



Strasburg Heritage Association

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Strasburg, Virginia

Fall 2013

www.strasburgvaheritage.org

SHA Fall Program

Shenandoah Valley Quilts

Mrs. Joan Knight, former curator of the Virginia Quilt Museum in Harrisonburg, will be our guest speaker
on Sunday, October 6th at St. Paul Lutheran Church at 2 o'clock.

Using examples from her own collection, she will present an overview of the quilt styles in the Shenandoah Valley down through the years, beginning with woven coverlets. Following the lecture, Mrs. Knight invites participants to bring a treasured quilt for identification of the pattern and age of the material. Because of time restraints, she requests that each person limit themselves to one item.

St. Paul Lutheran Church is located at 193 W. Washington St., Strasburg

The program will be held from 2-4PM.

It is free and the public is welcome. Refreshments will be served.

President's Letter

Barbara Adamson

Often the arrival of fall is a welcomed event after a hot and dry summer. But not this year. I think this was a very beautiful summer, with rain at the right times and no extended hot spells turning gardens crispy. Our June program meeting was a great success with local longrifle collectors John Adamson and John Reiley bringing several rifles made here in Shenandoah County to show, and speaking to us about this important and interesting part of our history. John A. remarked about how much audience members seemed to enjoy handling the rifles. Elsewhere in the newsletter you'll read about our upcoming quilt program and December's Homes Tour. We hope to see you in October, and be sure to contact Joan or Maggie to help out with the homes tour.

Upcoming Events –

Apple Butter making at the Strasburg Museum – Saturday, Oct. 12. Come by the museum to help stir. Order your apple butter early. Call the museum at 465-3175.

Belle Grove Plantation – The 2013 National Sheep Dog Finals. Oct. 8-13. The National Sheepdog Finals are held to crown the best working sheepdog and handler team within the USA & Canada. 150 handlers will compete throughout the week, culminating in the thrilling double lift finals over the weekend. For details go to www.bellegrove.org or www.nationalsheepdogfinals.org.

Retreat from Gettysburg – A lecture by local historian Richard Kleese on Thursday, Oct. 17, 6:30pm at the Shenandoah County Library, 514 Stony Creek Blvd. Edinburg. A little known topic, most of the sick & wounded from the Battle at Gettysburg received treatment at the Confederate hospital in Mt. Jackson. Hosted by the Shenandoah Room/Truban Archives Advisory Committee.

Battle of Cedar Creek Re-enactment – Saturday/Sunday, Oct. 19-20. Middletown. 149th Anniversary Re-enactment. For more information call 540-869-2064, visit Hupp's Hill Civil War Park or go to www.cedarcreekbattlefield.org.

Strasburg Hometown Harvest Festival & Ghost Tours – Saturday, Oct. 19. Festival from 2-5pm at town office parking lot. Fun community & family oriented activities. Free. Ghost Tours, 6-10PM. Walking tour with ghost stories and stories of the Civil War, tragedy and murder. Starts at Hotel Strasburg. Tickets \$3.00 early purchase at Town Office; \$5.00 day of event at start of the event. Special bus handicap tour at 3pm; must pre-register at Town Office. Go to www.hometownstrasburgva.org for more details.

Fall Litter Pick-Up on the Valley Pike

Our litter pick-up date for this fall is Saturday, Oct. 5. We meet at the Old Mill parking lot at 8am. Please remember to wear sturdy shoes and bring gloves, though we'll have gloves for you if needed. All hands are welcome – we'll finish by 10 o'clock.

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2013 Strasburg Holiday Heritage Homes Tour

by Joan Williams

The Strasburg Heritage Association in partnership with the Massanutten Garden Club will be presenting our Holiday Homes Tour on Saturday, December 14th from 10:00a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Here's a sneak preview of the homes on tour with more detailed information to follow.

We are offering four properties located in our Historic District within walking distance of each other and one property at the edge of town off Route #11.

