



Shenandoah
County

Historical
Society

Winter 2026

Newsletter

Reminder

The Historical Society Visitor Center and Book Store located in the historic 1795 Courthouse in Woodstock, VA will be closed during the months of January and February. We will reopen on March 6th.

We will continue to process book orders while we are closed. We will also monitor our voice mail at 540-459-1795. Private tours can also be arranged via phone.

New Members

Helen Kuhlman

Dennis Fravel

Marcy McCann

Gary Yew

Robert & Kathie DeSear

Kathleen Borne



SAVE THE DATE
June 20, 2026
"Shenandoah County
Celebrates 1776"

Plans for our day of celebration for America 250 continue to grow. With a dedicated landing page, periodic updates will be posted at ShenandoahHistory.org. More to come in our spring newsletter. You don't want to miss this one day!

Some updates to share:
The 5th Troop, 1st Light Dragoons (mounted infantry soldiers) will demonstrate cavalry and weaponry. ★ 8th VA Regiment reenactors will establish camp. ★ [Cont. on Pg.5]

Save The Date !

Heritage Day 2026

The 2026 Shenandoah County Heritage Day will be held in Woodstock at the Shenandoah County Government Center in April. We've chosen the location and are a bit uncertain about the exact date because we are still waiting to learn we will have the VA250 Mobile Museum for everyone to enjoy that day. Please mark **April 11 and 18** on your calendars, as one of these dates will be our annual gathering of Shenandoah County historical museums and organizations, as well as folks who bring exhibits of their own.

In 2026, our focus is to be people. We encourage anyone who has information about a person, persons, family or group

[Continued on Page 6]

March 17th Program By Author, Gabe Neville

Dunmore County Volunteers and the Williamsburg Powder Alarm of 1775



When the Redcoats marched from Boston to seize military supplies at Concord, the Royal governor of Virginia was plotting to do the same in Virginia. Volunteers from all over the Old Dominion marched to Williamsburg to recover the gunpowder seized by Lord Dunmore, not yet knowing that America was at war.

Neville, author of *The Last Men Standing: the 8th Virginia Regiment in the American Revolution*, will tell the story of Dunmore (Shenandoah) County's revolutionary committee, its volunteers who rallied to Patrick Henry's call, and how it all ended (for the time being) with a barbecue.

The program is at 7:00 PM at the St. Paul's Heritage Center, 106 S. Main Street in Edinburg. Refreshments will follow. Ample parking is available across



ATTENTION

ARE YOUR DUES DUE??

The date beside the name on your mailing label is the month and year your membership is due. Thank you for staying current. Rates on Page 6.

Please note new amounts.



From the: Shenandoah County Archives

By Zach Hottel, Archivist

1941 Passenger Train in Shenandoah County

This photograph shows eight Southern Railway employees and locomotive 1348 at the Strasburg Depot on October 20, 1941.

They posed for this picture because the 1348 was pulling the last scheduled Southern passenger train to pass through Strasburg before the service was to officially end on October 25, 1941.

The six men are, from left to right, Larry Mundy, conductor; C.R. Wetsel, extra fireman; E. Garvin, engineer; Harold Mauney, train master; Charles Chandler, agent; Omar Evans, fireman; G.C. Steadman, baggage master; and Douglas Bly, flagman.

Passenger rail service began in the Shenandoah Valley when the railroad first arrived immediately prior to the Civil War. The line was fairly busy with travelers coming to and from the valley line stretching from Manassas to Harrisonburg. However, road improvements and better performing automobiles reduced demand until the railroad ended service following this train's run. It did resume for eight months in 1947 following a heightened demand for service, but was permanently ended January 1, 1948.



“Railroad Employees and Engine Number 1348,” Image 0400002, Morrison Studio Collection, Shenandoah County Historical Society/Truban Archives, Shenandoah County Library, Edinburg, Virginia.

