

# Glimpses of Grayson

Grayson County Historical Society, Inc

P.O. Box 529

Independence, Virginia 24348

[www.graysonvahistsoc.com](http://www.graysonvahistsoc.com)

[graysoncountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:graysoncountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com)



## Officers and Board Members:

Amelia Waller, President

Wanda Lineberry, Vice- President

Barb Spears, Secretary

David Hauslohner, Treasurer

Dewey Lineberry, Board Member

Mike Spears, Board Member

Lewis Walker, Board Member

Roger Marshall, Board member

Summer

2012

## New & Interesting

### 1940 U.S. Census Released



The 1940 U.S. Federal Census was released by the National Archives in April 2012, published for the first time as a digital copy along with the microfilm format. The 1940 Census included for the first time the individual's place of residence five years before the Census was taken and the highest level of schooling obtained by the individual.

*Continued on page 2*

### Office Hours

Thursday, 10:00 AM-4:00 PM  
(Jan-Dec, weather permitting)

Or by appointment

Office will be closed on holidays.

Regular board meetings scheduled  
for the second Tuesday of the month  
at 7:00 PM.

## Do You Recognize These Photos?

If you have any  
information about these  
photos

(location, dates, identities of subjects, etc.),

please let us know at

[graysoncountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:graysoncountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com)

or 276-773-3320.



*This appears to be a school or class photo.*



*This  
The  
Goins  
of*

*photo has the name "Belford Phipps" on the back.  
tall man in the back was identified as Robert*

*Sugar Grove, VA.*

## New & Interesting

*Continued from page 1*

The Federal Census is not released to the public until 72 years after it has been taken. Until a digital name index is compiled by online databases such as Ancestry.com, researchers will have to browse the digital copies.

Genealogical researchers and volunteers are working to index the images which will be made available free to the public in perpetuity. Browse digital census images at [www.1940census.archives.gov](http://www.1940census.archives.gov)

## Virginia Vital Records

Beginning July 1, Virginia marriage and death records from 1962 through 1987 will be publicly available. The “closed” period for marriage and death records in Virginia was 50 years, but recently legislation was passed reducing it to 25 years. The Virginia Department of Health will turn over its vital records to Library of Virginia once the closed period ends, and is directed to enter into a contract by June 2013 with a genealogical research company to create an online index of all birth, marriage and death records (closed and open), with links to images of the open records. There is no statewide public index for Virginia now, and its creation would be a major asset to history researchers.

## Our Thanks to

**Janice Stanley** for the donation of a file containing the family history of the Swinney’s who originated in Iron Mountain. It is available on a CD here in the GCHS office or can be sent via e-mail.

**A. Joy King** for donating a copy of her book *King’s Quest: A History of a Virginia Family*. The book contains wills, marriage licenses, and photographs as well as historical facts about the major branches of her family trees. It includes the surnames: Bishop, Bohannon, Byars, Douglas, Doyle, Fowlkes, Harris, King, Kinser, Moyers, Overton, Royall, Russell, Steffey, Thommason and Walton.

**Wanda Lineberry** for donating the Bonham, Fuller genealogical chart prepared by Hugh Bonham in 1949. The chart is an impressive 36 ½ inches wide by 62 inches tall and is on display in the Historical Society office.

## For Sale

Copy of “Bicentennial Heritage, Grayson County, Virginia 1793” published by the 1908 Courthouse Foundation. It is in perfect condition except for a corner of the front cover page clipped off, approx. 2 inches total, does not affect the

book at all. Would like to get \$75 plus shipping. Please contact Amy Martin Wilson at [msamywils@gmail.com](mailto:msamywils@gmail.com)

## Inquiries

Looking for information on Claude Robert Bell (30 Oct 1895-19 May 1931) who married Mattie Prudence Pierce in Troutdale, VA on 16 Oct 1920. Marriage and death certificates indicate he was born in Ohio, parents listed as Tom and Mary Bell of North Carolina. Place of death, Smyth County, VA. Contact Pam Palmer, [Pam.Palmer@pepsico.com](mailto:Pam.Palmer@pepsico.com)

□□□□

Does anyone have information on a “Coomes Family Cemetery” or headstones in the Peach Bottom community of Elk Creek? Please contact GCHS at [graysoncountyhistorical@gmail.com](mailto:graysoncountyhistorical@gmail.com).

