleanor's mother, who was born before 1726 in Ireland, was a sister of Rev. John Brown, who became pastor of New Providence Church in Rockbridge County and married former Indian captive Mary Moore.

Edward Hall and Eleanor Stuart were married in 1744. The Stuart family, which resided on the Walnut Grove farm near Waynesboro, gave their daughter a tract of land on South River in Stuarts Draft that was adjacent to land owned by the Hall family. The land was "situated on both sides of South River, about five miles above Waynesborough."

Archibald assisted his daughter and son-in-law in building an addition to their home. According to a newspaper account, this addition was of "neatly hewn logs."

Edward became an elder of Tinkling Spring Presbyterian Church before 1758 and was one of the signers of a petition to the Virginia General Assembly regarding the appointment of trustees.

Edward and Eleanor had 10 children — Isaac, Archibald, Thomas, Alexander, Benjamin, John, Sarah, Elizabeth, Eleanor and Janet.

Isaac became a distinguished physician, who was educated in Europe and settled in Petersburg where he had a highly acclaimed practice. He became engaged to his first cousin, Jenny Stuart, daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth Moore Stuart. The wedding date was set, but some difference arose and the marriage never took place. In one

See *HALLS*, page 11

Don't delay. Renew today.
See page 2

# Area near Stuarts Draft once known for production of iron

By VERA HAILEY

The high concentration of ore in some parts of the Shenandoah Valley brought about the establishment of iron-producing furnaces. One such industry, located in Augusta County near the village of Sherando, was Mount Torry Furnace.

The probable founder of the furnace was Engelhard Yeiser, who purchased the land known as Torry Ridge in 1803. His initial investment was $16,000. The Mount Torry Furnace, built in 1804, was a large pyramid constructed of hand-laid stones. No mortar was used during the construction.

The original furnace size is unknown, but it was recorded in 1853 that its size was 35 by 11 feet. The 35 feet represented the furnace height above the firebox with an interior diameter of 11 feet. The original furnace was cold blast and charcoal burning, but was converted to a hot-blast furnace in 1853.

The furnace was constructed beside Torry Ridge so that the charge could be carried or wheeled from the stockpile across a bridge and dumped into the stack at the top. Back Creek served as a source of water to operate the waterwheel which powered air bellows.

What remains of a once thriving industry in eastern Augusta County can be found in the ruins of Mount Torry Furnace.

Photos by Vera Hailey

Timber was essential to the operation of the furnace. It was turned into the charcoal used to fuel the furnaces. Charcoal was made along the Coal Road in the area known as Big Levels, and in the chestnut forest around the village of Love.

The industry flourished as iron was a very marketable commodity both in the growing new nation and in Europe. It was necessary for everything from agricultural implements and wagon parts to industrial machinery. Many jobs were furnished by the local operation. A labor force of 50 to 100 workers, which included both African-Americans, often hired slaves, and white men, worked in two shifts to tend the charcoal fires and furnaces.

Iron smelting began to decline during the 1800s because of the discovery of richer ore deposits in the south and west and improvements in transportation and production methods, particularly the replacement of charcoal with coke.

The property sold in 1809 to Cumberland Williams, with Lorenzo Shaw and Matthew Bryan purchasing it from his heirs in 1851.

The Civil War boosted production for a time as the furnaces provided iron for cannons and wagon wheels which were processed by the Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond. The iron was shipped from the Mount Torry Furnace in the form of bars called pigs. The Valley supplied nearly all the iron for the Confederacy, including that used in the armor plates on the U.S. Merrimac (which was re-christened the Virginia when the Confederates took her over.)

Mount Torry was destroyed in June 1864 during the Civil War by the Federal force of Gen. David Hunter. The Union army filed this report: "I encamped near the mountain which Tye River has its source... Near this camp I caused to be burned an extensive furnace for the manufacture of pig iron which had just been refitted to be used for the benefit of the Rebel government." Mount Torry was rebuilt in 1865. The furnace struggled back after the war, but production ended in 1884.

The furnace is now owned by the George Washington National Forest and is registered as a Virginia Historic Landmark. A sign reads: "Mount Torry Furnace. Built in 1804. Destroyed in June, 1864 during the War Between the States. Rebuilt in January, 1865, and operated until 1884." —


# Halls

Continued from page 10

of the earliest local lawsuits of its kind, Jenny entered a suit for damages against her former fiancé for breach of marriage contract. She won the case and received a hefty financial payment. She became one of the wealthiest women on the Virginia frontier, and maintained a residence in Staunton.

Thomas, born in 1754, became a lawyer and moved to Kentucky.

Alexander was a farmer and lived on the old Hall farm on South River. He married his cousin, Mary Patterson Stuart, daughter of Major Alexander Stuart. One of their 10 children was John Hall, who was a lawyer in Texas and Secretary of State under Sam Houston.

John Hall married Mary Weldon and settled in North Carolina. He was a lawyer and became Chief Justice of North Carolina.

Sarah Hall married James Tate in 1770. He was commissioned as a captain in the Revolutionary War, and led a company that largely consisted of men of Tinkling Spring and Bethel Presbyterian congregations. He was killed at the battle of Guilford Courthouse. Sarah married Major Hugh Fulton four years later.

Elizabeth Hall married Andrew Fulton, brother of Hugh Fulton, "a gentleman of great worth, who frequently represented the County of Augusta in the Legislature of Virginia. He received 13 wounds at the battle of Guilford Courthouse, but recovered from them, and lived to a good old age." One of their sons was John H. Fulton, of Abingdon, a lawyer and congressman. —

# Early settlers made home in area known as Stuarts Draft

By VERA HAILEY

James Patton, born in the north of Ireland in1692, served in the British Royal Navy and became captain of a passenger ship that made 25 trips to America to transport Irish immigrants to the New World. He visited western Virginia and corresponded with William Beverley, and struck up a partnership to import pioneers to settle Beverley's new Shenandoah Valley lands. Patton was also related by marriage to Augusta County's first official settler, John Lewis. Patton and Lewis' wife, Margaret Lynn Lewis were double first cousins.

Patton started a new life in America when he disembarked his ship, the Walpole, on the Rappahannock River. Patton, his wife and two children, and John Preston (Patton's brother-in-law), his wife (Patton's sister) and four children, left the ship with 56 personal and indentured servants. The Pattons were started a new life in America. Thirty of these servants were probably brought along to settle on the 30,000-acre tract on the Calfpasture River. At that time it was necessary to settle one person per 1,000 acres.

Patton settled a section of land containing 1,398 acres in 1736 upon which he built his home, called "Spring Hill." The house was described as being a mansion, with

See PATTON, page 12

# Elk keeps silent vigil in The Draft

By NANCY SORRELLS

STUARTS DRAFT — Customers who drop in at Cohron's Hardware in Stuarts Draft will find more than good service and a friendly atmosphere. If they wander back to the drink cooler, they will also find an elk...or at least the head and antlers of one...because the creature itself has been quite dead for nearly 90 years.

> "I am really quite fond of the old elk."
> *Larry Cohron*
> *Stuarts Draft*

The massive and stately elk head hanging over the hardware store's drink cooker and dominating the nearby snack rack has a well established history in The Draft. Seems that the tale goes back to Oscar Cohron, son of the first Cohron to call Stuarts Draft his home.

Seems Oscar got married in 1911 and some local friends who had moved west got wind of the impending nuptials. They hunted and killed the elk then had the head mounted and shipped it east as a wedding present. "The people who sent it originally lived up around Rankins Creek about halfway *between here and Sherando," said Larry Cohron of the family story.*

Thus the elk became a fixture in the Cohron family and was passed down from one generation to the next. Eventually the womenfolk in the family got tired of looking at the shaggy creature (and maybe of dusting it as well!) The family also took into consideration the feelings of the elk's original gift givers. After all, it had been a wedding present. So the elk was moved from the Cohrons' home to the store about 1956. By that time the store was being run by Ward and Hilda Cohron, Larry's parents.

