



Highland Hourglass

A Newsletter Published Quarterly by the Highland Historical Society

First Families Update

The early pioneers who settled in this area between 1763 and 1776 certainly left their mark on Highland County. In the process of researching the descendants of this group of fourteen families, we found three hundred eighty-four county residents who can trace their family lines to these pioneers. One hundred ninety-five of them descend from seven of John Hiner's children. Many people appear on more than one family panel. For example, Kari, Kate, and Rhonda Obaugh appear on five panels. They descend from the Fleishers and McCoys through their grandfather, Bill Obaugh. Their grandmother, Wilma Hodge Obaugh, comes from the Devericks line. Their grandfather, Roy Gutshall, is a descendant of John Hiner, and their grandmother, Karen Hammer Gutshall, comes from the Arbogast family. Bill Wagner and his son John are on a total of six panels. Bill's father, John William Wagner, was a descendent of four different pioneers, and his mother, Paige Mary Gutshall Wagner, descends from an additional three pioneer families.

One bit of trivia that was uncovered is that three of the county's four auctioneers, Bill Bratton, Sherry Sulenberger, and Bill Wagner are all descendants of Michael Arbogast. The fourth auctioneer, Roy Gutshall, married into the Arbogast family.

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This exhibit turned out to be far larger than the original "Celebrating Highland's First Families" display that covered the period 1743-1760. Contacting families, gathering and reproducing photographs, and setting up the exhibit panels was a time consuming, yet rewarding task. People we contacted are proud of their deep roots and thanked the society for organizing this project. The total number of residents involved continues to climb. We are still gathering photographs, and those we contact frequently refer us to additional family members. This exhibit proves the saying that "You can't talk about anybody in Highland County because you might be talking to a relative."

We hope that all Highland Historical Society members find an opportunity to visit the museum and explore this exhibit for themselves. The display will be in place until the museum closes for the winter. The photographs will then become part of a permanent collection in the museum research library.



Library of Virginia Digital Imaging Project

Friday & Sat., June 10-11, 2011

As part of The Civil War 150 Legacy Project, representatives from the Library of Virginia will be on hand to scan privately held documents that relate to the Civil War in Virginia. This is an opportunity to share the information contained in these documents while retaining ownership of the originals. If you live in Highland County and own Civil War related papers, diaries, letters, or photographs, please contact the Highland Historical Society. Library of Virginia representatives will be scanning documents at both the museum and The Highland Center on the dates listed above.

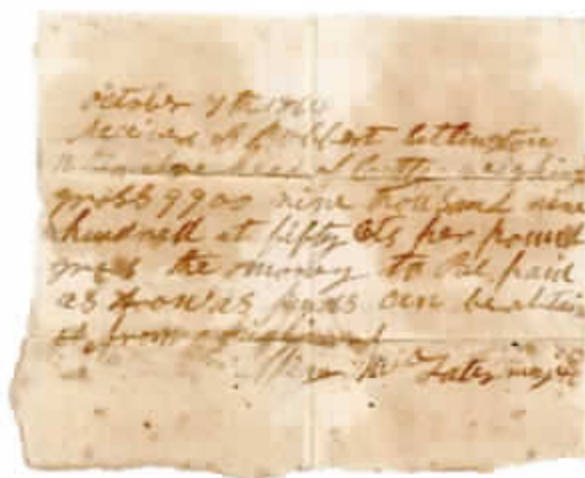
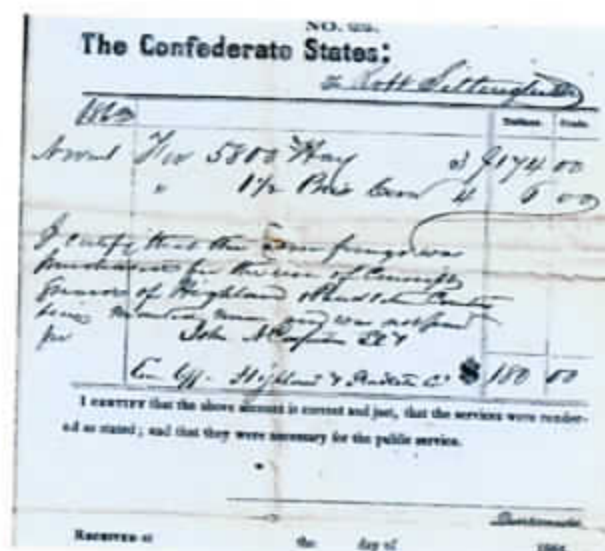
The following article is one of a series printed by The Recorder that illustrates what can be learned from seemingly insignificant scraps of paper.

Check Your Attic: It May Contain An Historical Treasure

By Clay Hamilton

Simple receipts can tell a complex story. In November 1863, Robert Sitlington, who lived just south of McDowell near where David Smith now lives, provided 5800 pounds of hay, at \$3.00 per hundred weight, and 1½ bushels of corn, at \$4.00 per bushel, to the Confederate Army. The receipt was signed by Lt. John N. Carpenter, who certified that the "...above forage was purchased for the use of conscript Guards of Highland and Pendleton Counties being mounted men and was not paid for."

