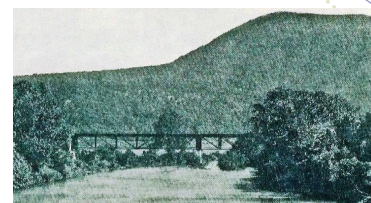


Strasburg Heritage Association



Volume 17

Winter 2017

Issue 1

Strasburg, Virginia

NEWSLETTER

strasburgvaheritage.org

A Trip on the Valley Pike: 1884

SHA Annual Meeting and Program

Sunday, Feb. 26, 2017, 2-4pm

St. Paul Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall,
193 W. Washington St. Strasburg

Please join us for a slide show of photographs from a trip down the Valley Pike as seen by brothers Walter and Dwight Biscoe from Marietta, Ohio in 1884. The pictures were taken from viewpoints ranging from Fisher's Hill to Stephens City and included battlefield sites at Fisher's Hill and Strasburg. Local historian Mike Kehoe will show us these images from glass plate negatives, taken in high resolution, that allow close up views of what the Valley looked like 133 years ago.

The presentation will follow a brief business meeting.

The public is invited.

Join us for fellowship and refreshments

President's Message Barbara Adamson

Strasburg Heritage Association has been a terrific organization in our community now for over 15 years. I'm glad to have been a member of the original board of directors and having served as president since 2009. I'm very pleased that Tim Taylor, who has served on the board since 2003, has agreed to move into the position of president. Past time for a change of leadership!

I thank the many volunteers who have helped out with multiple events, and board members who have served, over the years. I don't have enough space here to list all of the excellent programs we have offered to the community but note that in 2016 alone, we hosted three: Richard Kleese talking to us about Strasburg & the Post-Civil War Era, MSV Curator Nick Powers sharing information with us about the remarkable Henkel family of New Market, and Bill and Martha Erbach inviting us to visit the historic 1772 Stoner-Keller Mill at Fisher's Hill. I'm especially pleased that we have forged successful partnerships with other community organizations. Our partnership with the Massanutten Garden Club to host the popular Strasburg Holiday Heritage Homes Tour continues. And we have partnered with the Strasburg Museum on preservation projects and hope that we will continue to do so in the future.

Shenandoah County Heritage Day

Shenandoah County Heritage Day is to be held Saturday, April 8 from 11am-3pm at the Historic Courthouse in Woodstock. While all aspects of county history will be featured, a special focus this year will be WWI, the county's veterans and the homefront during the war. The United States entered WWI 100 years ago, on April 7, 1917. The Shenandoah County Historical Society, host of the event, encourages those who would like to exhibit their own family or community history, or who may have WWI memorabilia to share, to contact SCHS at 459-1795 or email at schs.va@gmail.com. There is no fee to attend or to exhibit. The event will include the VA Point of Honor WWI/WWII exhibit which is touring the state during the commemoration of the two World Wars.

SHA Board of Directors

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Strasburg High School Annuals by

Laura Ellen Beeler Wade and Bill Wade

When was the first Strasburg High School annual published? The answer is 1925. The annual was called “Shenandoah” and had a raised Indian head on the brown leather cover. It was dedicated to Miss Lucy Ludwig, a beloved teacher for many years, with her picture on the next page of the annual. Here is a summary of the information given in the front of the book. The seniors began in the fall of 1924 to propose having an annual, the first one to be published by Strasburg High School. All of the high school students were given an opportunity to name it as a “box was placed in the hall” for them to write down their ideas. It finally was between two names—“Rosemary” and “Shenandoah”. The Indian meaning of “Shenandoah” is “daughter of the stars”, and the Indian theme was used not only on the cover, but elsewhere in the book. Mr. G. W. Garner was the principal and he, along with three others, taught the high school students. The other teachers were Miss Emily E. Saum, Mr. E. A. Helsley and Miss Sara Gertrude Stickley (Miss Stickley later married Mr. Garner). The subjects taught were math, science, English, French, Latin, history, biology and piano. There were 27 seniors, and according to the annual it was the largest class to graduate from Strasburg High School up to that year. In the back is a listing of graduates from 1910 (first high school class) to 1924 with the college they attended, if any, their occupation, or where they were presently living in 1925. An ad states the photographs were taken by Morrison Studio of Woodstock. Shenandoah Publishing House in Strasburg printed the annual.