Larry is fond of telling the story about how Ward — in failing health at the time — pulled his son aside and said that it wouldn't hurt his feelings any if, after his death, the elk were to be pitched in the trash bin. Larry declared that he would never consider such a thing since he thought of the elk as a family heirloom!

And so, as long as there is a Cohron's Hardware, there will be an elk watching over the premises. It's a fixture as permanent in Stuarts Draft as the name "Cohron." "I am really quite fond of the old elk," Larry said. —

**A mounted elk's head keeps a silent vigil in Cohron's Hardware in Stuarts Draft. A wedding present to Larry Cohron's grandparents, the elk's head was moved to the hardware store in 1956 from the family's home.**

Photo by Nancy Sorrells

# John Colter: Augusta County's Favorite Son

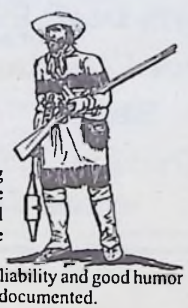
By VERA HAILEY

John Colter, one of Augusta County's favorite sons, was born in Stuarts Draft before 1775. His father was John Colter, grandson of the founder of the family in Virginia, Micajah Colter. The Colters were early settlers of the Stuarts Draft area.

Although a memorial to Colter now stands in Jackson, Wy., the significance of his contributions to that area were not known for generations. He was the first person of European descent to explore land that is now part of Yellowstone National Park. Colter reported seeing a land of geysers and boiling mud holes, teaming with wildlife. He was called a liar because this description was so unbelievable at the time.

Colter is best known in his native state as one who accompanied Meriwether Lewis and William Clark on their famous expedition. Lewis and Clark were also native Virginians: Lewis was born in Ivy; Clark in Caroline County.

By 1800 Colter had immigrated with his family to Kentucky. It was from Maysville, a small town on the Ohio River, that John Colter enlisted with Lewis in October 1803 for a salary of $5 per month. At the time, a fellow trapper described Colter as being 5 feet 10 inches in height, of a sturdy frame with a "pleasing face of the Daniel Boone stamp." Colter's reliability and good humor were also documented.



Colter's ability as a woodsman attracted Lewis and Clark's attention. He learned hunting and trapping in the mountains of Virginia, and later in Kentucky. He was athletic, quick, smart, a good shot and unafraid of Indians and wild animals. These skills would later save his life in the wilderness. During the expedition, he was promoted from a private to hunter, a coveted position.

See *COLTER*, page 14

# ◦Schools

*Continued from page 8*

dents, the county would not furnish a teacher. In 1887, the rate of pay for teachers was $27.74 per month for a man and $26.34 for a woman. The school term lasted five months.

On Dec. 1, 1880, Joseph H. Rankin sold to the Trustees of the Public Free School of South River District a small plot of land for the purpose of constructing a school. The property stretched from "the small scrub pine in the Howardsville Turnpike to a stone pile under the fence corner on the Rankin property." It became known as Rankin's School.

In 1904, there was a two-room school with 80 children enrolled. Because of lack of adequate space, there were as many as three children to a desk. Some parents complained of overcrowding and refused to send their children to school.

Because of the overcrowding problem, a Citizens' Educational League was founded by Dr. W.B. Dodge, with W.L. Speck serving as secretary and treasurer. Through the efforts of the league, in 1906 Stuarts Draft became the first school in the county to offer a nine-month session. It was made possible by the efforts of the Citizens' Educational League which supplemented the public school fund sufficiently to carry out the long school term.

The league raised funds to dramatically improve the Stuarts Draft school system. By holding fund-raisers, such as public entertainment, the school building was enlarged, a library was purchased, and an organ for music lessons was purchased. Also, grass seed was sown on the lawn to provide an ample playground.

The structure had four rooms. These improvements were recommended by Supt. E.O. Peale. Peale recommended the plan to other county schools. Prof. J.M. Betts of Delaware, an accomplished educator, was in charge of the school. He was assisted by "Mrs. Betts, Miss Rice and Miss Smithie."

In 1921 a new school building was completed at a cost of $16,000. It was large enough to accommodate 250-300 students, and included "a large auditorium of the most modern design." The structure currently houses the Stuarts Draft Volunteer Fire Company and the Old Schoolhouse Restaurant.

The school incorporated an agricultural education program, a brand-new curriculum idea back then, in 1924. In 1927, The Stuarts Draft Future Farmers of America chapter was recognized in statewide competition as the outstanding chapter in Virginia. It came in second in the nation in 1937.

The high school and elementary school both occupied the building until 1947, when the upper grades moved to Fishersville where a World War II veteran's hospital had been converted to Wilson Memorial High School. The elementary portion of the old Stuarts Draft school closed in the late 1970s when students moved to a more modern building across the street.

The elementary school on Draft Avenue closed its doors in 1994, following the completion of a new facility on U.S. 340 near Stuarts Draft's eastern limits. The complex also includes a high school and a middle school. The population of the area has grown substantially requiring that the old school on Draft Avenue be renovated for use once again. The target opening date for Draft's second elementary school, to be known as Stump Elementary School, is the fall of 1999. —

# ◦Patton

*Continued from page 11*

some building materials brought from England. It was located on the South River, in the area now known as Stuarts Draft.

According to local historian Dr. Howard Wilson: "Having determined to come to Virginia to establish his permanent residence in the back parts of Virginia far removed from seaboard, and to center his energies on exploring, obtaining grants for and seating, unoccupied crownlands in that region and it being impracticable to do this, and at the same time continue managing shipping operations, Captain James Patton evidently disposed of his shipping interests before coming to Virginia to reside permanently... to carry out their part of the joint venture with William Beverley."

Patton's first house was of hewn logs with clapboard nailed over the top. The second house was of brick with a wing being the original log house. The home featured brick cornices, hand carved mantels, paneling in some rooms, hardwood floors and large fireplaces.

Patton, who was the son of Henry and Sarah Lynn Patton of Scottish origin, married Mary Osborne in Ireland. Records show that his eldest daughter married Robert Breckenridge. His second daughter married the Rev. John Brown of New Providence Church in Rockbridge, and from them descended John Brown, of Kentucky and James Brown, of Louisiana, both United States senators, and the latter, minister of France.

Patton was a prominent citizen of Augusta County and an active member in Tinkling Spring Presbyterian Church. He was later made commander in the Augusta County Militia to protect the county during the French and Indian War.

On May 27, 1742, a court clerk recorded: "James Patton Gent, having taken the oaths prescribed the Act of Parliament to be taken instead of the oaths of Allegiance & Supremacy & the Abjuration oath & Subscribed the Test was sworn to his Military Commission of Colonel of Augusta County accordingly." Patton was sworn in as

See *MILITARY*, page 13

## •Turnpike

*Continued from page 10*

The road eventually ran for 23 miles, connecting the Rockfish River in Nelson County with the South River in Augusta County. Prior to the establishment of the road, farm products were hauled by wagon to Scottsville, then shipped by boat to Richmond for marketing.

In 1856, the General Assembly of Virginia passed an act dividing the Howardsville Turnpike at Stuarts Draft into two sections: the eastern section remained the Howardsville Turnpike, while the western stretch became the Beverly Manor Turnpike.