This receipt is a professionally prepared, pre-printed form and serves that in 1863, the Confederate bureaucracy was still operating efficiently and even local Guards had access to official forms. Of course, Sitlington never received payment for the forage. But in 1863, he probably still believed that a Confederate victory was possible and that he would eventually be reimbursed for providing the forage.



About a year later, on 7 October 1864, Sitlington got another receipt. This time it was from a Confederate foraging squad, led by Major William McFater. In stark contrast, this receipt was written on a scrap torn from a larger piece of ruled paper—probably belonging to Sitlington himself. The receipt was for 12 head of cattle, weighing in aggregate, 9900 pounds. He was to be paid \$4,450.00 "...as soon as funds can be obtained from Richmond." Again, Sitlington was never paid, and by the Fall of 1864, he almost certainly didn't expect to be paid.

In the Fall of 1864, the war was not going well for the Confederacy. Federal troops were running up and down the Shenandoah Valley burning barns, houses, crops, hay, and confiscating livestock. In fact, by 9 October 1864, General Phil Sheridan had just wrapped up such a destructive campaign in the Valley. Highland

County, although occupied by Federals from time to time, was secure enough in Fall of 1864 that beef could be obtained—and Sitlington still had 12 head to furnish Maj. McFater.

Perhaps readers here in Highland have similar receipts or other little papers in your family records—they all tell a story. These may be in your attic or in an outbuilding. If so, try to dig them out so that they can be scanned and preserved for future generations. If the job is too hard or you can't get to them, I will help. Just call me, Clay Hamilton, and I will climb into your attic or dig into your outbuilding and get them for you.

Collections Spotlight

J. Harry Lockridge recently donated the following books to the Highland Historical Society. They are welcomed additions to the museum research library.

The Appomattox Paroles April 9-15, 1865. William G. Nine & Ronald G. Wilson, The Virginia Civil War Battles and Leaders Series, H.E. Howard, Inc., Lynchburg, VA, 1989.

This volume contains an alphabetical list of soldiers paroled after the surrender of the Confederate forces at Appomattox. Listings include soldiers' states, regiments, and companies, and their ranks if a sergeant or higher. Occasionally a soldier's military occupation is included, such as blacksmith, musician, sharpshooter, or courier.

Pocahontas County, Virginia Marriage Bonds 1822 - 1852 and Minister's Returns 1822 - 1871 compiled and published by James E. Woodell and Rita H. Woodell, Morgantown Printing and Binding Co., Inc., 1988.

This book from Highland County's western neighbor includes records of families directly connected to those within the county.

Battle of Point Pleasant, First Battle of the American Revolution, October 10, 1774. State of West Virginia. Mattox Printing Service, Pt. Pleasant, W. Va., 1990.

This pamphlet contains "copies of reports of the Point Pleasant Battle Monument Commission to the West Virginia State Board of Control, 1927, and from Acts of The Congress of the United States, February 17, 1908 and the West Virginia State Legislature, 1931-1935." Of particular interest to those researching their Highland County ancestors is an alphabetical list of 1,122 participants of the battle. Many of the earliest settlers in what would later become Highland County are among them.

The Highland Historical Society thanks J. Harry Lockridge for these three works that increase the variety of resources that the Highland County Museum has available for genealogical researchers. We also thank him for the volumes of Lockridge family history that he has donated to the research library and that he continues to update as he uncovers new genealogical information.



1926 Advertising Map Now Available

We are pleased to announce that reproductions of the 1926 Advertising Map of Highland County are now available for purchase. The Highland Historical Society thanks Carolyn Pohowsky for loaning us her copy of the original map. As you may remember from the photograph of the society's map shown in the last newsletter, the Historical Society's copy had significant damage around the edges. The printer was able to combine both maps to produce a reproduction that reflects the best in color and condition.

This full color map contains the ads of twenty local banks and merchants with businesses in Crabbottom, Doe Hill, Hightown, McDowell, Monterey, and Vanderpool. The map includes the names of prominent geographical features and shows the location of post offices and schools in existence in 1926. The map is printed on heavy weight, high quality paper. It measures 21 1/4 "x 17 1/4 ". Retail price is \$15.00 at the Highland County Museum Store. It can be shipped for \$5.95. Virginia residents please include 5% sales tax.



Meet Your Board Members

This is the first of a series of articles that will introduce society members to the board of directors that is responsible for the Highland Historical Society and the Highland County Museum.

Meet current board president Sarah Samples. When asked why she likes the Historical Society, Sarah responded that it was "like asking a kid why they like candy." Her father got her to read historical novels while she was in high school. Ever since, she has been fascinated with "the story part of history, the people, their lives and reactions."