According to the 1939-1940 annual there were annuals for 1926 and 1927, and then no annuals were published until 1939-1940. The appearance and name were changed. Instead of having a leather binding, the cover was a light cardboard imprinted with a new name “Stauffer-Stadt” 1939-1940 Strasburg, Virginia on it. This name was suggested by their principal, Mr. Paul Hounshell, in honor of our German heritage. According to the history books, in the early days, Strasburg was called Stover Town (Stauffer Stadt). Below the picture of the annual staff, it states that this is the first annual since 1927. The annual was dedicated to Miss Eleanor Balthis. Many may remember her as their piano teacher. The faculty now numbered 9 teachers including the principal with 35 seniors pictured (one member passed away in October, 1939 before graduation).

The 1941 and 1942 annuals continued using the name “Stauffer-Stadt”. Interestingly, the 1942 annual was once again, as in 1925, dedicated to Miss Lucy Ludwig.

Mrs. Doris Stickley Baker, a 1943 graduate, remembers that there was no annual published in 1943. Mrs. Eva Mae Pifer agreed with her. This was due to all the restrictions during WW II. (Mrs. Baker even recalled parents initially were not going to be allowed to attend graduation ceremonies, but then that was changed.) In 1944 the annual’s name was changed to “Massanutten”. The war with Germany may have influenced why the students chose “Massanutten”. The following year, 1945, the annual’s name was again Stauffer Stadt. Evidently, by 1946 the name was no longer two separate words or hyphenated, it was “Staufferstadt”, all one word. From 1945 on to the present, the Strasburg High School annual has with few exceptions remained with the word “Staufferstadt” on the cover or spine of the annual. Since the late 1970s there have been varying additional titles such as—“Crayola Crayons”, “Dimensions”, “Top Secret”, “Purple Reigns”, “That’s The Ticket”, “In No One’s Shadow”, “That Small Town Feeling”, “Making the Connection”, “Schoolhouse Rock” and “Actions Speak Louder Than Words” used by senior classes, but “Staufferstadt”, the title given by Principal Paul Hounshell in 1939-1940, is still usually retained on the cover, spine or title page of the annuals.

For whatever reasons, there are no annuals published between 1928 and 1939. Perhaps, the Great Depression was one of the reasons. All of us who want to have a complete collection of annuals will not have to search for these years.

It is always interesting to see Strasburg through the eyes of the students and teachers as we remember our past, acknowledging how the faculty, the subjects taught, and class sizes have changed. Enjoy your Strasburg High School annuals. They can provide many tidbits of information. You may wish to pass them down through the family or donate them to the Shenandoah County Public Library Archives.

Note: If anyone has copies of the 1926 and 1927 annuals, I would be interested in seeing them.—
Laura Ellen Wade

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The nominating committee has reported that board members Dennis Hupp, Kathy Kehoe, Randy Painter, Wendy Pieper, Tim Taylor, Laura Ellen Wade and Joan Williams are up for re-election to two-year terms. Dennis, Randy and Wendy have decided not to return to the board. Dennis has served on the board since 2003. We regretfully accept his decision and hope it will be only a temporary absence. In addition to serving on the board since 2009, Wendy has acted as secretary during that time for which we thank her. While Randy has served only a short time on the board, we appreciate his support and hope to tempt him back at some future date. We thank Dennis, Wendy and Randy for their service and continued support. The nominating committee has proposed two new board members for two-year terms. They are George Hoffman and Nick Racey. We are delighted to have George and Nick join the team. Both have shown great interest in local history over the years and will be great additions to the board. Further, Barbara Adamson has decided to step down as SHA president, after serving in that position since 2009. We're very pleased that Tim Taylor has agreed to take over as president. Laura Ellen Wade has agreed to continue as vice-president and Sue Foster has agreed to continue serving as treasurer. A secretary will be chosen at the next board meeting.

Yoo Hoo! Dues are due in February.

We hope you will continue your support of SHA by renewing your membership. Our annual membership fee of \$20.00 is due in February and is much appreciated. Help us continue to support historic preservation in Strasburg, offer interesting programs and an informative newsletter mailed right to your door. Thank you!

******Preservation Awards Nominations Sought***

The Shenandoah County Historical Society will present historic preservation awards at its annual meeting in May. These awards are intended to recognize outstanding preservation projects in Shenandoah County. Nominations are currently being sought. More information and nomination forms are available at Strasburg library and Hupp's Hill Civil War Park, at other libraries and museums in the county, and at their website, www.schs1795.org. Or call 459-1795. Nominations are due by April 1, 2017.