Along with agricultural products, especially wheat and flour, livestock, iron, and whiskey were likely to have been transported down the turnpike. According to the 1840 census, Augusta County produced 90,000 gallons of spirits, made by 62 men employed in 56 distilleries. At that time, distilling was the second largest industry in the county, outdistanced only by milling. There is evidence that whiskey was hauled across the Rockfish Gap in 55-gallon barrels. The estimated traffic on the turnpike was 10-20 wagons per day.

Today much of the road is in the state highway system, but other parts are no longer used. The stretch of road (Va. 701) which runs from the Middlebrook Road to Route 11 at Riverheads High School takes its name—Howardsville Road—from the original Howardsville Turnpike. Area residents knew this road by its informal designation long before the county's E911 system required the naming of all county's roads. —

## •Military

*Continued from page 12*

a Justice of the Peace in 1743.

In 1755 during the French and Indian War, Patton took a group of rangers west to counter attacks from French and Indians. The expedition took them into Montgomery County in the area now called Smithfield, where they lodged at the home of John Draper. A weary Patton stayed overnight at the house for a respite, while sending his rangers on to a fortification at Dunkard's Bottom.

The next morning, while the men in the house were harvesting crops in the field, and Patton was in the cabin writing, a group of Shawnee Indians attacked. They killed Patton, Draper's mother and carried off his wife, daughter and two grandchildren. The men in the fields were not able to provide assistance, as they were not armed. A military dispatch dated Aug. 30, 1755 noted that "Coll. Patton of Augusta County a very active and worthy man was lately scalped as he was proceeding to command a party of Rangers on New River."

It is not known where Patton was buried. Some say he was buried near where he fell at Draper's Meadows. Others say he was taken to the fortification at Dunkard's Bottom, which was the destination of the rangers, and buried there. At any rate, the Daughters of the American Revolution have erected a monument to Patton and the massacre's other eight victims, at Virginia Tech. —

## •Whence

*Continued from page 7*

with its penchant for memorable place names, seems to use the word draft.

The topographic maps show drafts in the same type as land forms such as hollows and knobs. Water features — creeks, runs, rivers — are shown in an italic type. Evidently to the United States Geological Survey, a draft is the hollow or valley cut by a small stream, but not the stream itself. Which brings me back to my original question: What's a draft?

I finally turned to the dictionary — not your household variety dictionary, but the ultimate authority on our language, *The Compact Edition of The Oxford English Dictionary* (known by people who spend perhaps a bit too much time on this kind of thing as the OED.)

The OED consisted of two volumes, each about the size and heft of a wheel chock for a firetruck. Confident that I was nearing the end of my quest, I selected Volume One and opened it, only to find the pages covered with thin, gray smears of minute type. It took a 4X lens to render the type legible. I found DRAFT, one and one-half columns worth, and not one word of water or land forms. The entry also said that draft is a modern phonetic spelling of DRAUGHT, (prounounced Draft) which I turned to next. Here were a full seven columns of eyestrain which finally yielded the following:

Draught: a. A current, stream flow. b. A stream course, a ravine (?) (also draft)

Even the OED seems a bit uncertain, since it stuck in that question mark after ravine. At least it answers the question of what a draft is. What it doesn't explain — and I'm just as happy that it doesn't — is the thing that caught my attention in the first place, namely the fact that this word appears to be used only in parts of three counties in the mountains of western Virginia. For now, I'll leave it at that: further proof, if any is needed, of the unique nature of our Augusta country. —

# Yesterday once more

## Draft orchard indicative of area's ag heritage

By VERA HAILEY

STUARTS DRAFT — During the 1920s-1940s, Augusta County had hundreds of acres of apple orchards. One orchard was the Virginia Valley Orchard Company, Inc. in Stuarts Draft. Now located on part of the site is the John E. Hailey farm and Shenandoah Valley Orchard Company, Inc. Hailey is the son of the former orchard foreman, Joe Hailey, and remembers stories told by his father. The elder Hailey died in 1979.

An original map shows the layout of the orchard when it began around 1912. Land was purchased from the Brown family in Stuarts Draft by the corporation, which was headquartered in Pittsburgh, Pa. Instead of issuing corporate stock, parcels of land were sold to individual investors. Apple trees were planted on some of the lots, but others remained in forest land. All of the profits from the entire operation were pooled, and every person received the same share of money regardless of whether they owned apple trees or oak trees.

Henry Borton from Pittsburgh was the general manager of the company. He never moved to the area but visited periodically. Clyde Moorhead was appointed superintendent of day-to-day operations. Moorhead, his wife and three children moved from Pulaski. The company built them a house on the property.

Three teams of horses were sent down from Pennsylvania. The company had purchased these for $500 per pair, a fortune when the orchard workers only made around $30 each month. "People came from all around to see those horses, because it was such a big deal in those days. Times were hard in this area back then, and it was a treat for them to see the horses," Hailey said.

In 1912 a well drilling company from Charlottesville was appointed to drill three wells on the property — one well at the orchard and two at the Moorhead home. The steam driller was trammed all the way from Charlottesville. Since it was powered by steam this was a time consuming task. They had to stop at regular intervals, so the machine could regain power. The three well drillers assigned to the project arrived on the site in early spring and stayed all summer. John Hailey recalls his father mentioning that one of the men had a wooden leg.

**John Hailey, owner of Shenandoah Valley Orchard Co., recalls hearing his father talk about the early days of apple production at the orchard in Stuarts Draft.**

Water was vital to the operation of the business. With no modern pesticides available, water was loaded into tanks and mixed with a lime/sulfur compound. Four-hundred gallons were mixed at a time. The tank and spray rig were then hooked up to a team of horses. It was crucial that the apple blossoms be sprayed to keep the apples from being spotted with disease and blight.

Joe Hailey started working for the orchard as a 21-year old and was later appointed foreman. He walked from his family's home (off Va. 610 near Rankin's Creek) each day in the beginning, but he was given a house to live in on the Moorhead property when he was promoted. His salary was then $100 per month which included his house, meals each day at the Moorhead home, a horse and buggy, and an automobile.

"He wanted both because he really didn't like to drive a car," Hailey commented. It was a good thing he did not get too attached to it, because when the Depression came his pay was cut in half, and his car was taken away.

In the early days of the orchard all of the laborers walked to work. Hailey recalls his father talking about the Campbell family, from Love, who walked through the woods and down the rough Coal Road each day — over 24 miles round trip. This was during the 1920s. They left the orchard each evening at 5 p.m. and always returned by 7 a.m. the next morning. The average worker was paid $1 a day for 10 hours of labor.

Many varieties of apples were grown in the Augusta County orchard. These included York, Imperial, Stayman, Maiden Blush, Red Delicious, Golden Delicious, Black Twig, Ben Davis, and crab apples. Some of these are virtually non-existent today since new disease resistant varieties have been developed by horticulturalists.

Most of the apples raised in the orchard were not for local use. They were packed into barrels and put onboard trains at the old railway station in Stuarts Draft to be shipped to other domestic locations as well as to meet the demands of the overseas market. Horse and wagons were the mode of transporting the apples to the station until trucking became popular in the 1930s.

According to Hailey, the financial profitability of the orchard was predictable.

"One year every five years a profit was made, two years they broke even, and two years they lost money. It followed this pattern," he said.

In 1928 an unusual event occurred that would have a long-standing effect on the fate of the profitability of the business. A powerful ice storm plagued the area and wreaked havoc on the apple trees, which had reached good production levels. The weight of the ice broke all of the trees apart, and a strange remedy was mandated. Hailey recalls his father talking about the men who came and painted all the trees with blue paint. They pulled the trees back together, bolted them and tied them with wire. After this the trees were of lesser quality and did not last as long as they should have.