This Newsletter can be sent to you electronically. Many photos will appear in color, and it saves postage ! Notify us at: ShenandoahHistory.org

The Shenandoah County Historical Society, Inc.

is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization.

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Message from the President



Barbara Adamson

We're kicking off 2026 and the commemorations of the American Revolution with a bang! As you know, plans are well underway for our Shenandoah County Celebrates 1776 event on June 20.

Our first program meeting of the year will be Gabriel Neville, author of *The Last Men Standing The 8th Virginia Regiment in the American Revolution*, on March 17th. Gabe will present a program that highlights the dedication to the revolutionary ideal of Shenandoah County.

The November program, featuring local archaeologist, Mike Kehoe, drew the largest audience we've ever had for one of our programs, and was enthusiastically received. There were lots of questions for Mike about the history of Native Americans in Shenandoah County and it was a great presentation. You can see it via the link on our website, www.shenandoahhistory.org.

The Historic Courthouse will be closed January and February, opening again on Friday, March 6th. As always, we encourage anyone who would like to become involved, contribute to the historical knowledge of our community, and get to know our wonderful 1795 Courthouse to help us out and give us a call. [540-459-1795]

We regret that several of our volunteers have decided that other life demands now require their departure from Historic Courthouse duties. We understand, of course. We thank Kim Stevenson, Jim Stevenson and Clemmitt Sigler for the contributions they have made to SCHS. They will be missed!

Nominations are Invited for the 2026 John H. Adamson Excellence in Preservation Awards

In 2014 the Shenandoah County Historical Society established an Excellence in Historic Preservation Awards program to be given at the annual meeting/banquet in May. The purpose of the program is to honor projects within Shenandoah County that deserve recognition for their preservation efforts. By doing so we hope to encourage others to follow the examples of those being recognized. These awards continue an earlier program that had been created by the former Shenandoah Preservation League.

In 2022 this award was renamed as the John H. Adamson Excellence in Historic Preservation Award, to honor the late Mr. Adamson for his numerous significant contributions to the Society. The Awards are intended to recognize outstanding projects in the fields of history, architecture, scenic beauty, and material culture (this includes furniture, textiles, documents, folk art, photography, basketry, tools and more). The original, or source object(s) must have been completed to be eligible for consideration.

"Each year we look forward to receiving a number of high quality applications," Awards Chairman, Karen Whetzel said. "Shenandoah County is rich in accomplished and potential historic preservation projects and we are pleased to be able to support this awards program. The Society believes that the quality of life in Shenandoah County is greatly enhanced by preserving evidence of our unique history, and that publicly recognizing these achievements may bring about a greater awareness of the value of historic preservation."

Nomination deadline is April 1st. and forms are available throughout Shenandoah County at libraries, museums, town historical societies, and by contacting the Society at 540-459-1795, or by e-mail at SCHS.VA@gmail.com. Also, you may print a copy of the nomination form by going to the Society website at www.shenandoahhistory.org. (Our Organization/Interest Areas/Preservation Awards) A list of previous awardees is also on the site.

**★ Black History Month★
A Living Legend at Age 99:
New Market's Own Juanita Durrett**

By: Karen Whetzel

When I saw the Southern Kitchen Restaurant's Facebook page about the New Market restaurant honoring Juanita Durrett in the SK Hall of Fame there, I thought about how Juanita, who had worked there for 69 years and who was famous for her pies (coconut cream was probably ordered the most!) must have an interesting life story. Since I knew Juanita's granddaughter and great grandchild well, I decided to learn more about her as a person, family member, and community member. On a cold February morning during Black History Month and twelve days after her ninety-ninth birthday, I had the pleasure of talking with her and learning more about her life in New Market.

Juanita was born in Ohio on January 30, 1926, and just celebrated her 99th birthday. She moved to New Market in the 40s, and started her family. Juanita doesn't like to talk about herself, and she mentioned several times that she didn't want to talk about things that happened long ago.