A Little Folk History Peoples Drug Store

By
Kathy Kehoe

If you were a Strasburg area resident and you went to town in the last 100 years, you could not have walked down Main Street without seeing the People's Drug Store sign. And you probably went in to pick up a prescription or to buy an over the counter medicine or to get a cherry coke at the soda fountain. Maybe you just went in to visit, to pass the time of day with the people who worked there or with other customers. Maybe you just went to Peoples to talk to other people.

Bob Willey was a pharmacist at Peoples for fifty-four years. Sitting in his living room on a recent Saturday afternoon, Bob shared his memories of Peoples Drug Store. He feels his greatest influence to be a pharmacist was from James Sullender, the pharmacist at Peoples when he was growing up. He remembers going to Peoples Drug Store with his mother and having ice cream sodas. After graduating from Strasburg High School, Bob earned his pharmacy degree in 1960.

Bob has noted the many different owners of Peoples. John M. and J. Ray Miller were the original owners who opened the drug store in 1916, hiring S. G. Good as the pharmacist. The first location was 133 E. King Street. (most recently "Bygones" antiques). The Shenando Building had been built in the early 1900s, and housed the Strasburg Post Office until the new post office was built in 1936. At that time, the drug store moved into the Shenando Building where it remained until it closed in 2016. George Emmart was a pharmacist who had bought Vaughn's Drug Store business across the street from the Shenando Building. When Emmart sold the business back to Allen "Doc" Vaughn, he then became the pharmacist at Peoples and remained pharmacist there until his death in 1947. In 1947 the business was sold to partners James Sullender and Jeff Hendley, who rented the first floor of the Shenando Building. In 1953, Bob tells us, that Sullender bought his business partner Hendley's half and then in 1954 bought the building from Dick Palmer, gaining rental income from the apartments upstairs. Pharmacists H. R. "Bud" Barr and Bob Willey bought the business together in February 1965. In April they discussed a business deal to buy Vaughn's Drug store. The original plan was to keep Vaughn's open and continue the greyhound bus service that was located there as well as the over the counter medicines and the soda fountain, but the prescriptions would all be filled at Peoples. Bob describes how he and his partner "Bud" Barr and Allen Vaughn walked up the street to the newspaper office. They "sat in in Editor Jack Crawford's office" and gave him the news about the sale. An article was printed in the Northern Virginia Daily a couple days later. When they left the Daily office, the three men stopped in at Peoples. Bob says that "to my knowledge, that was the first time Vaughn was ever inside Peoples Drug Store." Vaughn told them, "You all keep a nice drug store here." The next day, Doc Vaughn changed his mind about filling prescriptions at Peoples and continued to do so for a couple more years until he retired. In 1972, Bob and partner Bud Barr bought the Shenando Building from Sullender and then sold the business and building to Randall Fansler in 2003.



Pharmacist Michelle Rimel bought the business next. Michelle told me she struggled for a year and a half whether to close the business or keep it open. "We still miss it" she says, "like everybody else. But economically owning your own shop isn't practical now." She now works for a drug store chain. "The thing that I miss the most is people sitting up at the bar and chatting with us. I miss being able to talk to my customers about their families and really knowing them. That's what made that the great place it was--being happy with them and being sad with them. I consider those people my friends, not just my my customers, and my staff was just phenomenal. So many people came in frequently just to visit with others and to me that is the whole family feel of the people that came in." Michelle donated pictures, bottles and the business sign to the Strasburg Museum where they can be shared with town residents. She sold the soda fountain to Cooters in Luray, a museum for the TV show Dukes of Hazzard, for their Daisy's Diner. The Shenando Building is now another empty building for sale on King Street.

Polly Wilson's father, Walter M. Cary, was a pharmacist at Peoples in the 1940s. Her father was from Delaplane in Fauquier County and had worked in the D.C. area. Her mother grew up in Fort Valley. "I was awfully young when Daddy retired" she says, she doesn't remember much about when he worked there. She does remember being in Peoples and having ice cream with her father, but "Daddy would only let me have vanilla and I wanted chocolate" but if she ate chocolate, she'd get it on her clothes and then her mother would know he'd bought her ice cream. Her father gave her baby colic medicine that smelled like yeast and really worked.