- 1) 117 High Street, now owned by Alice Muellerweiss and Kevin Watson, was the local Grammar School House and then the home of Doctor H. T. Hopewell in 1856.
- 2) Denise Jane owns and operates Denise Jane Portrait Design from her historic home located at 295 West Queen Street. Miss Frances Jenkins, a well respected teacher in the early 1900s, lived with her family in the home. The back part of the home was said to have been built in the 1750s and the front part of the house is believe to have been built in 1905.
- 3) Back by popular demand is "The Ham Shack" belonging to Craig Morris and Mike Marcheterre, as well as their log cabin "The Country Crossroads Building", located behind their home at 262 South Sharpe Street. During the tour event, on the porch of their historic property, Natural Art Garden Center will be demonstrating holiday wreath assembly and decorating.
- 4) The Strasburg Home Theater at 151 West King Street built in 1940 by William Dalke, is now owned and operated by Richard Perryman. This landmark in our town has changed hands numerous times and its recent owner is restoring it to its original art deco beauty.
- 5) Caroline Stalnaker has graciously offered her historic Mt. Pleasant 1812 Bed & Breakfast as the jewel of our tour this year and is located on the edge of town at 292 Hite Lane. This property is a working farm and the house, now being used as a bed and breakfast, is listed on the *National Register of Historic Places* and the *Virginia Historic Landmark Register*.

Please mark your calendar and join us for another enjoyable and educational event supporting the Strasburg Heritage Association and promoting interest in the historical preservation of our community.

Interested in being a docent in one of our homes? We welcome you in assisting us with this event. If you can help, please contact either Joan Williams at 465.2953 or Maggie Maloney at 465.5147.

Thanks in advance for your support and we look forward to seeing you December 14th.

A Little Folk History The Bathing Beach

by
Kathy Kehoe

In the years before World War II, young people around Strasburg spent many carefree summer days at a local swimming hole on the Shenandoah River. There are not many of those youngsters left now to tell the folk history of The Bathing Beach, where they could swim, dance, boat and socialize.

The late C. Douglas Cooley wrote about The Bathing Beach in his book, "My Strasburg—The Beginning and Ending of my Life There" (2002, page 16, Commercial Press). "Around 1930, Howard Crabill, built a bathing beach on the river behind what is now the Lions Club Park." Doug describes two dressing rooms, a room for soft drinks and snacks, and a "large platform built across the top of the riverbank and steps down to some diving boards."

Larry Allamong has a picture of his mother taken at the Beach of her sitting on a log. When he was young the log was still there even though the Beach had long been abandoned. In his mother's photos, he found a picture of two teenage boys. On the back are the names Pat Keister and Mitchell Pappas. Pat remembers that he "especially enjoyed the wire that was strung across the river that was used like a zip line..... they would hold fast until they were above the deepest part of the river and then would let go and plunge into the water."

Both Benny Updyke, age 86 and his brother Wayno 89, remember using that zip line and how much fun it was.



Pat Keister and Mitchell Pappas at The Bathing Beach on the Shenandoah River.

This cable was the highlight of the Beach. Doug Cooley writes: "Believe it or not the water was deep enough in those days to permit some shallow diving. To top it all off there was a steel cable running across the river with a trapeze on it. Those brave enough could make a running start while holding on to the trapeze and make a flip or whatever trick they were brave enough to try when they reached the middle of the river."