New Market was where Juanita raised her four children: the late Alfreda Durrett, Teresa Hunter, Carol Perkins, and Harry Durrett. Her three living children, all three of her grandchildren (Alfreda's daughter Joanne Thompson, and Carol's sons NT and Duane Perkins) and one great grandchild Caiden Thompson gathered to celebrate her 99th birthday. Harry and Teresa both live on the same street as their mom, and Carol lives in Waynesboro. Grandchild Joanne and great-grandchild Caiden live a few blocks away, so Juanita has plenty of her family nearby if she needs something.

Juanita was a kitchen manager at Southern Kitchen when the Newland family owned it. She worked there until she was in her 80s. When asked how long she worked there, Juanita replied "for a long time." Juanita, who is black, said that she did not experience much racism in New Market; and noted that any racist things she saw or heard were "signs of the times."



Son Harry noted that his mother was "a special person; a terrific role model with a work ethic over the top who would walk up the hill in deep snow to get to work." In fact, for many years, Juanita always walked up that hill to work. Juanita confirmed that she only remembers one time when she didn't go to work; she had the flu and missed a few days. The other restaurant workers brought food to her. She also noted that businessman Carroll Moyers was a frequent patron, and if it snowed a lot, he would drive his truck to her house and take her to work so that she could open Southern Kitchen, and he could get breakfast!

Granddaughter Joanne Thompson wrote an eloquent Facebook post on her "Grandmama" for her birthday. Joanne reflected: "99 years. Even though humans seem to be living longer, 99 years is beyond my comprehension. It boggles my mind that both my parents are gone, but my feisty, hardworking, funny, stubborn, no nonsense, amazing grandmother is still with us and still keeping us all in line. What a tremendous blessing! She may not move as fast as she used to, but she still moves. She may not get out as much as she'd like to, but she still keeps in touch with people and stays informed about the world around her. She may forget a thing or two here and there, but the sharpness of her mind is astounding, and let's face it, we all forget a thing or two here and there. Her spirit is just as alive and active as it has always been. Her life is contagious. She is a living, breathing history, and I find myself more amazed with her with every passing season."

Juanita mentioned to me that one thing she misses most in going to church. She reminisced about Manor Memorial United Methodist Church in New Market, where she worshiped when she was able to get out. She and other women of the church crocheted, made quilts and afghans, studied the Bible, and more.

Although Juanita has fond memories of working at Southern Kitchen, [Continued on Page 6]

♦ Continuing Series on Building History in Shenandoah County ♦

The Village of Mount Clifton and the Mount Clifton School



Mount Clifton School

Mount Clifton is a small village about 4 miles west of Mt. Jackson, Va. on the Orkney Grade (Rt. 263). It was given its name as the village sets atop bluffs overlooking Mill Creek. Early family names were Hammon, Osborne, Minnick, Noel, Newman and Fansler. Mt. Clifton was settled by Jacob Hammon, an immigrant from Germany in the mid 1700s. He purchased 260 acres of land from Philip & Catherine Tussing in 1792 and 90 acres from Jacob Rousch in 1796 which were described as being on the drains of Mill Creek. He moved to Ohio in 1805 with his wife, Anna Hottel (daughter of George Hottel), and his younger children (Jacob & Anna had 10 children). At this time he deeded his land to his son George who was married to Lydia Painter (they had 7 children - 4 sons and 3 daughters).