**Workers at Virginia Valley Orchard Co. in Stuarts Draft use a horse-drawn rig to spray apple trees. The photo was taken April 22, 1922.** Photo courtesy Hailey family

Tragedy struck the operation again that same year. A well was being hand-drilled on the property by a local man named Mr. Robertson. In those days a rope lowered a bucket to bring the dirt out the hole. A rope was used until it started to fray and then was replaced with a new one. One day the rope showed signs of wear, but they decided to use it for one more day. This decision proved fatal for Robertson, who was approximately 100 feet down in the hole when the rope broke. This breakage sent a full bucket of dirt hurling to the bottom, and the blow killed him.

In 1939 a sawmill was brought to the property to make boards for an apple packing shed. This structure is still standing today and houses the Stuarts Draft Cider Mill. It is operated under the Shenandoah Valley Orchard Company, Inc. Writing on the boards in the building still commands the reader to use the caution of the Depression years: "Apples = $, treat them as such." This was left intact during remodeling of the building.

The orchard remained in operation until the early 1940s. A $40,000 legal suit was filed against the corporation in a Harrisonburg court that prompted it to file for bankruptcy. The property was considered almost worthless at the time, and the corporation was anxious to dispose of it. The land was sold, much of it bought by Joe Hailey and E.M. Shultz.

The life of the Virginia Valley Orchard Company spanned four decades and was an economically important part of the development of a small rural town. Because of the jobs created by this enterprise, many people were able to survive the years of the Depression. —

*This article was originally published in the March 1996 issue of* Augusta Country.

## Colter

*Continued from page 12*

The expedition, which was commissioned by President Thomas Jefferson, mapped new territory west of the Mississippi River acquired by the U.S. in the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. They also catalogued plant and animal life, established relations with the Native Americans and collected information about their culture.

After more than two years in the wilderness, the Lewis and Clark expedition had completed its objectives and the troupe headed back East. When the explorers reached North Dakota, they were met by two beaver trappers from Illinois. In a move that astounded the group, Colter requested that he be allowed to leave the expedition and return to the wilderness with the trappers.

Clark recorded in his journal: "...his (Colter's) services could be dispensed with from this time and we were disposed to be of service to any of our party who had performed their duty as well as Colter had done, we agreed to allow him the privilege providing no one of the party would ask or expect a similar permission to which they all agreed that and they wished Colter every suckcess and that as we did not wish any of them to Separate until we Should arrive at St. Louis they would not apply or expect it...we gave Jo Colter Some Small articles which we did not want and some powder and lead. The party also gave him several articles which will be useful to him on his expedition."

The three trappers remained together until early spring. Colter left them and ventured off toward St. Louis in his canoe. On the way, he met with another party of trappers led by Manuel Lisa. When they learned that Colter had just left the very area they intended to go, Lisa urged Colter to join his party. Colter agreed, and remained in the wilderness for another three years. He became the first white man to see the northwestern corner of Wyoming.

The group reached the Big Horn River via the Yellowstone River in November of 1807. As winter approached, Colter once again set out on his own. From the map that he drew, it was determined that he passed through Jackson Hole, Wy., over the Tetons to Teton Basin, Idaho, and then made a northern trek through parts of Yellowstone.

Colter determined the source of the Yellowstone River, discovered Yellowstone Lake and explored the Big Horn and other rivers. He used and described several important mountain passes.

Throughout his travels, Colter used Indian trails and learned routes from tribesman while spreading the word that their furs were in great demand. By the time Colter returned to the fort in the spring of 1808, the Indians were already trading furs.

His experiences with the Indians were not always pleasant. He angered a fierce Blackfoot tribe by helping their enemies, the Crows and the Flatheads, at the Three Forks of the Missouri. The Blackfoot captured Colter and his trapping companion, Potts. Potts was killed but Colter managed to engineer a daring escape.

Colter did not return to civilization until 1810, seven years after his original departure. Some sources credit an April 1810 Indian ambush that killed five men with prompting Colter and five others to leave the wilderness. He was given a land grant by an act of Congress for his part in the famous Lewis & Clark expedition. Colter died in Missouri less than four years after his return from the wilderness. A marker dedicated to John Colter stands near the intersection of Tinkling Spring Road and Stuarts Draft Highway. —

# Schoolhouse News

## Riverheads students enjoy volunteer experiences

By BECKY McMANNES

GREENVILLE — How many people, especially teenagers, do you know of who help others in their spare time? There are not many who do. That is what makes three Riverheads students unique. Each volunteers in a different field of the medical profession, but they say they feel the same way about volunteering.

Angela Gilbert, a senior, plans on pursuing the career of a registered nurse after college. She volunteers with the outpatient surgery unit at Augusta Medical Center. Outpatient surgery is where patients undergo surgery then are able to go home the same day once the procedure is performed.

ANGELA GILBERT

"Teen volunteering is a very good opportunity for someone thinking about a medical career," Angela said. "I have learned how to graph temperatures, answer call bells, clean beds, feed people, help people to the bathroom, and see how the patient care floor operates. The outpatient care unit trained me as a secretary who admits the patients into the hospital so that I am able to work there when I am 18." Volunteering has really made an impact on Angela's life.

The second volunteer is Jill Argenbright, a junior, who volunteers as a nurse's aide at AMC.

"I work in the patient care unit. I assisted a technician. I gave out trays, changed beds, answered call bells, stocked lab trays, gave out towels, and early in the morning I gave [patients] fresh ice water," Jill said. "I would basically do what the technicians or registered nurses didn't have time to do. A lot of the time I did the running. We wheeled patients to the east wing for tests. We also picked up blood from the blood bank and took test tubes down to the lab." Jill's life goal is to be a physical therapist. Volunteering in the hospital gave her a one-on-one experience with the patients.

Emily Brown, a sophomore, volunteers with the AMC dialysis program which involves a machine that helps the kidneys process blood.

"I thought it was really interesting," Emily said. "I liked volunteering there because you were able to see a lot of things. I think my volunteering made the patients feel good. It is nice for the people in the community to come in and visit with the patients. A lot of the people on dialysis are older so it is nice to see younger people in there talking and playing games with them. It makes me feel good to know I've made their day brighter."

The teen volunteers say teenagers should consider being more active in their community. Helping someone or something is a great feeling, they noted. It makes the person helped feel good as well as the volunteer himself or herself. The three teenagers mentioned have shown they care about helping their fellow man. —

JILL ARGENBRIGHT

EMILY BROWN

## Bishop sets tone as new RHS principal

By MATT CALDWELL

GREENVILLE — Arriving early, he can be seen daily in the office, in the halls, and most importantly in the class rooms, and while he is no stranger to secondary schooling, he is at once the new man and the big man on campus. He is a change and a beginning. He is William C. Bishop Jr., the new principal of Riverheads High School and the third in the school's 36-year history.

During his first semester, Bishop eased himself into his new role as principal. This slow transition was mutually beneficial to not only staff and students in their understanding of what Bishop expects, but allowed Bishop to recognize the different policies and procedures between country and city schools. Bishop came to Riverheads from Lee High in Staunton. When asked about the students themselves, Bishop smiled and replied that "teenagers are teenagers," city or county.

As far as academics are concerned, Bishop says he intends to focus primarily on the state's Standards of Learning and preparation for their implications. Bishop says that teachers will teach, however, it is up to students to learn the material. A student's education is for his or her benefit, and therefore, students should take active roles in their education and be accountable for the process.

Bishop also noted the importance of the learning environment and said that, in a time of increasing school violence nationwide, he feels lucky to enjoy the small community atmosphere and close student-teacher relationship at Riverheads, which he said he feels is very important.