□□□□

Looking for information on Lula Bell Hale (18 Sep 1918-31 Jan 2000). Who were her parents, husband, husband’s parents, etc. Please contact GCHS at [graysoncountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:graysoncountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com).

□□□□

I am currently searching for information regarding these surnames in Grayson County: Allen, Fielder, Hawkins, Lewis, McGee, and Stuart. Please send information to: Dealy Fielder, 541217 Coffield Unit, 2661 FM 2054, Tennessee Colony, TX 75884.

□□□□

## Workshops

Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Genealogy  
Presented by Mary B. Kegley  
Reynolds Homestead  
Saturday, September 15, 2012  
9:00 AM - 2 PM  
\$60 per person, includes lunch  
Call 276-694-7181 to register

## Letter from the President

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Although I have lived the majority of my life in an area that is not culturally diverse, I am a student of other cultures. I like to integrate some “foreign” philosophies and practices in my approach to living. Doing this feeds my creativity, and reminds me of the interdependent web of all humanity.

One such “foreign” practice that I wish was more widespread in our culture is the veneration of ancestors. On the first and fifteenth of every lunar month, the Taiwanese light incense and honor their ancestors at the family altar, set up with the ancestral tablet and adorned with candles and offerings of food. They pray to their forefathers and foremothers, wishing them well and requesting blessings for themselves and their loved ones. This form of veneration is deeply ingrained in the Taiwanese cultural fabric as a secular family rite. Thus, one's religious faith does not preclude one from this tradition.

The Taiwanese ancestral tablet houses the family tree of at least 10 generations of lineage, complete with titles, names, locations and dates of birth and death. Although this type of record-keeping is not practiced in the U.S., Americans also have a strong interest in their genealogy. While the ritual of honoring ancestors with incense and altars may seem foreign, the idea is universal. No matter where we are from, it is meaningful to feel connected with ancestors who have helped shape who we are.

A 2007 survey conducted by Ancestry.com showed that 78 percent of the respondents wanted to learn more about their roots, even if only half could name more than one great-grandparent. This interest gave rise to television shows that explore family trees for celebrities: *Who Do You Think You Are?* on NBC and *Finding Your Roots* with Henry Louis Gates, Jr. on PBS. These shows illustrate how we are influenced by our ancestors beyond simple genetics and how we are shaped by their choices, their actions, and their sacrifices for us.

I don't discipline myself to honor my ancestors on a regular basis, but I do choose to honor them whenever I think of them, or on significant anniversaries. I like to take a memento, perhaps a picture of my grandfather, or a piece of jewelry passed down from my great-grandmother, and place it in a location that seems appropriate. I make sure the surrounding space is not cluttered by other items. I take a deep breath, close my eyes, and wish my ancestors well. I sometimes request a blessing. I sometimes reflect on my family's history. When I am done, I open my eyes slowly. I find myself feeling more content, having honored my legacy in this way.

Perhaps this is a practice you might like to try. And if you need help with finding ancestors to venerate, please contact our office. We have a researcher on staff, who can assist you in your quest.

Best wishes to you,

Amelia Bland Waller

### *Postcard depicting school photo, date unknown*



**First Row:** Clabie Hines, Maily Elliot (Hall), Garley Haga, John Wingate, Nora Hale (Pappas), Mae Hall (Cornett), Eva Livesay, Bertha Mae Burris, Brook Hall, Reba Hines, Lana Hall, Grace Nickols, Clifton Simms, Mary Jane Harrington, Reed Livesay

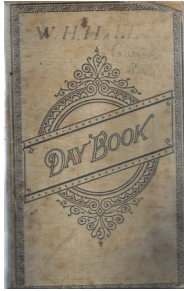
**Second Row:** Grady Watson, Eulus Harrington, Howard Watson, Everett Hale, Cleat Cornett, Bonnie Comer, Margie Comer, Glade Hall, Gussie Wingate, Rita Hall, Vinnie Hall, Estell Nickols, Brua Hall, Wesley Burris, Clyde Livesay, Gay Hines, Freed Hall