George and his sons (Jacob & Aaron, Moses, Reuben), are credited with establishing the village of Mt. Clifton. They built a flour mill, saw mill, blacksmith shop and a building where the first post office was located. The post office opened on Sept. 9, 1850 and son Aaron was the postmaster. The post office operated until Jan., 1908 when operations were transferred to the Mt. Jackson post office. The original building still stands

on the north side of Rt. 263 as you descend "Clifton Hill" and it housed various businesses over the years. In 1883, it was the Osborne & Hammon Store. From the late 1890s until the 1920s, it was known as D. C. Hammon & Son. (D. C. or David Clinton Hammon was a son of Moses Hammon). In Oct. 1898, the store burned to the ground and it was thought to have been the result of burglary. The store was rebuilt and existed for many years. D. C. Hammon & Son closed in 1929 and the business was bought by his nephew Burtelle Fansler, Sr. and Marvin Will who ran the store for a few years. Wes Frye and his wife took over during the 1960s. A second store operated by a Col. Stickley was also located at the top of the hill. This building still stands.

A large house that sat next to the store was the home of Moses Hammon. Moses was married to Caroline Evans, (granddaughter of Capt. Jacob Lincoln from the Linville Creek area of Rockingham County). Caroline's mother was Hannah Lincoln who was married to Joseph Evans from Page County. Hannah & Joseph died in 1825 leaving Hannah and her sister Rebecca and brother Joseph as orphans. Guardianship was then given to Abraham, Hannah's brother, and his wife Mary. The family story is that Hannah climbed out a window of the Lincoln Homestead one night & eloped with Joseph Evans.

The mill was located at the bottom of the hill next to Mill Creek. It was known as "Jacob Hammon's Mill" until 1854 when it was sold to his son Moses Hammon. After Moses's death in 1895, the mill was sold to his son-in-law Erasmus Fansler who then sold it to Robert Phillips. Robert's son, Jack, was the last person to operate the mill. The building no longer stands.

There were four schools in existence over the these years. The first was Noel's School during the 1830s-40s located along Mill Creek, below Mt. Clifton, and the teacher was Jacob Noel. The second school is dated to 1852 and was located on the site the Mt. Clifton Methodist Church. This school operated until 1882 when Phoebe Noel sold a parcel of land, close to where the second school was located, to the Ashby School Board of Trustees. The school was a one room school on the north side of the Orkney Grade. The last school in Mt. Clifton was built about 1920 on land donated by Charles Newman also on the north side of the Orkney Grade. This school was a 2-story structure typical of the style built at the time. It was used until the 1940s when students were transferred to Triplett High School in Mt. Jackson. At that time it was sold to Mr. Earl Turner who lived upstairs. He made chicken coops downstairs and later converted the space into an apple crate factory. The building no longer exists.

The Mt. Clifton Methodist Church was built in 1884 on land purchased in 1852 from Arron and Samuel Hammon. The church was organized at Mt. Clifton in 1864 but met at Hudson's Cross Roads. The original building was used as a school house (see above about schools) until 1884 when the church was built as an M. E. Church. Rev. Jacob Hopkins was the first pastor and the church was originally known as Hopkins Chapel. The church recently closed due to lack of membership.

The village also had an I. O. O. F. (Order of Odd Fellows) Lodge. The organization was called the Mt. Clifton Lodge No. 200 and was established on April 19, 1898. They promoted social goodwill, provided mutual support and engaged in charitable activities, with their motto being Friendship, Love and Truth.

Prior to 1932, the Orkney Grade was a dirt/gravel road. It was blacktopped in 1932 and in 1961-62, it was widened and straightened. The road was excellent for sledding when covered with snow.

Mt. Clifton today consists of mainly private homes and farms. One store still exists – Country Cupboard which for many years was the Bowers Grocery store.

By: Kenna Fansler



Mill is on the right side, Hammon home is the first on the left, the PO /store is in the center and the church is at the top.

Historic Building Series

6024 Main Street, Mt. Jackson, VA

(Continued from Fall issue)



The small frame building located at 6024 Main Street was built in the early 1800s when Mt. Jackson was named Mt. Pleasant. It served as the town's first post office, being established October 25, 1814. Alexander Doyle was the first postmaster. The building has the typical wide yellow pine flooring as was the custom at that time. The building has an attic which is accessed by a ladder. The inner walls are of "hoggin bricks" that are stacked floor to ceiling that were discovered during a renovation in 1990. Noggin bricks are the bricks that were placed at the top of the stack in a kiln and never properly fired for use as exterior wall bricks. The exterior front has a deep-stepped front and a fan window at the top. The frame weather boarding is the beaded style. The back section has a loft that is believed to have been used as living quarters due to the walls being plastered and an opening for a stove pipe.