Sarah Ann Carner Samples was born in Clarksdale, Mississippi on July 7, 1929. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from King College in Bristol, Tennessee, and a Masters of Education from the University of Mississippi. Sarah met and married Charles W. Samples of McDowell (Clover Creek) while both were attending King College.

She began teaching in the Highland County Public Schools in 1951 and taught for 35 years. She taught five or six different subjects per year to students in grades 7 through 12. The subjects she taught included earth science, general science, biology, chemistry, and physics. She also taught pre-algebra, remedial math, business math, algebra I and II, plane and solid geometry, trigonometry, and pre-calculus. Her skills were not confined to math and the sciences. 12th grade students also studied courses in English, Public Speaking, and American History under her instruction.

Sarah is an involved member of the McDowell Presbyterian Church where she serves as an elder and clerk of the session. She is the Sunday school superintendant and teacher, and serves as an officer and Bible leader of the Presbyterian Women.

Sarah is committed to a variety of civic organizations in Highland County. She is a charter member of the board of directors of The Highland Center and currently serves as president of the board of directors of the Highland Medical Center. She has served on the board of the Highland County Public Library and has been active in home extension work in the county. Sarah is a charter member of both the Women of the McDowell Volunteer Fire Department and the Monterey Garden Club. She was a charter member and secretary of the Friends of Historic McDowell Battlefield, the organization that later became the Highland Historical Society. She is the longest standing member of the Highland Historical Society board and served as secretary to this organization for many years. Sarah enjoys gardening, needle work, reading, and collecting invalid feeders, glass and china shoes, and "old stuff" as she describes it. She has one son, and two grandsons who live in Paducah, Kentucky.

The board of directors of the Highland Historical Society is pleased to have someone with Sarah's experience and dedication to Highland County as our leader.



Education Day Planned for 2012 Reenactment

The reenactment committee, which includes society board members, re-enactor coordinators, and representatives from local organizations, met in February to begin planning for the sesquicentennial McDowell Battlefield Days event in 2012.

Friday, May 4th will be an educational event designed to meet the needs of school groups and home schoolers. Demonstrations will include aspects of wartime home and military life, and possibly a section on military medicine. This event will be developed to meet the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) criteria. Highland County Public Schools and those from neighboring counties will be invited to participate. Senior Citizen groups and the general public will also be invited to attend.

Saturday, May 5th activities will include camp tours, wagon rides, guest speakers, the battle reenactment, and other activities that have been features of previous events.

Calendar of Events

Friday & Sat., June 10-11, 2011

Library of Virginia Digital Imaging Project at the Highland County Museum and The Highland Center. Please call Lorraine at 396-4478 or 468-3470, or call Clay at 468-3086 if you have documents and photos to share.

May 26, 2011

"Highland Soldiers in WWI" exhibit will open. It will replace the "Highland's Faith Community" exhibit in the center portion of the "Uniquely Highland" room.

August 11, 2011

"Highland County Quilts" exhibit will open to coincide with the Virginia Consortium of Quilters meeting to be held in Monterey on August 13. This exhibit will be in the back porch room and will remain in place until the museum closes for the winter. If you have quilts to lend that were not in the 20009 exhibit, please contact Lorraine White at 468-3470 or Jeanne Appar at 499-2835. Thanks.

**May 4-5, 2012
McDowell Battlefield Days**

Check your Renewal Date

Annual memberships run from January 1 to December 31. If you receive a mailed copy of the *Highland Hourglass*, please renew by the date shown below your address. If you receive an email copy, please renew by the first of each year. Life Members will find a 9999 in the year portion of the date under your address. No annual renewal is required.

**SEND US YOUR EMAIL ADDRESSES!
WE WILL GLADLY EMAIL NEWSLETTERS
AND OTHER NOTICES TO YOUR INBOX.**

Items Available by Mail:

- Campbell's 1847 Map of Highland County
- 1926 Advertising Map of Highland County
- "The Battle of McDowell" DVD
- "Tol' Able David" DVD
- *Images of America, Highland County*, by Chris Scott
- "Parallel Lines: Stories from the Battle of McDowell" CD
- Battle of McDowell Mapset

Please email for prices and shipping rates, thanks.

Highland Historical Society Membership

Membership rates:

Annual:

Individual ... \$15
Family ... \$25
Business ... \$25

One Time:

Life ... \$250
Patron ... \$500

All members receive copies of "The Highland Hourglass," the society's newsletter; and a 10 % discount in The Highland Museum Store. Business and life members receive a framed membership certificate to display. Patron members receive a life membership plus their names engraved on the "Friends of the Museum" plaque.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone and/or Email _____

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Preserving Highland County's Past for the
Enrichment of
Present and Future Generations

Highland Historical Society
P.O. Box 63
McDowell, VA 24458

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Highland Historical Society

P.O. Box 63
McDowell, VA 24458

highlandhist@mgwnet.com
www.highlandcountyhistory.com

540-396-4478

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Will Crisp
Jay Garber*

*Ludford Creef-
Roger Omdorff
Linda Simmons*

Staff

Lorraine White, Executive Director

Museum Hours:

Nov. 1 to Feb. 28
By Appointment Only

March 1 to Oct. 31
Thursday, Friday & Saturday 11AM to 4PM, Sunday 1PM to 4PM

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Highland Historical
Society



Highland Hourglass

Highland County School Children Visit Museum



Will Crisp greets Marty Leech and the Highland County students.

