

Harrison County
WEST VIRGINIA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

POST OFFICE BOX 2074
CLARKSBURG, WEST VIRGINIA 26301-2074

NEWSLETTER

FALL 1991

SEPTEMBER MEETING

A description of the work and future plans of the Clarksburg Heritage Committee of the Stonewall Jackson Civic Club will be explained during the program in the meeting room of the museum at 7:30 o'clock on Wednesday, September 18, 1991. Dollie Bassel, past president of the local civic club and past president of the North Central West Virginia Federation of Women's Clubs, will be the speaker.

The work of the club in fostering the heritage of Clarksburg is shown in the ever-ready assistance the Stonewall Jackson Civic Club members give to historical events. It was they who last spring staged the public reception at Waldomore for Dr. James L. Robertson, Jr., when he came to Clarksburg to research records and interview citizens prior to writing a biography of General Thomas Jonathan (Stonewall) Jackson. The new book will be the fifth book written by Dr. Robertson in the series "Studies in American Military History."

OCTOBER MEETING

Alison Deem, president of the Harrison Arts Council, will speak before members of the Society at the Stealey-Goff-Vance House on Wednesday, October 16, 1991. The talk will center on plans to convert the Nathan Goff, Jr., residence on West Main Street into The Clarksburg Art Center.

Goff built his palatial residence during the years 1880-1883. Philadelphia architects Sloan and Balderston drew up plans for the house which was built mostly of local materials gathered from Goff's own land.

NOVEMBER MEETING

Don Kniceley, administrative assistant for adolescent education in Harrison County Schools, will talk on Indian artifacts at the meeting of the Society on Wednesday, November 20, 1991.

Mr. Kniceley, for whom the study of Indian culture is a hobby, believes soil should be disturbed in the search for Indian artifacts only by archaeologists. He collects artifacts only where construction has turned up various arrowheads, etc. He will illustrate his talk by showing remnants of Indian culture he holds found in Doddridge, Braxton, Harrison, Lewis, Pocahontas, Randolph and Wood Counties in West Virginia.

DECEMBER MEETING

The annual Christmas party will be held at the Stealey-Goff-Vance House from 2:00 - 4:00 o'clock on Sunday, December 8, 1991. A Christmas tree decorated in the style of a Victorian tree and food typical of one hundred years ago will let guests step back into a Christmas of yesteryear.

PUBLICATIONS

A novel for youths

The Chinese laundry, which was operated in Clarksburg from the late nineteenth century to the mid-1920's, is the setting of a novel for youths: Yep, Lawrence. *The Star Fisher*. New York: Morrow Junior Books, 1991. And thereby hangs a tale:

Dr. David Davisson purchased the lot on the northeast corner of West Main and Second streets where the Union National Bank Plaza now stands in Clarksburg in 1839 and built a brick colonial house for a residence and an adjoining office. On the back of the lot facing Second Street was a small white building where the doctor's daughter Isabelle (Belle) taught Clarksburg Select School. Her niece Alcinda also taught in the Belle Davisson school. After the death of Dr. Davisson in 1870 his daughters Belle and Carrie, along with granddaughter Alcinda, continued to live in the David Davisson residence. When Belle and Alcinda were too old to conduct the select school, they rented the school building to a Chinese family for a laundry. Members of the Chinese family cared for the aging Davisson ladies. Because the business district of Clarksburg surrounded the Davisson property, Alcinda --- when she was the last surviving member of the David Davisson family --- sold the Davisson holdings in Clarksburg and moved to Bridgeport to land first claimed by her great grandfather in 1771. Here the Chinese family cared for her until her death December 31, 1928, at the age of eighty-one. Alcinda Davisson bequeathed her estate to the Chinese family. They returned to China.

Lawrence Yep, a grandson of the Chinese couple who cared for the Davisson sisters, owned notes his grandparents had written of their experience in Clarksburg. Sister Rosemary Winklejohann, a nun in California, telephoned Madge McDaniel during the time she encouraged her student Yep to write a story with a Clarksburg setting. Miss McDaniel sent the nun a copy of Dr. David Davisson biography from *History of Medicine in Harrison County* by Alice Jo Hess. Lawrence Yep later visited Clarksburg and the burial plot of the David Davisson family in the Bridgeport Cemetery.