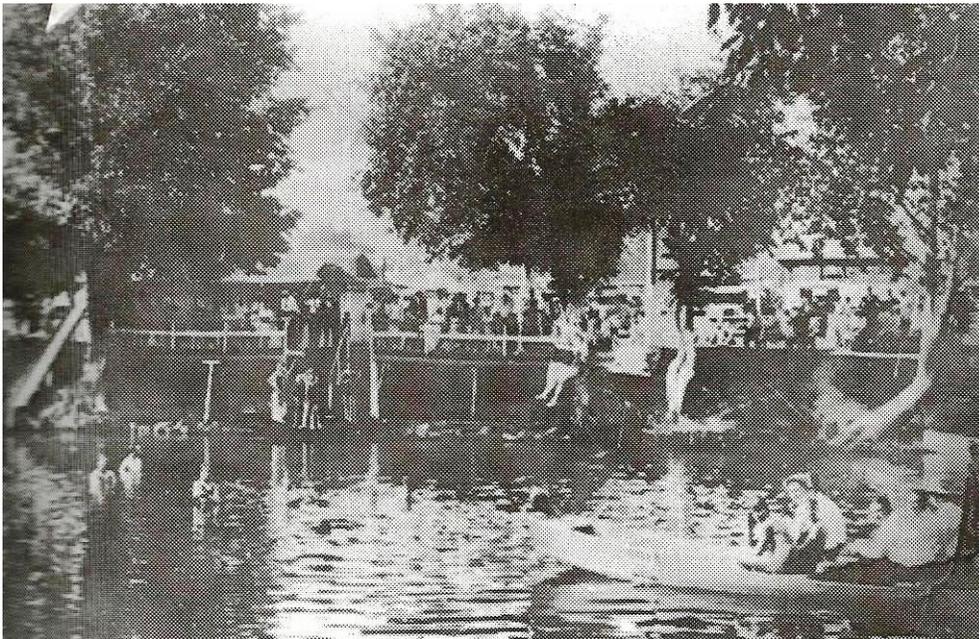


From C Douglas Cooley's book: Strasburg Community Memories, Pg 188, Commercial Press, 1999;
The Zip Line going across the river.

Margaret Williams Bromley, remembers her friends went to the bathing beach, but after a near drowning scare at Girl Scout camp, Margaret seldom went near the water. She remembered there was a stage for musicians to play music and a place for dancing. Wayno Updyke of Waterlick remembers a jukebox that the kids used to dance to and songs like "In the Mood", and "Tuxedo Junction" by the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra. He recalls the lyrics of a song, "Come on down to Alabama, south to Birmingham.....Most of the people who went there are passed away now." he recalls. Wayno's brother Benny of Strasburg remembers the boats that were docked at the Bathing Beach. The boats, he recalls, were

"hand made by Mr.

Sonner, who lived close to the Old Mill". He describes the boats as "pole boats" locally made, 3 ft. wide, 16 ft. long, flat bottomed boats. "All you could see on the river in the prewar days were boats."



From C. Douglas
Cooley, Strasburg
Community Memories,

Doug writes that "All of my friends and many people from our town along with quite a number of people from other communities in the area, enjoyed swimming at this bathing beach. A few years later Mr. Crabill sold the beach to the Dick Palmer family."

Doug Cooley writes in another of his books, "Strasburg Community Memories" (1999 Commercial Press, Pg. 188) that in the 1920s and 30s, it was "operated by the Howard Crabill and Dick Palmer families." In this book is a picture of Jimmy Racey (Strasburg teacher and elementary school principal) and his niece Frances Palmer Trimble, (Strasburg High School teacher) "taking a ride on their water pony 'Alfalfa'. This was in the day when the Shenandoah River was deep enough to jump in and hearts were young enough to play. Somewhere Benny has a picture of his friend, the late Jim Strosnider, at The Bathng Beach. Benny describes Jim as a weight lifter and in the picture he is wearing a bathing suit and holding two bathing suit clad girls in the air, one in each arm. Jim is showing off his strength and "All three were smiling" said Benny.

Now if you walk down to the River behind the Old Mill, you will see a grassy clearing on a high bank. Not long after the boys went off to war and the girls went to work in the Silk Mill making parachutes, the Flood of '42 took out the docks and returned the riverbank back to nature. It is very quiet in that clearing now, but if you listen you just might hear the past come around you—the laughter, the music, and the sound of splashing water, of whoops and yells, and memories of long ago.

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