On Monday, May 2nd, forty-seven students, teachers, and parents from Highland Elementary School visited the museum. The students, from three different grades, came with specific topics to explore. Fifth grade teacher Melody Moats' students came to learn about the Civil War and the Battle of McDowell, Marty Leach's fourth graders were studying both the Civil War and the early settlement of the area. They wanted to see the "Celebrating Highland's First Families" exhibit. Pre-school students, under the guidance of Cappie Hull and her assistant Kim West, were completing a year-long study of Appalachian culture.

The museum provided one staff member to assist each class. Volunteer Will Crisp covered the Battle of McDowell. He started his group outside to point out Sitlington Hill and the terrain and features that shaped this Highland County battle. His group ended their tour by viewing the 20 minute film in Battlefield Orientation Room. Board member Christ Scott assisted students in their exploration of county settlement. He told stories and showed pictures of county history from his book *Images of America, Highland County, Virginia*. Students toured the First Families exhibit and were excited to discover pictures of friends, family members, and some-

times their own faces on the family trees. Director Lorraine White organized the back porch exhibit room into a display of artifacts that represented Appalachian culture. Home food preservation tools and articles made from feed sacks represented self sufficiency, flat irons and gas lamps were used to talk about life before electricity, carefully patched clothing and furniture showed how people made do with what they had, and a handmade banjo and church pump organ represented the Appalachian love of music. The children especially enjoyed piling into the rope bed under a heavy wool comforter, examining the woodstove waffle maker, and pretending to wash clothes with a washboard, tub & homemade lye soap. They watched intently as Lorraine showed them how to make a cornhusk doll.

The students played games and ate lunch on the museum lawn before leaving to tour Fort Johnson on Shenandoah Mountain. Teachers and museum staff were impressed by the students' enthusiasm and agreed that it was a successful day. We hope to make their visit an annual event.



Students find familiar faces on the family trees

Collections Spotlight

The museum received quite a few donations of documents and artifacts recently. Since it would be difficult to focus on only one or two of them, this quarter's spotlight will show the variety of items welcomed by the Highland Historical Society.

Roger Orndorff donated a five volume genealogy entitled *Descendants of Michael Arbogast*, compiled by Charles Joseph Eades. Shortly after these books took their place on the Family Research library shelves, Christine and Ramsey Wilson of Falls Church, VA came to study her connection to the Michael Arbogast family. They were fortunate to arrive on the first Saturday of the month since Roger was on duty to assist them at the museum on that day.

Carolyn Pohowsky donated a number of items including group photographs of the Mr. and Mrs. A. Wills family, the Mr. and Mrs. Bud Meadows family, and the Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hiner family. These are a welcome addition to our growing collection of historical photographs. Carolyn also donated a pamphlet entitled "Prospectus 1905-1906 of Monterey High School." It includes school regulations, courses, textbooks, tuitions fees, and the rates for students boarding at the Hotel Monterey. Yes, students paid tuition to attend high school in 1905. In recognition of the upcoming Highland County Quilt exhibit, Carolyn donated a Hevener family quilt that was made from salesman's fabric samples.

Opal Alt of Williamsville donated seven assorted size hand carved fur stretchers, and a beaver board made and used by her late husband, Glavis Alt. Mr. Alt was a well known Highland County trapper and fur trader. Several bottles of scent lures and a dirt sifter used to cover traps were included in her donation. These objects illustrate a way of life that has all but disappeared in recent history.

Davie Leach donated a Dunkard dress worn by her great grandmother Mary Magdalene Whistleman Botkin, a flat bonnet made and worn by her great aunt Margie Botkin, and an elaborately decorated black velvet child's cape worn by her great aunt Audra Humphries. A group of twenty descendants of the Botkin family have scheduled a visit to do genealogical research at the museum on July 23. Mary's dress, along with photos of her family and the log house they lived in will be on display. Articles of clothing are always a welcome addition to the museum's collection. Individual pieces can be used to accent a variety of exhibits.

Our thanks to Roger, Carolyn, Davie, Opal and all those who have donated to the museum collections.

Digital Imaging Project a Success

The Highland Historical Society is pleased to report that the Library of Virginia Digital Imaging program that was held on Sat. June 10 & 11 was a very successful event. Library representative Laura Drake Davis and Special Collections Director Tom Camden completed a total of two hundred seventy-nine scans. Documents on hand included letters, photographs, receipts, Confederate bonds, medical exemptions from service, and an amnesty oath.