This historic building has served the community in many ways during its lifetime since being the post office. Dewitt Clinton Jordan and his brother, L. H., operated a general merchandise store known as L. H. Jordan & Bro. during the late 1860s – early 1870s. (See article about Dewitt Clinton Jordan at, 6028 Main St., in the Fall Newsletter). Other uses were a private school, a shoemaker's shop, temporary school for over flow from Triplet High School in the 1940s-50s, Anna Tisinger's weaving and loom shop and recently a craft shop, gift shop, grocery store and 2 churches. (1)

The building is on the same deed as 6028 Main Street and no research has been uncovered when both buildings were placed together on the same deed.

[1- Chamber of Commerce book "Mt. Jackson, Va. the Past of the Present of the Future"]

Shenandoah County Historical Events Scheduled

Shenandoah County is fortunate to have many museums and organizations devoted to preserving our history. County archivist, Zach Hottel, brought the groups together several years ago to interact and share information through the History Council.

The Council has ensured that each month of 2026 there would be a public program related to Shenandoah County history. These events are listed on the SCHS website, ShenandoahHistory.org and will be publicized through social media. Following is a list of events scheduled between January and March, 2026. April's big event, Shenandoah County Heritage Day, has its own article elsewhere in the newsletter. We'll cover more events in our spring newsletter!

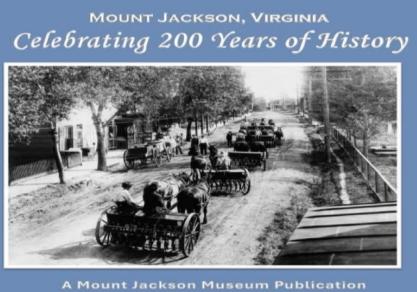
January – Mt. Jackson will celebrate its Bicentennial and the Mt. Jackson Museum's new book, *Celebrating 200 Years of History*, with a book signing at the Town Hall on Saturday, January 24, from 1-4pm. The museum will be open.

February – Shenandoah County Library will celebrate Black History Month with two programs: The African American Experience in Shenandoah County, a Lecture discussing the history of African Americans in SC since 1776, at the County Library. Tuesday, February 3rd at 7pm. Also, Roots and Resilience: Black History in Shenandoah County. Will be a gathering of local Black History groups for displays and sharing at the Mt. Jackson Town Hall on Saturday, February 28, 11am-1pm. Which will be Co-hosted by the Mt. Jackson Colored Cemetery Committee.

March – New Market Historical Society will celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Shenvalee. Details to be determined. Also in March, the Women's Suffrage Movement in Shenandoah County will be featured at the Bonfire Book Store on Main St. in Woodstock on Thursday, March 19th at 6:30pm. Hosted by the Shenandoah County Library.

The complete list of events throughout the remainder of the year will be listed in the Spring issue of the SCHS newsletter. Information will also be available at the SCHS Visitor Center Bookstore at the Historic Courthouse in Woodstock when it reopens in March of 2026.

New Book Available



A Mount Jackson Museum Publication

This new book, published by The Mt. Jackson Museum, will be available for purchase as of January 24th. The book is filled with historical photographs and information about Mount Jackson that was collected through research, archives and interviews with local residents. Copies will be available at the Mt. Jackson Museum and the Town Office, where you can also reserve a copy by mailing a check for \$50 payable to the Museum to 5901 Main St., Mt. Jackson, VA 22824. The book will also be available through the SCHS mail order or in the bookstore when it re-opens in March.