Bishop resides in Staunton, with his wife, Theresa, and three-year-old son, Kyle. —

WILLIAM BISHOP

Time to renew?
See page 2

# The Hitching Post

## Regular grooming will condition horse to accept practice

**Q: I have a problem pulling my horse's mane. She's very sensitive and resents the tugging. How can I get her to accept it?**

*—L.L.*

The problem with your mare is common to horses that are not exposed to mane pulling on a regular basis. This can cause two situations. First, if you do not pull her mane as a routine, then the mane becomes long and needs a great deal of pulling when you decide to do so. The second problem is she is not used to the tugging and resents it.

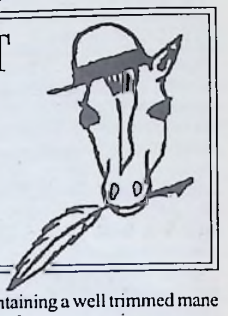
One approach you might take to this problem is to make mane pulling a part of your grooming routine. Pulling the long hairs of the mane shortens the length with a natural look. Trying to do too much at one time can stress your mare. Another suggestion I would like to make is to pull her mane after riding when she is warm. She will be relaxed and the hair should pull out easier.

I've had grooms that used mane pulling combs and some that used their fingers. The best ones choose the long hairs to be pulled, tease back the rest, and pull the hair out quickly. The worst grooms I've had will sometimes grab too much hair and yank on me without success. Yanking three or four times for a pull irritates ME, too. Take less hair and pull clean.

When looking at the mane, remember to work one section at a time. For the first day work the longest hair and plan on no more than fifteen minutes. It may take a week to finally get the mane to the length needed for braiding or shows. You can also work mane pulling into your grooming routine so it breaks up throughout the process. Pull for a few minutes and then work on hoof care. Go back to pulling and then break to curry comb. This will prevent your mare from having time to get irritated. The changes will keep her interested and comfortable.

Pulling manes is tedious work in your grooming routine. Many grooms put it off until show season or they neglect it until it becomes a necessity. Consider keeping up the mane as part of a weekly grooming routine and your horse should get used to it.

Maintaining a well trimmed mane as part of your grooming program also keeps YOUR technique in top form. Doing something often helps you become better at it. Most horses are irritated, not with the actual mane pulling, but more with the groom's approach. If you cannot pull the hair out with one yank, then you need to pull less hair each time, or work on your technique. As I said before, I've had grooms that have had to pull three or four times to get the hair out. That's enough to irritate ANY horse! —




*I.B. Hoofinit is a fictitious horse character developed by Chris Marrs as a service to teach horse care. Questions to I.B. Hoofinit may be submitted to P.O. Box 2955, Staunton, Va. 24402. Questions become the property of Chris Marrs, and answers are subject to editor approval. Information provided in this column is meant to be taken as general advice. Each horse, rider, owner, and situation reflects different problems. I.B.'s answers are meant to be informative and enjoyable, but not binding. Common sense in any situation is a must.*

## I. B. Hoofinit's 'Horses in History'

**Can you identify the horse described in the following vignette? If so, simply write your answer down and mail it with your name and address to I. B. Hoofinit's Horses in History, P. O. Box 2955, Staunton, Va. 24402. The first correct answer received will be sent a free gift! The answer will appear in the next issue of *Augusta Country*!**

This little white Arabian stallion was owned by a famous French military soldier. He was one of 52 horses that made up this soldier's personal stable in 1812 on an ill-fated Russian campaign. The little Arab survived the dreadful retreat from Moscow. Although he only stood 14.1 hands, he was a perfect partner for his military owner who was short legged and portly. As a military horse this stallion was wounded eight times in his career. He was swift, reliable, and steady under fire. You have most likely seen him in paintings with his owner. Can you name this Horse in History?

## •Right to Farm

Continued from page 5

make contact with members of the Senate Agriculture Committee as well as local delegates or senators and voice support for Virginia's existing Right to Farm Act.

In addition to Sen. Marye, members of the Senate Agriculture Committee are John Chichester, R-Fredericksburg; Richard Holland, D-Windsor; Charles Hawkins, R-Chatham; Jane Woods, R-Fairfax; Kenneth Stolle, R-Virginia Beach; Thomas Norment, R-Williamsburg; William Bolling, R-Mechanicsville; Patricia Ticer, D-Alexandria; Emily Couric, D-Charlottesville; Mary Margaret Whipple, D-Arlington; Emmett Hanger, R-Verona; John Watkins, R-Midlothian; Roscoe Reynolds, D-Martinsville; and Phillip Puckett, D-Lebanon. (See the tables on this page for telephone numbers and addresses of these senators as well as local delegates and representatives.) ---

Clip & save

### Area legislators' addresses and phone numbers

**House of Delegates**

**Creigh Deeds, D**
P.O. Box 360
Warm Springs, Va. 24484
804/698-1018

**S. Vance Wilkins Jr., R**
P.O. Box 469
Amherst, Va. 24521
804/698-1024

**Steve Landes, R**
P.O. Box 42
Weyers Cave, Va. 24486
804/698-1025

**Senate**

**Emmett Hanger, R**
P.O. Box 2
Mt. Solon, Va. 22843
804/698-7524

**Kevin Miller, R**
2 South Main St., Suite 606
Harrisonburg, Va. 22801
804/698-7526

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### Senate Agriculture Committee members

**Madison Marye, D**
P.O. Box 37
Shawsville, Va. 24162
804/698-7539

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**Mailing addresses for senators during session only is General Assembly Building, Richmond, Va. 23219. Mailing addresses for delegates during session only is P.O. Box 406, Richmond, Va. 23218.**

**The Virginia Farm Bureau Federation operates a toll free legislative information telephone line. Call 1-800-277-0307 for reports on General Assembly action. The information on the recorded message is updated each Tuesday and Friday. It is available seven days a week during the assembly's session.**





## •VCC

Continued from page 6

VCC assisted with the technical aspects of the planing including doing land research, submitting information that included tax assessment and map making. "The VCC is exceptionally pleased with this ag district because it complements the conservation work we have been doing along the Rt. 252 corridor. With districts such as this we can protect a large land base that supports agriculture. It is a way to raise a consciousness and awareness of agriculture in a community. It publicly allows farmers to commit to this use and their properties are given consideration in instances like planning, nuisance ordinances, and eminent domain cases," noted VCC Executive Director Faye Cooper.

For those in this newest district, which will be reviewed and renewed in eight years, a collective statement has been made. "Zoning and ordinances can be changed so quickly and easily that we had to go on record and say, 'No, we don't want certain things around here,'" explained Alex.

Some of the land owners have gone even further. The Callisons and the Bundys, for instance, have placed easements on particular tracts of land. The Bundy family farm is part of 600 contiguous acres that will remain agricultural land for perpetuity under conservation easements.

As he strode to the porch of his mid-19th century farmhouse and looked out across the sweeping viewscape along a rural backroad in southern Augusta County, Col. Bundy summed up the reason for all the work that went into the ag district: "It's great to stand here and look out and know that it's always going to be this way." ---





**ADDRESS CHANGE?** If your address has changed for any reason or if you are planning to move, you must notify *Augusta Country* of the change. Call 885-0266 or 1-800-884-8248 or write *Augusta Country*, P.O. Box 51, Middlebrook, Va. 24459. Please help us keep our records up to date. *Thank you*

# Country Crossroads

## *Reflecting pool reflections*

***By Roberta Hamlin***

January 1999

Dear Maude,

Those days I spent at home over the Holidays were certainly over far too soon!! And here we are — at the beginning of a new year.