Dorothy Jenkins told me that Peoples was "a lovely place to work. The soda fountain was very popular." "People didn't buy ice cream in stores like we do today." Home refrigerators had small freezers and didn't keep ice cream solid because it just wasn't cold enough, "so people went to the drug store to buy." When we had a parade in Strasburg, the drug store would be a madhouse. When the "ladies of the town brought their children into town, they would bring them to Peoples for ice cream, almost every afternoon." The drug store was filled with children after school, eating Sealtest ice cream, milkshakes, sundaes or banana splits

Mary Taft Miller went to work at Peoples as a bookkeeper in 1962 when Doc Sullender was the pharmacist. She remembers in those early years the drug store had a full soda fountain and sold Revlon makeup products and a hand cream called Cara Nome. They sold English Leather men's cologne and leather goods such as wallets they bought in bulk. In the prescription room, they mixed a black salve, a "drawing salve" that was a formula invented by local physician Dr. Winkfield. "On a really large table in the back," said Mary, "they mixed huge quantities of it." It was used for splinters, boils, cuts or any skin infection and it would "draw out" the splinter or infection. I remember having black salve in our house when I was growing up. To my memory, it smelled like motor oil. It was dark black and came in a small ceramic white jar with a screw on lid. I used it for splinters, especially in later years when I was often carrying and stacking wood for our wood stove. Mary states that it had belladonna and ichthammol in it and is no longer sold because belladonna is not considered safe and is poisonous. When I googled "ichthammol" (which took awhile since neither Mary nor I knew how to spell it), it was described as having a large percentage of sulfur. Customers would still ask for black salve long after they could no longer sell it. Mary worked there until 1970 when her first child was born. When "Mr. Barr asked me to come back to work, my children were in school" and she went back to People's in 1979. Mary earned her pharmacy tech license while working under pharmacist Randy Fansler. She and coworker Ginnie went to Manassas to take the test around 2004 and she could fill prescriptions. When asked how she read the doctors' writing on the prescriptions, she answered with a laugh "it wasn't easy. But you did get to know the doctors' writing and everybody would look at it to decipher which medicine it was." Later a computer read the script and Mary worked more as a cashier and bookkeeper. "It was a great job for a woman," said Mary, for those days. "You can work the hours you want or can work, part or full time, raise your family and still work. There weren't

as many choices for women back then." said Mary. "All those I worked for at Peoples, I had the same feeling of family."

Juanita Lucas worked at People's Drug Store in the 1960s. Her daughter Debbie Lucas Seekford remembers going there after school for soda and ice cream sundaes. "You could get hot roasted peanuts from a case—they were so good." Debbie remembers. "Mom used to walk to work every day from Lee Street until she later got her driver's permit. When she got her permit, if someone needed their prescription and couldn't get it, she and the other employees would deliver free. And if someone needed something and did not have the money, I'm pretty sure you could make payments. That would not happen now. Those were the good old days."

"Peoples Drug Store was a landmark for a hundred years" said Janet Fish, who worked at Peoples for 26 years. Janet had worked at the Silco store until it closed and Dollar General took over. "I took four months off" she said, and then I just walked up the street and asked Bud for a job." Janet says she really misses working at Peoples but is enjoying her retirement. She started the job waiting on customers but later became a pharmacy tech. She was trained by pharmacists Bud (Barr) and Bob (Willey). "Bob taught us, gave us books to read and study for the exam." Janet says Bob was a good teacher and "was very good with all of us." During her years at Peoples, Janet "watched the prices go up on medicine." In the 90s, customers still charged everything on charge accounts, especially those on social security who only got their checks once a month. She saw the creation of Medicare Part D prescription drug plans and more insurance companies covering medicine. "People could afford medicine after that." said Janet. Peoples delivered to Massanutten Manor, a subsidized apartment building for those over 62, every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. "It was a great courtesy" said Janet, and the seniors wanted to know if other drug stores would deliver. There is only one drug store in Strasburg now. Janet remembers the penny scales: "they were very accurate; sometimes people would come in just to weigh themselves." For a penny, you could step up on the scales and see your weight and "fortune", a few words that popped up under a glass window. "You're the hardheaded type and lose no time dreaming" was my fortune at the open house and closing day of Peoples in October. The scales were identical to the ones that used to be in the Virginia Restaurant and were in the drug store as long as anyone could remember.