Several documents were highlights of the day. Georgianne Hull brought a "Register of Disbursements, 1863" signed by Joseph Layne, agent for State Salt for Highland County. The exact nature of this registry, which contains names of county residents and amounts of salt and flour each received, is not known. Laura Drake Davis offered to research the duties of a county salt agent. Among the historical society's collection was an order to protect the persons and property of Robert Sitlington signed by General Milroy. Another society document was the signature album kept by Miss Irene Hull of Meadowdale between 1858 and 1878. Many entries in the album were written and signed by Civil War soldiers.

Copies of the documents will be available for online research at the Library of Virginia website. The Highland Historical Society and those who brought documents to scan will receive digital copies.

If you have items to be scanned, but missed the June date, Library of Virginia staff will be on hand at Bath County High School on July 30. Call 540-839-2543 for an appointment or contact Clay Hamilton at 468-3086 for assistance.

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner



On Sunday, June 26, twenty-two volunteers, board members and their families gathered at Laurel Point Bed & Breakfast to enjoy the second annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. The evening began with everyone outside enjoying good conversation and the expansive view from the patio. It started to rain just as dinner was ready. Tables and chairs were quickly moved inside where the fellowship resumed.

The menu featured hamburgers, brats, & pulled pork barbeque.

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manned the grill and board members supplied a delicious assortment of salads, drinks, and desserts to compliment the meal. Guests of honor were all those who volunteer their time whether they serve as monthly docents, occasional volunteers, or those who help with special exhibit preparation. The Highland Historical Society is grateful for the valuable help these volunteers provide. We could not keep museum open without them.



Welcome New Volunteers

The historical society board welcomes new volunteers Wickie & Bea Hooke and Molly Payne of Monterey, and Linda Simmons of McDowell. Wickie, Bea, and Molly have assumed their duties as docents. Linda volunteered to help with maintenance projects. She cleaned the museum prior to Library of Virginia visit. Bill Rich of Hightown plans to become a volunteer sometime in the near future. We congratulate Bill on his recent marriage to Sharon Hevener.

Snow Guards Needed

Keeping the Mansion House in good repair is a very important part of the historical society's stewardship of the resources in our care. The board recently contracted with Sam Shell Custom Carpentry of Monterey to repair and realign the gutters on the house. Sam will also re-point the bricks on an area of the building where a problem with the gutter allowed rain water to erode the lime mortar.

In order to prevent future problems with the gutters, we need to have forty snow guards installed on the building before winter. Unfortunately, the gutter repair and re-pointing will nearly deplete the institutional savings account that is designated to cover such expenses.

If anyone would like to make a special donation toward the installation of snow guards, it would be greatly appreciated. The cost to purchase and install one snow guard to match the ones currently on the building is \$28.10. Please make checks payable to the Highland Historical Society and indicate that your donation is to be used for this purpose. Thanks!

Meet Your Board Members

This month, the Highland Historical Society board approved the nomination of two new board members. We welcome Robert W. (Wes) Maupin and Lisa Munchel to the board.

Wes Maupin grew up in Dayton, VA and lived in Charlotte, NC for three years, before returning to attend Wilson Memorial High School in Waynesboro. He received awards for his participation in football, basketball and track, and attended Campbell University in North Carolina on a track scholarship. Returning to Virginia, Wes attended Blue Ridge Community College where he received an A.A.S. degree in Law Enforcement. He worked for the Virginia Department of Corrections, working for the last twenty-six years at the DOC Academy for Staff Development, overseeing the coordination of training programs and activities for 2,500 of the agency's 11,000 employees.

In February, 2006, Wes's wife Pamela was diagnosed with terminal ovarian cancer. He retired from the DOC in December of that year, after thirty years of public service, in order to spend as much time as possible with Pam. They bought property in Highland County, built their dream home, and moved to the county in 2006. Pamela passed away in March of 2010.

While living in Highland County, Wes has been a substitute teacher at Highland High School, and served as an auxiliary deputy sheriff. He is a member and past president of the Stonewall Ruritan Club. As a Ruritan, he led the effort to get the "Welcome to Highland County" sign erected on Shenandoah Mountain and coordinated with other community service clubs to get similar signs posted at other locations in the county.

Wes has two daughters, Katie who lives in Texas with his granddaughters Maggie and Cassie, and Carrie who lives in Albuquerque New Mexico. Wes's hobbies include trout fishing, most outdoor activities, and restoring old British sports cars. He is also working on a book, "Churches of Highland County, Virginia." Wes attends the McDowell Presbyterian Church.

When asked why he agreed to serve on the board, Wes responded, "I've always had a deep appreciation of history and enjoy visiting historical sites....sensing what went on, when and where and how those events in many ways changed the course of history. But, really I agreed to serve on the board because Clay [Hamilton] asked. He said those on the board thought I might be of some help serving and I'm generally open to doing what I can in that regard....as part of my wanting to live here and be an active productive member of this community. I love it here. I guess that's why."