**Back Row:** Wade Harrington, Cleborn Cornett, Olen Hall, Lessie Hall, Emilia Hall, Walter Livesay, Kersie Hall, Ellen Hall, Leo Watson, Lizzie Haga, Ella Hale

## New Acquisitions

Peggy MacTavish, a Hale and Hall descendent, recently donated her grandfather's, Warner H. Hall of Comer's Rock, Day Book to GCHS. Her grandmother, Sarah Ann (Hale) Hall gave it to her mother, Rita Gillis (Hall) Smith, many years ago. After her mother's death, Mrs. MacTavish became the caretaker of the book. The information in the book provides details of the daily lives of many who lived in and around Comer's Rock circa 1899-1930. The pages contain names and dates of birth and death certificate information, coffin account information, as well as pages which trace transactions between Warner H. Hall and others in the community. Mrs. MacTavish has done extensive work, scanning the entire book, creating a thorough index, and compiling it all into a digital copy for all to enjoy. Together, the records provide a vivid representation of life in Comer's Rock, VA at the turn of the last century. GCHS gives it's sincere thanks to Mrs. MacTavish! A digital copy of the Day Book may be viewed at the GCHS office or individuals via e-mail.

Do you have a  
Please share  
at  
PO Box 529,



story or thoughts to share about a community in Grayson County?  
and they might be published in our next Newsletter! Send them to GCHS  
[graysoncountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:graysoncountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com) or  
Independence, VA 24348.

## The Storekeepers

*The following was written and contributed by Alta Billings of Elk Creek, VA.*

"Thank you, and come back." These words were used many, many times during a day's work by Berlin and Mattie Catron, as they cheerfully operated the local general store located in Elk Creek, Virginia. Mr. Berlin, called O.B. by most people, was medium in stature with skin which was always reminded me of someone who had just returned from a week at the beach. It was as tan as Mrs. Mattie's was fair. His hair was brown with some natural wave, and it was always combed and well kept. His voice was deep but always kind. The only times I remember him appearing to be upset were when his customers would ask for something and he did not have it. He would always reply, "The DAD BUM truck didn't bring it." In contrast, Mrs. Mattie was tall with hair as white as snow. She kept it neatly pinned (with what we called Bobbi Pins) back on the sides.

The crude, wooden structure was built in the early 1900's and was taken over by the Catron's somewhere around the early fifties. It was somewhat of a landmark to the Elk Creek community until it was destroyed by fire in the late sixties and was replaced by a more modern, block building. The Catron's continued to operate the store until Mr. Berlin's death in 1975.

I grew up about three miles from the store and loved going with my dad, or mom to "pick up a few things". As I think back, I realize that many of our local business people and professionals back then did go beyond their call of duty, and they exchanged kind words or deeds right along with their goods or services. The customer was treated with dignity and respect. Somewhere along the way, that quality has often faded and passed, much like the old dwellings in which their businesses were housed.

As a child, I was fascinated by the candy display of such delicacies as Mint Juleps, Sugar Daddies, and BB Bats of strawberry, chocolate and banana. I remember the Coats and Clark display of colorful threads and of bolts of fabric, which Mrs. Mattie kept for the local seamstresses. There were also a few shelves of various kinds of shoes for sale, mostly conservative styles for the working class people.

Other senses were often indulged upon entrance to the store- the familiar smell of feed wafting from the feed room located in the back portion of the building; the oil which was used to treat the bare, wooden floor; the smell of oil cloth which was displayed in colorful bolts behind the counter; and of coal and smoke from the old pot bellied stove. The focal point of the store was that old pot bellied stove, which rested in the back. It usually was visited by some of the locals who swapped stories with each other as they sought a few minutes' warmth and comfort from its black belly. That same stove proved to be the enemy when it apparently caused the fire which destroyed the wooden dwelling years later.