For a month during which I seldom have any thing interesting to write about, this one has certainly been exceptional. The members of Congress always come to town in January, but seldom is anything much done, other than organizing their new offices. Those lazy days of January are usually looked forward to by most of us with great fondness. Well, not this year!! With the impeachment proceedings, work never seemed to stop. And, by the time the Senate trial began, there were swarms of interested onlookers everywhere. There was that constant fear that someone else would be the first to know something. Lobbyists kept dropping in on the hill, and would lay in wait, ready to attack any "friend" who happened to have been seen talking to anyone who came out of the Old Senate Chamber. The words, "Hello, Joe," would come to the unsuspecting staff member who was looking very occupied writing something down. (That something actually had nothing to do with the heavy proceedings in the hallowed halls of Congress but instead concerned how much to tell the tailor to let out the waistline seam on the gray suit, not the navy pinstripe.) "How in the world *are you? Haven't seen you in ages. We never did get together for that lunch I promised you at the Watergate...*"

A number of smiles would finally erase the confused expression from the face of the staff member (whose name was probably John not Joe) and then the conversation would more than likely continue with: "Now, tell me, just what are they doing?... What have you heard behind the scenes?... Is it true that..."

Or, overheard at a popular local restaurant: "Look, there's that woman from the Capitol Hill Club. Wonder if she knows who really is on Larry Flynt's list?" Up will jump the well dressed "insider" and head straight toward her table. "Hello Jane! ('Or is it June?' he will think.) How in the world are you?..." The show has a different name, but the actors and the story line seem to stay about the same. I must admit, however, that it is more fun when eavesdropping at lunch, to speculate about this kind of conversation than it is to hear them talking of "HR123" or "SR456." Those legislative bill numbers leave a loot to be desired in the excitement category. However, I am afraid that I must have been in this city for too long, for now even the parties seem to remind me of the political scene.

My new friend Paul called and invited me to the huge party which kicked off the Washington celebration of Mardi Gras. I was SO excited! It was wonderful, for everyone seemed to know him and like him and were really nice to me. It was the way a party ought to be. The music was great. The food was fantastic. It was just what I needed to lift my spirits (and to wear the other one of those two new dresses I bought last month.) Part of the entertainment consisted of a group of mimes, and they were wonderful. There were several of them who were all covered in white and represented dancing statues on columned platforms. There was one woman who was dressed as an actual statue — a statuary head and shoulders atop a Greek column. She was so still and when she did move, moved so slowly that everyone seemed to think she really was a statue. I even saw someone set a drink down on her! Her smile was frozen — and the first thing that went through my mind was, "just like those of many of our elected officials." Another group of mimes were painted all over in gold, silver and bronze paint. Part of them were supposed to be robots — why did that remind me of other politicians? Their movements were jerky, then frozen. One was a bit mischievous, reaching down and touching people briefly on the back then freezing with this wicked smile. He was my favorite of all. Still others of the gold and silver batch where outside the ballroom by the escalators, on stilts, greeting everyone as they came and went. Seemingly much taller than their actual height, they were smiling and bowing. Surely no one would be tempted to compare them to politicians!

I almost got a good case of the giggles every time I saw one of those wonderful mimes. It would have been embarrassing to have had to explain what was going on in my mind. But with all that has been going on for the past days and months here in Washington, I do not think that anyone would argue with me that in this city people are not necessarily what they seem!

I am now ready for HR1, or Senate Resolution 2, a little concentrated work, and hopefully a change of pace for the rest of the winter. That does not mean that I'm not off today after work to catch the last of the End-of-the-Year sales, however. Nor does it mean that I won't keep my ears open for any little bits of interesting news at the table next to me at lunchtime.

Give my love
to everyone at home,
LuLu

## Slam dunks and love in the country

*From the AC archives*

***Hank and Irma***

**By Lee Ann Heizer**

"Mom, tell me about love," pleads 13-year-old Irmalene.

Irma sighs and momentarily reflects on the days when she was asked to tell stories about three bears, three little pigs or three billy goats gruff. Her teenage daughters continues, "I don't think you could find romance around here if you beat the bushes for it. Everybody knows that. Hollywood knows it. You don't see any movie people flocking to Augusta County to shoot a love story do you?" Irmalene concludes triumphantly. "You have to live in some exciting city to find love. Look at 'Sleepless in Seattle,'" she suggests to her mother. "Now there's a place where you can find romance. The best Augusta County could offer would be 'Wide Awake in Weyers Cave' and what kind of love story could you get out of a title like that?" Irmalene questioned, "How you and Pop ever managed to fall in love around here I'll never know! It sure couldn't have been like it is in the movies," muttered Irmalene.

"Quite the contrary," countered Irma. "The way I remember it, it was just like in the movies." Irmalene's all-knowing adolescent oration abruptly stops as her mouth drops open in amazement.

"Which movie was it like, Mom?" her daughter queried. "Was it "Raiders of the Lost Ark? Did you and Pop team up to defeat the forces of evil and fall in love when you weren't especially busy fighting bad guys?"

"No dear, not that one," responds Irma.

"I know, I know! It must have been "The Sound of Music." You were an aspiring nun and Pop was a lonely widower with seven children...No, I don't guess it could have been that. You're a Methodist."

"You have to go back a little further than that Irmalene," said Irma. "It was exactly like the movie 'Seven Brides for Seven Brothers'."

"Oh, I see," responded her daughter. "No, I don't see. There's only one of you and Pop doesn't have six brothers. How could you two falling in love be like that movie?"

Irma thinks that, having supplied her daughter with a movie title, they can perhaps move on to more realistic themes for discussion. This is not to be the case however as Irmalene is now anxious for details.

"Well," Irma continues reluctantly, "it was like part of the movie."

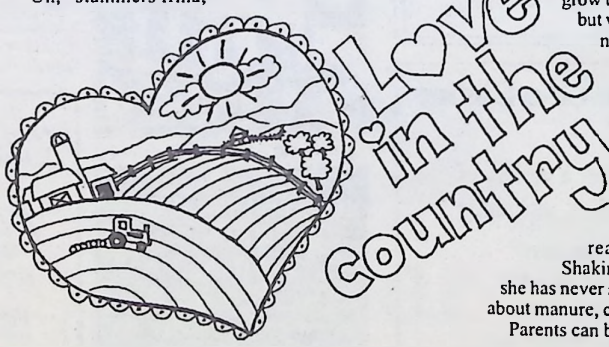
"Which part Mom?" pursues her daughter.

"Uh," stammers Irma, knowing that her true confession is not going in a helpful direction. "It was like the part where the handsome brother comes down out of the mountains and asks a beautiful village girl to marry him."

Irmalene woefully answers "You mean the part where the guy says 'I got me a farm that has 50 acres of wheat, woodland, cows, pigs, and sheep. It's got everything but a woman. How about it?' You call that romantic? That has about as much romance as bidding on a cow at the market," whines Irmalene.

"It may not have been romantic, but it was realistic," says Irma sagely. "And in matters of love and marriage being realistic goes a whole lot further than being romantic. Romantic movies are based on idealized situations, and a marriage between two very imperfect people is anything but an ideal situation. In marriage you have to make the best of what ever comes along. And usually what comes along is not long-stemmed roses. When you talk about 'true love' you should probably call it 'real love' and know that it's more gritty than glamorous, more exhausting than exciting, and more giving than taking.

"It's kind of like those slam dunks in basketball," continues Irma. "Sure, they're exciting -- what you would call romantic, I guess -- but it's the hard work of moving the ball up and down the court and taking realistic shots that wins the ball game. A marriage is just like that. It takes a team effort and you can't rely on a few thrilling slam dunks to make it work out." On a roll now Irma concludes, "So it's not sending me roses that makes Pop romantic. It's things like bringing me a truckload of manure to help my garden grow that thrills me. We've never danced till dawn, but we've sat on the back porch on warm summer nights listening to the music of the crickets and frogs. We don't go out to eat intimate dinners in fancy restaurants, but your Pop never fails to tell me how good the dinner I cooked was. Pop can't fill my closet with fur coats or my jewelry box with diamonds, but he does keep the oil changed in my car so I don't get stranded on some country road! All things considered, I'll take realism over romance any day."