Ginnie Himelright Finfrock's work at Peoples spanned 45 years, from June 1971 to October 2016 when they closed. "We were very fortunate that some customers were lifelong; some customers in 2016 had been customers in 1971" said Ginnie. But some things changed. "In 1971, I went to work wearing a dress or skirt and blouse, dress shoes and stockings. In 2016 we could wear jeans and a t-shirt if we wanted to." Ginnie went on to say, "In the 70s, you'd get a case of something in the storeroom and it would be stocked on the shelves; in later years, an order would come every day. We might order one of something because it only took a day to get it." "We were closed on Christmas Day but open every other day," said Ginnie. "We might have had the 4th of July off, but we worked Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, New Year's Day and Easter. The first year I worked there I had to work til 9pm on Christmas Eve. In our family, Christmas Eve is as important as Christmas Day, and I had never been anywhere but home on Christmas Eve." Ginnie remembers how surprised she was to see people shopping in the drug store on Christmas Eve for presents. "Valentine's Day was a huge thing for us. We sold many many boxes of Russell Stover Valentine candy, and we did free gift wrapping. We probably got in 50 or 60 boxes of Valentine heart shaped boxes every year. By 2016, we probably got in ten boxes of candy and didn't sell all of those." Ginnie remembers Peoples had "In house drug store charge accounts until 2003". And in the "Seventies, we had a full service ice cream soda fountain."

"Election day was very busy because people would take care of business while they were in town." Said Ginnie. "How things progressed and changed. We used to hand record everyone's prescription on large index cards, and when we did a refill, we hand wrote it on the back of the card. The information on the pill bottle was typed on an electric typewriter. Codes for insurance billing were written by hand too." Ginnie trained under pharmacist Bob Willey, took classes at Lord Fairfax Community College, tested for the state of Virginia and is a licensed

pharmacy technician. There used to be different levels of pharmacy but now all pharmacists are doctors. "Bob really taught," said Ginnie. "You read and checked and read and checked and if you're not sure, you check it again. Bob had very high standards for himself, to make a mistake was not tolerated." Bob would say, "If you are going to do it, you do it right."

"One thing that stayed constant was the personalized service and the way our customers were treated." Said Ginnie. "In my opinion, I feel like we had good relationships with our customers. You weren't a number, you were a person. We had the willingness to go the extra step to make sure our customers got what they needed."

That's what a small town drug store is all about. Good customer service, but more than that. Not only was Peoples Drug Store a small town business, it was a business where the staff knew the challenges their customers faced each day. When your customers are your neighbors and your classmates and those you sit beside in church or at the high school football game, you possess an understanding that you might not otherwise have. This is why Strasburg will forever hold Peoples Drug Store dear to its heart.

The Shenando Building, Strasburg's High-rise

Several people remember a transom, a hinged window over a door, in the back of the building that had words painted on it. It read: "Don't Spit on the Floor". This would have been left over from the days when many men were chewing tobacco and spittoons were kept in public buildings. Pharmacist Bob Willey says there were three doors in the back that entered into three different shops; one was the shop of an electrician, one a harness maker and one a barber. I remember there was a barber pole there for many years of my childhood, but I do not remember a barber at that time and the pole looked very out of place. Ginnie Himelright Finrock was working at Peoples when the remodeling was done. She said it was a rainy fall and she had to retrieve supplies from behind a curtain of plastic. Bob recalls that in 1972, when he and business partner and fellow pharmacist Bud Barr owned the building, they had the two top floors removed. The Shenando Building had previously been known as Strasburg's "high-rise" because it was four stories high. Bob says the drug store was "closed for only 15 minutes" during this remodeling when a crane lifted two steel beams. These beams, states Bob, were there to reinforce a theatre stage. The 2nd floor was a theatre for silent films in the early part of the 1900s. From Calvin Sonner's website of Strasburg information, there are excerpts from The Strasburg News, a weekly newspaper before the Northern Virginia Daily combined area weekly newspapers into one daily newspaper. (<http://www.csonner.net/stranew.htm>) Mr. Sonner has collected two articles, one an advertisement for the Empire Theatre and another announcement about "infantile paralysis" (polio) and the quarantine of 1917.

From The Strasburg News, Compiled by Calvin Sonner

EMPIRE THEATRE

We take this means of thanking our patrons and the public of Strasburg and vicinity for the support they have given us during the past four years in conducting the motion picture business and to assure them that in the future, as well as in the past, our aims will be to give them the best service possible.

Our picture parlor, located on the 2nd Floor of the Shenando Building, gives you ample ventilation from both sides. This combined with newly installed electric fans, will ensure to our patrons at all times plenty of cool breeze and proper ventilation. The building conforms to all State laws governing Public Halls-- as to exits, fire escapes, etc. ensuring to our patrons the utmost safety.