Lisa Hoke Munchel is originally from Littlestown, Adams County, PA. She presently works at Pendleton Manor in Franklin, WV as an activities assistant. Her early post-secondary education was in nursing and respiratory therapy. Lisa attended college late in life, attending Adams State College in Alamosa, CO, where she majored in History, with minors in Philosophy and English. She is married to Phil Munchel, manager of the Highland Telephone Cooperative. Between them, they have three children and four grandchildren, Jacob, Bradley, Danielle, and Brandon. They are expecting the arrival of another grandchild in December.

Lisa has served on the board of the Highland County Public Library, and assisted Mary Dowdy with the Girl Scouts. She has been a member of the Highland Homemakers and belongs to the Monterey Garden Club. Lisa is a life member of the National Federation of State Garden Clubs and the State Garden Club of Pennsylvania. She is also a member of the ladies auxiliary of Pendleton Manor. She and Phil are Catholic and belong to the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parish in Franklin, WV.

When asked why she volunteered to serve on the Highland Historical Society board, Lisa responded, "I love history, any body's' history – from ancient to recent, to the ever changing. What ceases to amaze me is the recent generation's lack of particular interest in all things before themselves. Like it doesn't matter to them. They are so against old or any antiquity. They live in the now and the future by their own choice. The restoration of the love of history is my interest now until the end."

Calendar of Events

August 5, 2011

The Highland Historical Society will sponsor a Spaghetti Dinner at the firehouse in Monterey. Meals will be served from 5PM to 8PM. Free will donation to benefit the museum.

August 11, 2011

"Highland County Quilts" exhibit will open to coincide with the Virginia Consortium of Quilters meeting to be held in Monterey on August 13. This exhibit will be in the back porch room and will remain in place until the museum closes for the winter. At the present time we have identified approximately twenty-five quilts for this exhibit. Most are from the Blue Grass Valley.

August 13, 2011

A Community Cookout will be held at the museum in McDowell. Hot dogs, baked beans, potato salad, and ice cream will be available between 5PM and 8PM. Musical entertainment is not yet finalized. Free will donation to benefit the museum.

**May 4-5, 2012
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Patron ... \$500

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Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

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Highland Historical Society

P.O. Box 63
McDowell, VA 24458

highlandhist@mgwnet.com
www.highlandcountyhistory.com

540-396-4478

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Will Crisp
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Ludford Creef
Jay Garber
Wickie Hooke
Molly Payne
Linda Simmons

Staff

Lorraine White, Executive Director

Museum Hours:

Nov. 1 to Feb. 28
By Appointment Only

March 1 to Oct. 31
Thursday, Friday & Saturday 11AM to 4PM, Sunday 1PM to 4PM

Highland Historical Society
P.O. Box 63
McDowell, VA 24458

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Society

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New Exhibits at the Highland County Museum

Much has been written about military campaigns and the life of a soldier, but what was it like to live in Highland County during the Civil War? The new exhibit, "People and Perspectives: Highland County in the Civil War" uses artifacts and original documents to address this question. In it the visitor is introduced to county residents from the 1860s. Irene Hull, a young woman from Meadowdale collected soldiers' signatures in an album. Some of the young men wrote verses that spoke of war, carnage, separation from loved ones, and the need to be remembered when they were gone. Sarah Jane Layne, her mother Polly, and others cared for sick and wounded soldiers from both armies in their homes. Letters from soldiers' parents express gratitude for the quality of care their sons had received. Robert Sitlington collected at least twenty-four receipts for forage, corn, mutton, and beef that both armies took from his farm. It is doubtful that he was every reimbursed. Harriet Kincaid and Sarah Givens experienced the war from the slaves' perspective. Sarah's mending basket reflects an African American construction style that is quite different from a typical Highland County basket of the time.



Two 19th century wooden coffins, one adult size and one made for a small child, grab the visitor's attention. This portion of the exhibit talks about the wartime spike in civilian fatalities from disease. Soldiers moving through the county brought with them diseases to which the local population had not previously been exposed. More Highland County civilians died of diphtheria alone than the total number of county soldiers who died from illness and wounds. Most of those who died were children.

Other artifacts in the exhibit include a Union army kettle and tripod, a cradle, mourning dress, pottery bowl, canteen, photographs, hymnals, and a piano. Each object has a story of its own. Together they give a glimpse of the Highland County home front in the Civil War.

In the "Uniquely Highland" room, one side of the kiosk contains a wall of soldier's quotations about Highland County and the battle of McDowell. The other side features the role of the 12th Georgia regiment. The only non-Virginia unit engaged, the 12th Georgia suffered the heaviest casualties at the battle of McDowell. A glass case filled with reproduction firearms of the Civil War period rounds out this display.

Mark Your Calendar - McDowell Battlefield Day, May 5th



Confederate reenactors march past the Felix Hull House that was used as officers' headquarters in 1862.

On May 5, 2012, the Highland Historical Society will sponsor McDowell Battlefield Day to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Battle of McDowell. This brief but intense battle was the first victory of Stonewall Jackson's now famous Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1862. It boosted his men's moral, kept the Union army from capturing the railhead at Staunton, and paved the way for future victories at Front Royal, Winchester, Cross Keys, and Port Republic.