Shaking her head in silent dismay Irmalene knows she has never seen a movie where lovers get all worked up about manure, crickets and motor oil.

Parents can be so weird. ---

# Prune shrubs, trees to help prevent weather damage

*Lawn & Landscape*

By Jeff Flint

Winter is upon us once again and this time with a temperament. The only gardening on most individual's minds is pruning a few limbs to create arms for Frosty the Snowman. The truth is this is a wonderful time to prepare for a beautiful spring with healthy plants and a good time to go out and enjoy the weather.

Pruning can be accomplished this time of year without having to fuss with all the leaves and new growth found in the spring and summer. It is also easy to see into the branch habit of trees and shrubs. When making pruning cuts, cut back to a branch angle crotch. This will avoid leaving a stub limb that could produce prolific sucker growth and hide the actual pruning cut. Pruning paint should not be needed. Rather, allow the cut to heal on its own. Listed below are a few of the most important reasons to prune shrubs and trees:

- To compensate for root loss - (for example — construction on your home that has disturbed the ground around the trees and shrubs)
- To control plant size - ("No one told me my dwarf mugho pine would reach 5 feet.")
- To influence flowering and fruiting - (Orchards prune apple trees heavily every year to encourage fruit production.)
- To train young plants - (The pyracantha on the side of your house should be trained into an espalier.)
- Health and appearance - (Many trees and shrubs such as Bradford pear and red stem dogwood require yearly pruning.)

This brings me to the other important issues in your winter landscape — the protection of your trees and shrubs as many things can damage or even kill evergreens. It may be winter, but some plants continue to need moisture.

Make certain that plants have plenty of water as you progress into the frozen ground conditions of winter. Snow and rainfall this fall has helped, but that is not always the case each year. Plants such as boxwood (*Buxus*) and holly (*Ilex*) may need an application of wilt-proof, anti-transpirant to help keep their green color.

Ice can severely damage some types of plants. Weak wood, as found in birch trees or weak branch angles as found in Bradford pear trees, can cause problems. This year's first ice storm took a toll on Bradford pear trees. On a trip from Waynesboro to Staunton, I counted nine trees that were completely destroyed. To avoid having this happen to your trees, a couple of things can help:

- Prune unfavorable branch angles where breaks are likely to occur;
- Use cables to bind large branches which carry most of the limb weight and which have acute branch angles.

No, the thermometer isn't registering 80 degrees outside. But there is a lot you can do to help your plants in the winter. An added bonus is breaking up the winter doldrums with a little yard work. —

*This month* Augusta Country *welcomes Jeff Flint to its staff of columnists. Jeff is co-owner of Village Garden Center in Fishersville. He holds a bachelor's degree in horticulture and landscape design from Virginia Tech. If you have questions regarding specific lawn and landscape problems, send them to* Augusta Country, *P.O. Box 51, Middlebrook, Va. 24459 and we'll refer them to Jeff.*

# Harvesting walnuts provides fun for kids and a little money too

By ROSEMARIE GREENAWALT

My 8-year-old brother named Jon and I wanted to pick up walnuts. The reason I wanted to was to earn money to buy Josefina, one of the American Girl dolls. I do not know the reason Jon wanted to earn money. But anyway, we went out to pick walnuts before we went to a hay ride at the Salatins'. At their farm they also buy walnuts.

We went out in the pasture which is behind our house. There are lots of walnut trees near the creek. In several places, my brothers had made little dams so we could walk across the creek. Now they were full of walnuts.

So we started picking up walnuts. I wore rubber boots. We picked and we picked. My goat named Spence wanted to get the walnuts. We thought they weren't good for him, but our buckets were so heavy we couldn't stop him from getting them. He didn't really want to eat them, though. He just wanted to smell them.

Then my brother and I set our full buckets on a fallen tree while we went and picked a few more walnuts. By then we were getting tired and thirsty. Just then, we heard our mom pulling up in our car. We hurried to get our buckets. When she got to the pasture, she helped us pick up more walnuts. In the trunk she brought a big washtub to fill. We poured in our walnuts and picked more.

Soon we were done. We filled up the tub and all the buckets that would fit in the trunk.

Then we were ready to leave for the Salatins. When we got there, we pulled up to where they were taking walnuts.

"You have to wait for that pickup in front of you," Daniel Salatin said. As we waited we took pictures of the machine. The walnuts went up-up a conveyer belt into the machine. The noise hurt my ears. The machine split the outside off of the inside of the walnuts. Then the outside hulls were taken in a spreader to be fertilizer.

The inside nuts went into a bag. They paid us for that. We got $5.50 to share.

**Jonathan and Rosemarie Greenawalt wait their turn in line to hull walnuts which they gathered this fall.**

Photo by Matthew Greenawalt

A few days later our friends the Crilleys from Mt. Solon came to help get more walnuts. They wanted to earn money for horse camp.

With their family and our family, we filled our trailer with trash cans and buckets and barrels and boxes and the washtub full of walnuts.

On Saturday morning, my dad said, "I'm going to be over to the pasture in five minutes to hook up the trailer."

"Boy," I thought, "I can't pick up very many walnuts in five minutes." We hurried to get as many more walnuts as we could. We found a place in the cow pasture with lots and lots of fat walnuts. My dad took a lot longer than five minutes and we filled up everything.

He said, "That's plenty, maybe even a little too much for this trailer."

My mom and I took the walnuts to Dave's Recycling in Harrisonburg. There was a fairly long line so we decided to get our errands done while we waited. Then we came back. We drove up and there was a HUGE line.

"Boy," we thought. "I wish we had a book to read." We looked around in the car and presently found one and my mommy read to me. Soon it was done but the line was still there. Finally we got closer. We thought it was almost our turn. But when we looked around the corner, there was a whole other row of cars in front of us waiting.

There were pickups and vans and cars all full of walnuts. We waited three hours before it was finally our turn.

We did not get nearly as much money as I thought we would. But we sure saw lots of walnuts. —

*Rosemarie Greenawalt is the 6-year-old daughter of Dave and Beth Greenawalt of Bridgewater. Mom is a contributing writer to* Augusta Country *and provided some assistance to Rosemarie with this article.*

# Audiences fall hard for *Shakespeare in Love*


*A movie review by Hannah's mom, Sue Simmons*

Young Will Shakespeare has writer's block. The tower of his creativity has collapsed. He has promised the proprietor of the Rose Theatre a comedy — something with a little love, a little sword play, a bit with a dog. But the unwritten play, "Romeo and Ethel, the Pirate's Daughter" remains locked in Will's head. If only Shakespeare were in love...

And thus, the stage is set for *Shakespeare in Love*. Written by Marc Norman and Tom Stoppard, this is a romantic comedy about a tragedy. Will's friend Chris Marlowe gives young Shakespeare (Joseph Fiennes) a few ideas for his Romeo and Ethel comedy (rivals, love affair, a sword fight, Mercutio) but Will doesn't break through his writer's block until he meets his muse in the person of Viola De Lesseps (Gwyneth Paltrow). Like Romeo and Ethel — soon to be Juliet — fate does not bode well for these young lovers.

Viola is betrothed to Lord Wessex, a cash-strapped nobleman bound for his holdings in Virginia, where he plans to take his new wife. Enamored with the theatre, Viola takes advantage of her parent's absence prior to her nuptials. Disguising herself as a man, she auditions for the role of Romeo. "Were life a slumber, I'd dream myself into the company of players," (is it Shakespeare or Stoppard?) she muses to her nurse.