1776 Event - [Cont. from Pg. 1]

* Dr. William Rickman, early American "Surgeon General" will be portrayed by Ralph Ryer MD. * Local expert Waltraud Hornick will demonstrate creating yarn from fleece in the 18th manner of spinning wheel use. * Brian LaMaster, will display his traditional gunsmith's skills and include children's activities. * Juanita Leisch will display 18th C. regimental uniforms. * Brett Walker, national expert on boot and shoe making of the 17th, 18th and 19th century, will demonstrate his trade from that period. * Kenneth S. Christmas demonstrates Rev War drumming and will include children in his activities. * Diane Cooley Lutz will share 18th C. genealogy findings and include children in her offerings. * A scavenger hunt for children is planned. Professional roving actors include Marquis deLafayette, Daniel Morgan, Billy Lee, Peter Muhlenberg and Patrick Henry.

[For further details or sponsorship opportunities, contact Suzanne McIlwee (sartz@shentel.net) or Kim Yeck (kimyeck@mac.com).]

Go To:

[www.ShenandoahHistory.org](http://ShenandoahHistory.org)

For info, schedules and 1776 Events



Shenandoah
County VA

Historical Society

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Join the SCHS
New Yearly Dues:
Member: \$15 (Newsletter by E-mail)
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Lifetime \$250
Send Fee to address above.
Renewal Date is beside name on
mailing label →

Strasburg Heritage Assoc.
Annual Membership Meeting
February 15, 2026, 6:00PM
At St. Paul's Lutheran Fellowship
Hall on Washington St., Strasburg, VA
Program: Basket Makers Virginia
Stultz and Jean Whetel

Upcoming Events	Continued.....	Bulletin Board.....
<p>Heritage Day - [Cont. from Page 1] to bring that information to share. Exhibits do not need to be elaborate. Binders of information or photos, tri-folds, or any object or book that tells the story of people is encouraged. There is no fee to participate and we will furnish tables and chairs. Time will be from 11am-3pm. Call 540-459-1795 and leave a message. Or call archivist, Zach Hottel, at the county library at 540-984-8200 to learn more.</p> <p>Toddler Time At the Frontier Culture Museum Staunton, VA January, February, and March features Toddler Time! (for 18 mo. to 4 years) Each session at the Museum will include a story time, a hands-on historical activity, and a craft to keep. January 10th (10am to 12pm) is the first Toddler Time and each event will feature different subjects. Sessions are twice a month. Info at: 540-332-7850 and at website: frontiermuseum.org There is a small fee and noise!</p>	<p>Black History - [From Page 3] and says that although Jimmy Shifflett treated her well when he bought the business from the Newlands, she doesn't miss working. Juanita did mention that she misses co-worker Cindy Rinker, who coordinated the Hall of Fame photos and information about Juanita's induction which was published in February, 2025, in the Chimney Rock Chronicle. Great grandchild Caiden Thompson sums up the essence of Juanita: "Having a great grandma is an amazing physical manifestation of how paradoxically short and long a century is (even though she's not 100 yet.) It's incredible to be able to actually know her instead of just hearing stories about her, and I'm so glad I have the opportunity to know such a dedicated, loving, and funny person." Amen!</p> <p>SCHS COMPLETE BOOK LIST Is available on web site: www.ShenandoahHistory.org</p>	<p>Would you like to join the Historic Courthouse Visitor Center Volunteer Staff? The Museum / Visitor Center / SHS Bookstore is open every Friday and Saturday from 11-4, March through December. This year, we have added Sunday [1 to 5 PM] so we are in need of additional volunteers. If you would like to join our group, please call 540-459-1795. Leave a message and we'll get back to you. Additional team members will be needed when the Center we re-opens in March.</p> <p> SCHS is on FACEBOOK Visit our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/SCHSVA or simply click on the Facebook icon on our website: ShenandoahHistory.org New information is posted regularly.</p>