A living history event is scheduled that will recreate both military and civilian life of the time. Horse drawn wagons will take visitors through picket lines to visit Union and Confederate camps and the artillery positioned on cemetery hill. Civilian reenactors, who have researched the history of McDowell, will portray former residents of the town. Step back into 1862 and visit them on one of several porches throughout town. These reenactors will be in what is known as "first person." They will present scenarios and answer questions as if they are actually living at the time of the Civil War.

At the Highland County Museum, reenactors will portray military life, including drills, camp cooking, military punishments, fife and drum music, and more. Of special interest will be the demonstration of Civil War medicine. Civilian reenactors will present sewing, quilting, soap making, and other necessary home skills as well as parlor games and children's activities of the period. These reenactors will be in "third person" and will answer questions from a present day perspective.

The McDowell Presbyterian church grounds will feature a homesteading area with period crafts and live animals. Craft demonstrations will include broom making, chair caning, and basket weaving. Lectures in the church sanctuary will cover a variety of topics including the role of VMI cadets at McDowell, Stonewall Jackson's Sunday School for slaves, and 1860s women's clothing. The Shenandoah Valley Minstrels will perform Civil War era music in the church yard.

The event will be open from 9AM to 5:30 PM. Cost is \$5 per person or \$15 per family, and will cover wagon tours, lectures, and admission to the battle reenactment at 1PM. Tickets will be on sale in the McDowell Presbyterian Church yard and at the Highland County Museum. Food will be available at the McDowell Volunteer Fire Department and elsewhere.



Visitors take a wagon tour past the McDowell Presbyterian Church that served as a hospital for soldiers wounded at McDowell.

Building Improvements Coming Soon

The Highland Historical Society is pleased to report that it is the recipient of a Transportation Enhancement Grant from the Virginia Department of Transportation. The Highland County Museum qualifies for these funds because the building was formerly a hotel stop along the Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike. After stringent review, plans for the following projects have been approved.

UV protective, single panel storm windows will be installed to protect exhibits and collections from the harmful effects of ultraviolet light. These windows will also help conserve heat and reduce the museum's electric bills.

Central air conditioning will be installed on the second floor to aid climate control, protect artifacts and documents from the negative effects of extreme temperatures, and create a more pleasant environment for visitors and staff.

A much needed **handicap ramp and parking space** will be constructed at the rear of the building to make the museum more accessible to those whose mobility is limited.

The **yard fence** that surrounded the property when it was the Mansion House Hotel will be reconstructed to provide a contained space for outdoor programs and create "curb appeal" to attract visitors to the museum.

We are currently in the process of selecting a contractor. Watch for updates in future installments of *The Hourglass*.

Collections Spotlight

Two significant examples of Highland County textiles have found a new home at the museum.

This "Pretty Triangles" quilt was made during the Civil War by slave Harriet Kincaid of Hightown. It

demonstrates both its maker's skill and the types of fabric patterns available during that time period. The quilt is in very good condition for its age.

Harriet Kincaid was born near Richmond and brought to the

Williamsville area as a young girl. Sometime in the 1840s, while Harriet was a teenager, John Bird of Hightown purchased her to take care of his ailing wife Margaret [Dahmer] and their eight children. Margaret died in 1847, leaving Harriet to manage the household until John married Elizabeth McCoy

Hiner in 1860. Following the Civil War, Harriet continued to live with the Bird family. John died in 1878, and Elizabeth "Aunt Betty" died in 1900. Harriet then lived in a house provided for her by the Heveners. She died in 1912 at the age of 86 and is buried in the family cemetery on Everett and Anna Lee Rexrode's farm. She was denied burial in the Hightown Cemetery because she was black.

This dress was worn by Mary Katherine Masters of Hightown at her wedding to Oscar Bird of Doe Hill in 1882. The dress is a dark blue bodice and skirt ensemble complete with camisole, feathered hat, and shoes. It is the first complete outfit from the era of the bustle skirt to become a part of the museum's growing collection of period clothing.

Mary Katherine's mother died while her father was fighting in the Civil War. She became a foster child of John and Elizabeth Bird and maintained a close relationship with Harriet Kincaid. Mary's children adored "Aunt Harriet" and fondly recalled worshipping with her in the balcony of the Hightown Church and hiking across the fields with her to Hevener's Store.

We thank Kathryn Morikawa, granddaughter of Mary Masters Bird, for donating these items.



Mary Katherine Masters Bird wearing her wedding dress on her 84th birthday in 1941



Harriet Kincaid

Quotes Left Behind

Sometimes you can discover a lot about a person by the quotes they left behind. A short statement can reveal a person's beliefs, passions, or life experiences. I would encourage everyone with an interest in family history to preserve the quotes of your parents and grandparents so that others can learn more about them in generations to come. Here are a few quotes by some local residents now departed.