In a time when women were forbidden by law to appear on the stage, Viola's ruse is found out quickly by Will, who, already smitten with the fair lady, allows it to go on. Shakespeare thus finds himself in the middle of a Shakespearean plot. Class and marriage separate Will and Viola who, like Romeo and Juliet, steal what little time they have left and live a lifetime in a few short weeks. By the final curtain there is plenty of love, a bit of sword play, even a dog — and the authority figure who puts all to right.

Screenwriter Norman produced the script for *Shakespeare in Love* more than 10 years ago. Studio politics and ubiquitous casting quarrels held up production. Playwright Stoppard (whose writing credits include the plays *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, *The Real Thing* and films *Empire in the Sun* and *The Russia House*) re-wrote the story, giving it an Elizabethan dazzle that should please audiences of any age, in the box seats or on the ground. Stoppard may well be the only man alive who has dared to put words in Shakespeare's mouth — giving credence to the theory that Stoppard was Shakespeare in a past life.

Allusions to scenes and lines familiar to anyone with just a passing knowledge of Shakespeare are tossed around at breakneck speed. John Madden's direction gives double meaning to the famous balcony scene as well as the fight between the Montagues and Capulets. Elizabethan England never looked so lively and inviting.

Fiennes and Paltrow make the most of a wonderful script. Fiennes fleshes out the Bard. No longer that lone image of Shakespeare demurely holding his quill, Fiennes' Shakespeare is lusty, jealous, drunk, deceitful, superstitious, cynical and potent. Paltrow proves for perhaps the second time in her career that she can act. Indeed, if you've never shed a tear at the death scene in Romeo and Juliet, you may well not escape this time. Fiennes and Paltrow are aided and abetted by a fine supporting cast: Geoffery Rush (the proprietor of the Rose) Ben Affleck (Ned and Mercutio) and Imelda Staunton (Nurse). They manage to capture the sheer genius of Shakespeare and poke fun at society and the frail humans who inhabit it without insulting anyone.

Judi Dench (*Mrs. Brown*) steals the show in her 10 minutes as Queen Elizabeth. A trained Shakespearean actor who herself knows all the lines from *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night*, and a *Midsummer's Night Dream*, Dench creates a fearsome and godlike Queen measure for measure. When Viola learns she is to be presented to her Majesty "Sunday next," you are sure Viola will hold her own. When Sunday's audience with the Queen arrives, you tremble and fade right along with Viola. Don't be surprised if Dench wins an Oscar nomination for this role so memorable is it.

*Shakespeare in Love* is the tale of woe of Juliet and her Romeo. It is also a farce, a love story, a comment on society, and an intellectual exercise. Get the thee to the theatre and if *Shakespeare in Love* doesn't soon come to a theatre near you, call the management and complain.

Hannah's Mom gives *Shakespeare in Love* four bananas. And she'll go see it again and take Hannah the next time.

*Shakespeare in Love* carries an R rating. The film includes some nudity, sexual situations, and general bawdiness. —

## Setting the record straight on Virginia history

Tom Stoppard may know his Shakespeare but he definitely does not know his Virginia history. Since he will no doubt read my riveting and insightful review of his movie when his copy of Augusta Country arrives in the mail, I thought I would take a few lines to set the record straight.

Stoppard's film *Shakespeare in Love* is set in 1593 London, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. One of the story's character's Lord Wessex, an impoverished aristocrat who marries Viola De Lesseps for her money, plans to take her to Virginia where he has both land and plans to make a fortune raising tobacco and wheat.

Oh, puh-leeeze.

Elizabeth I came to the throne in 1558, eight years before Shakespeare's birth. Her reign was marked by a cultural renaissance and England's ascendancy as a world power as she vied with Spain for New World colonies.

Englishmen Martin Frobisher first probed the North American continent for a Northwest passage to China in 1576 but it was Humphrey Gilbert who dreamed of a settlement, probably as a base for piracy against Spanish ships. He made two attempts, the first in 1578 is shrouded in mystery; the second in Newfoundland in 1583 lasted all of two weeks.

Gilbert's younger half-brother Sir Walter Raleigh backed an expedition in 1585 to settle Roanoke Island. This expedition failed but he tried again the next year, when 120 people under the command of John White returned to Roanoke. After establishing the settlement, John White sailed back to England for supplies. Just as his supply fleet readied to return to Virginia, the Spanish Armada attacked England and the ships were pressed into the Queen's service. White's return was delayed until 1590. When he arrived back at Roanoke, the colony had vanished, thus earning it its place in history as the Lost Colony.

By that time, England and Elizabeth had lost interest in the New World. Not until her successor James I made peace with Spain in 1604 did interest in North America renew. Thus were founded two settlements in 1607: one on the Sagadahoc River in Maine and the other on the James River in Virginia.

Jamestown of course lasted. But just barely. The first settlers, all men, sought their fortune in gold and nearly perished in its pursuit. Only after nearly starving in 1610 did the settlers look to other means of making a profit: cedar, sassafras, wine, silk, iron, tar, and finally in 1612, smoke.

John Rolfe, who had been experimenting with the harsh tobacco prized by the natives, discovered that a West Indian variety proliferated in the Virginia climate. By 1616 Virginia shipped 20,000 tons of the weed to England. Will Shakespeare, by the way, died that year.

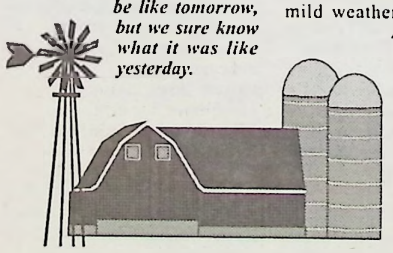
The stream of tobacco would grow from a trickle to a torrent until the 1660s when the bubble burst and the bottom fell out of the tobacco market. Prices plummeted and financial crisis gripped the colony. Only then did Virginia farmers realize the wisdom of diversification of crops and started growing wheat and hemp.

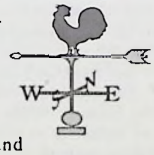
So you see, Mr. Stoppard, the Lord Wessex in your story probably did not have holdings in Virginia. He probably would not even have wanted to set sail for the New World and if he had, good Queen Bess probably wouldn't have allowed it. He most certainly could not have envisioned farming tobacco and wheat.

We forgive you, however: The Bard played fast and loose with history so why not you? —

## Yesterday's weather

***Most newspapers include a weather forecast in each edition. But we try to be a little different at Augusta Country. We may not know what the weather will be like tomorrow, but we sure know what it was like yesterday.***






***Feb. 6, 1807*** — It was the famous "Cold Friday" in the Midwest and South. The temperature did not rise above zero in Ohio and Kentucky.

***Feb. 12, 1989*** — Unseasonably mild weather prevailed across Alaska. Morning lows of 29 degrees at Anchorage and 31 degrees at Fairbanks were actually warmer than those in northern Florida.

***Feb. 16, 1987*** — A winter storm produced snow and ice in the Ohio Valley and the Appalachian Region. Snowfall totals in Virginia ranged up to 14 inches around Farmville, while Granville, N.C., reported eight inches of sleet and ice. Freezing rain in eastern North Carolina caused extensive damage to power lines. Gales lashed the coast of Virginia and North Carolina.

***Feb. 23, 1802*** — A great snowstorm raged along the New England coast producing 48 inches of snow north of Boston. Three large ships from Salem were wrecked along Cape Cod. —

Information for this report was taken from the World Wide Web homepage of the U.S. Storm Data Center.