History of the salt industry

The University of Kentucky Press will publish in 1992 John Stealey's history of the salt industry in West Virginia. John Stealey, who is a member of the Harrison County Historical Society and a history professor at Shepherd College, wrote the study of the salt industry as a dissertation to complete his doctorate. Stealey is a direct descendant of Jacob Stealey who built the Stealey-Goff-Vance House in 1807.

Genealogical history edited and indexed

Marshall B. Shore, 2804 East 30th Ave., Spokane, WA 99223, found in the Harrison County Historical Society "A Genealogical History of the Talbot, Hall, Reger and Martin families in

Barbour County, West Virginia 1780-1880" by Columbus C. Talbot. The history was part of the Truman Reader Collection which the Society owns. Mr. Shore made a copy of the history and carried it back to Spokane.

Mr. Shore has indexed the history and has had the entire work reprinted. He sent a copy to the Society. He would like to hear from anyone interested in the families. Richard and Cottrill Talbot and their sister Charity came to what now is Barbour County in 1780.

Coincidentally the Society received a sketch of the Talbot family by Irvin Durwood "Duke" Talbott, well-known resident of Elkins, WV. The sketch contains in addition to the history of the family, interesting notes of happenings from 1780 to the present as to how they affected the family. Irvin Durwood Talbott is a descendant of Richard Talbot

John W. Davis diaries, etc.

On June 20, 1991, Julia Davis attended a luncheon honoring the memory of her father John W. Davis, in Morgantown. The luncheon was a portion of the West Virginia Birthday celebration sponsored each year by the West Virginia and Regional Collection of the West Virginia University Libraries. At the luncheon the announcement was made that the university library will publish the manuscripts of two books Julia Davis has written. They deal with the London years when John W. Davis was U. S. Ambassador to the Court of St. James.

SOCIETY BUSINESS

Grant for Stealey-Goff-Vance House

The president of the Society received the following letter dated July 1, 1991:

Dear Mr. Anderson:

I am pleased to announce a state grant award of \$5,355.00 to you for the restoration of the Stealey-Goff-Vance House. The Historic Preservation office of the Division of Culture and History will be in contact to arrange the details.

The Stealey-Goff-Vance House project is an outstanding effort, and I commend you for your work in preserving this important historic site.

I am very pleased that this project is proceeding, and I want you to know that this endeavor has my complete interest and support.

Sincerely,
Gaston Caperton

The Society is grateful for the money which will go toward repairs to the museum structure damaged by aging and termites. The Society still needs funding in the future for painting woodwork in the interior of the museum and for treating the brick on the exterior.

Hosts and Hostesses

Hosts and hostesses at the museum during visiting hours in summer 1991 have been Jack Sandy Anderson, Betty Dakan, Dorothy Davis, Sally Hall, Don Higinbotham, Madge McDaniel, Reverend Russell Reithmiller, Trecia Tucker and Barbara Wood.

Membership

Members who failed to send dues for the year have been notified. Please send your check. A membership form is included in this newsletter.

Additional new members since the last newsletter are:

Harold O. Farris		Lucille Harrison
5876 Overhill Lane	and	Route 1
Dayton, Ohio 45429-6044		Mt. Clare, WV 26408

John Haymond descendant visits museum

Patricia Gail (Haymond) Viellenave, 6201 Boulder Hwy. #91, E. Las Vegas, NV 89122, and several members of her family, visited the museum on June 18, 1991. She was able to find a great deal of information on the Haymond family and enjoyed seeing the surveying instruments used by her ancestors. She plans to return about the same time next year, when we hope to have additional information assembled for her. Perhaps there are relatives in the area who would like to write her. She will be glad to hear from you.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
HARRISON COUNTY, WV, HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 2074, CLARKSBURG, WV 26302-2074

Please Print

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

..... Adult - \$5.00

..... Family - \$7.50

..... Contributing - \$25.00

..... Student - \$1.00

..... Institutional - \$10.00

..... Life - \$100.00