Daniel Colaw (1830-1921) was one of ten children of George Colaw and Elizabeth Wimer. He was a farmer and served in the 62nd Infantry, CSA. He was a deacon for almost 30 years at the Goshen Church, later named White Presbyterian, at New Hampden. His dying words at the age of 91 were "Stand by the church."

George Marvin Botkin (1902-2002) was a son of George Lee Botkin and Naomi Melissa Blagg. He was a farmer, livestock hauler, and threshed grain throughout much of the Stonewall District, first with horse-drawn and later with tractor-driven machinery. He was quoted as saying "I had a steering wheel in my hands all my life."

George William Grogg (1895-1977) was a son of John Milton Grogg and Phoebe Jane Grogg. His father John grew up on Jack Mountain in Highland and later moved to Pocahontas County. George worked for the lumber mill at Cass, WV and was a veteran of WWI. His favorite saying was "He ort to know. He's an old man."

Mary Elizabeth Bell Blagg (1895-1961) was a daughter of John A. and Bettie F. Bell of Lunenburg County, in south central Virginia. She grew up on a farm in that area and moved to Highland County in her mid thirties. Upon seeing the farm land in Highland she is recorded as saying "Good thing grass grew around rocks."

Cornelius T. "Little Neal" Wimer Jr. (1880-1963) was one of 18 children of Cornelius Taylor Wimer and Susan Catherine Waybright. He was a farmer in the Frank's Run area of Blue Grass and a member of the Methodist New Church in Blue Grass. When he left the house, he was known to say: "Now don't lock the doors, someone may come and want something to eat."

Amanda Jane "Mandy" Vint Blagg (1849-1936) was one of 15 children of Joshua Vint and Hardena Sammando of the Totten Chapel area of Pendleton County. A mother of 10 children, 8 of which survived to adulthood, she was known to say "I can tell how a man works by watching him eat."

Richard Harding "Dick" Crummett (1887-1967) was a son of Silas W. Crummett and Sally A. Harding. He was a farmer noted for registered Shorthorn cattle and Shropshire sheep; he also raised and sold bronze turkeys for both breeding and slaughter. He was an elder at Pisgah Presbyterian Church and when asked about donating to a special fund by a church official he said: "Well, I don't have it right now, but I can borrow it."

Jonathan Clark Eagle (1864-1941) was a son of Enoch Eagle and Susannah Siron. He was a farmer in the Stonewall District, first along the Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike, then in the Doe Hill area. As quoted by his son Ray, he said "A piece of paper doesn't care what you write on it, it just lies there."

William Hudson Vint (1827-1907) was a son of William Vint and Elizabeth Jane Botkin of Pendleton County. He was a farmer and served in Company C, 62nd Regiment, CSA. He was wounded at both Williamsport and New Market. Hudson was an ardent admirer of the Southern Confederacy and was noted for his stories at Confederate reunions. He was recorded as saying: "Once upon a time I had the pleasure of driving 10,000 fleas through a stubble field. I drove them all safely through and never lost a single one."

Contributed by Jim Blagg

Just a reminder, if you have not already done so, please renew your membership for 2012. Your support is vital to the continued success of the Highland Historical Society and the Highland County Museum. Thanks!

Win this Quilt!

Members of the Highland County Quilters' Guild made this beautiful sampler quilt using Civil War era patterns and reproduction fabrics. They have donated it to be raffled for the benefit of the Highland County Museum.



Ticket sales will begin at Battlefield Day, May 5. Cost is \$1 each or 6 for \$5.

Check your Renewal Date

Annual memberships run from January 1 to December 31.

If you receive a mailed copy of the *Highland Hourglass*, please renew by the date shown below your address.

If you receive an email copy, please renew by the first of each year.

Life Members will find a 9999 in the year portion of the date under your address. No annual renewal is required.

**SEND US YOUR EMAIL ADDRESSES!
WE WILL GLADLY EMAIL NEWSLETTERS
AND OTHER NOTICES TO YOUR INBOX.**

Items Available by Mail:

- Campbell's 1847 Map of Highland County
- 1926 Advertising Map of Highland County
- "The Battle of McDowell" DVD
- "Tol' Able David" DVD
- *Images of America, Highland County*, by Chris Scott
- "Parallel Lines: Stories from the Battle of McDowell" CD
- Battle of McDowell Mapset

Please email for prices and shipping rates, thanks.

Highland Historical Society Membership

Membership rates:

Annual:

Individual ... \$15

Family ... \$25

Business ... \$25

One Time:

Life ... \$250

Patron ... \$500

All members receive copies of "The Highland Hourglass," the society's newsletter; and a 10 % discount in The Highland Museum Store. Business and life members receive a framed membership certificate to display. Patron members receive a life membership plus their names engraved on the "Friends of the Museum" plaque.

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Preserving Highland County's Past for the
Enrichment of
Present and Future Generations

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Museum Hours:

Nov. 1 to Feb. 28
By Appointment Only

March 1 to Oct. 31
Thursday, Friday & Saturday 11AM to 4PM, Sunday 1PM to 4PM

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