During the Summer months our house will be open three evenings per week -- Mondays,

Wednesdays, and Saturdays. Perfect order insisted upon at all times.

We have contracted with the Paramount Picture Corporation of Washington, D. C., for their famous plays, and can now offer the public better service than ever before.

We know of no better way to thank you for past favors and merit you future support than to say that, beginning last Monday, July 23, and until further notice our admission will be Five Cents to all. Again thanking and soliciting a continuance of your patronage, we are,

Yours to serve, Empire Theatre Management

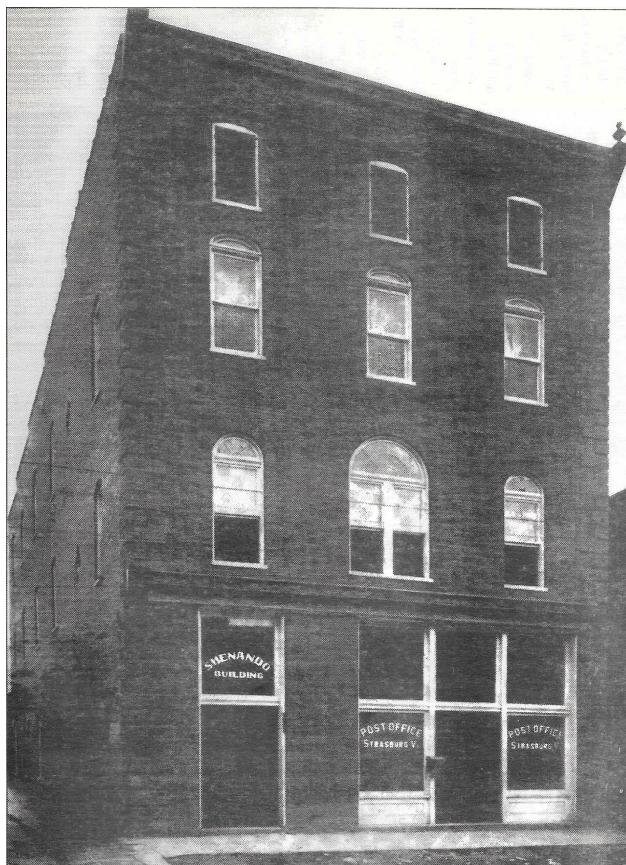
Children Can Now Go To Moving Pictures - September 6, 1917

The quarantine established by the Corporation of the Town of Strasburg and the Town Board of Health against infantile Paralysis has been lifted, and now the children can go to the moving pictures whenever they can beg the necessary price of admission from their parents. This action was taken at the meeting of the Corporation Council Tuesday night, it being the opinion of the members of both Council and Board of Health that as there are no new cases of the disease in nearby towns, that as the paralysis situation throughout the Valley of Virginia shows great improvement, and that as much cooler weather is almost upon us, there is no further necessity for keeping the children housed up or away from public places. For some time the children have been dreaming of the time when they could go to the "movies" again.

The town officials think that the quarantine established by the county which IS STILL IN FULL EFFECT, every road leading out of the county being guarded, is sufficient to protect the youngsters from infection, in the face of the vastly improved conditions stated above. There has not been a single case of infantile paralysis in our town or in this end of

Shenandoah County, for which our good citizens should thank their luck stars. It is not likely that the county quarantine will be lifted until every case of the disease in nearby counties has been stamped out.—**The Strasburg News,**

Compiled by Calvin Sonner



Shenando Building, 1910, from Strasburg

Community Memories by C. Doug Cooley

Silent Movie Theatre was on the 2nd Floor

Symphony of Stitches – "Marching into the Twentieth Century"

Saturday, April 22 at St. Paul's Heritage Ctr. Edinburg. Focus this year is on WWI and the era before 1940 with talks, displays of original artifacts, show & tell with your own artifacts and photos, and a silent auction. Information about registration (fee involved) is available at stitchesVA@gmail.com or call 984-9309 or 459-7377.

Strasburg Heritage
Association

PO Box 525
Strasburg, A 22657

Strasburg Heritage Association

Www.strasburgvaheritage.org

**Membership Application or
Annual Renewal for 2017**

-

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email address: _____

MEMBERSHIP: _____Cost is \$20.00

Additional Donation: _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____

Please Mail Completed form to:
Strasburg Heritage Association
PO Box 525
Strasburg, VA 22657