The elementary school which I attended was only a few hundred yards from the store, and we were forbidden to cross the road to the store. I rarely had extra money for such fine things as Mint Julep candy and bubble gum, but on one particular day, I did have a WHOLE nickel. Some friends and I were on the playground below the school, which was so-o-o close to the store AND to those sweet treasures. Because the



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## The Storekeepers

Continued from page 4

fence was rickety and exhibited various holes and spaces at that time, we were especially “watched” and kept within our boundary. I agonized “Oh, to be able to spend this entire nickel at the store TODAY! If I could just send it by someone older, THAT would be acceptable. I don’t dare sneak off. My pants would be smoking after the spanking I might get.” Well O.B. happened to be outside on his store porch, and we waved and waved to him. After all,

he was the man who had access to all of that candy, ice cream, and soda pop! Out of the kindness of his heart, he sent one of the older high school students, who often visited the store while waiting for the final buses, up to the fence to “take thrilled to spend a so good. A penny happy with my

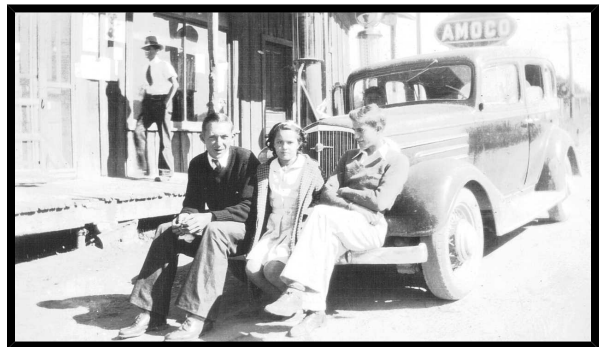
One Saturday store in his green, 1952 of the pain it caused wide graveled area, and he proceeded into behind; I stepped from first removing my as I realized that the caught between the around eight or nine strength and volume of Mrs. Mattie, all three,

my finger was released, they took me into the store and used various ointments, medicines, and bandages, without charge of course, and put me back together again. Well, this Humpty Dumpty was treated like a real princess. I was given a bottle of soda pop and my choice of candy. My finger healed nicely too. The years passed, and during the summers of my teen years, my older sister and I were responsible for some of the canning from our garden’s harvest

Because my mother worked at a public job, she expected us to help with the chores. The local cannery

was located close to Catron’s Store, and when my sister and I were working at the cannery, we always walked up to the store eat our lunch. Mrs. Mattie had a modified lunch counter in the rear of the store. You could cut your own meat or cheese and make your own sandwich. I remember how bologna or spiced ham and cheese tasted so good back then, but today it’s probably one of the last choices for lunch. Anyway, my sister Linda and I would lean back in O.B.’s old wooden chairs and chat with some of the locals. If Mrs. Mattie was not busy, she would come over and ask us what we were canning and if there were many people down at the cannery.

The Catron’s “carried many of their customers on credit”, a practice that’s not so common today. I recall my mother stopping there almost every afternoon after work and purchasing a few items needed for preparing supper, or packing lunches that week. She also stopped on the days she got paid and gave O.B. and Mrs. Mattie a payment on her account. They NEVER pushed her, and as a result, she maintained a sense of pride and dignity as she continued to work and help support her family. Modern society has since created an entirely different picture. Thirty or forty years from now, what kind of memories will today’s children have? Will they remember individuals who went above and beyond the call of duty to help their neighbors, or will they simply remember the establishment and its location. I feel fortunate to be able to look back and remember a storekeeper and his wife who not only made a contribution to their community through their establishment, but who CARED about its people and their needs.



to



# Help Support the Society

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## GRAYSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

The Grayson County Historical Society, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, chartered for the purpose of collecting, preserving and sharing the rich history of Grayson County, Virginia. The Society membership meets on the second Tuesday of March, June, September and November at 7:00 p.m. at a location to be announced. Members are also invited to the Society's annual picnic and Christmas dinner; date, time and location TBA.

Dues are assessed annually in January and are not pro-rated.

Individual Annual Membership (outside USA add \$5) . . . . . \$15.00

Family Annual Membership (outside USA add \$5) . . . . . \$20.00

Lifetime Individual Membership . . . . . \$200.00

Please complete and detach the form below, and mail with your check payable to "GCHS" to P.O. Box 529, Independence VA 24348.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I am currently searching for information regarding these surnames in Grayson County:

\_\_\_\_\_



## **Membership Events**

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### **Potluck Picnic**

Saturday August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012

5-7 PM at the Matthews Living History Farm Museum

Come reunite with fellow GCHS members, old and new alike. Bring a dish or dessert and your stories and pictures to share! GCHS will provide meat and all utensils.

### **Fall Exhibit and Presentation**

September 2012

Theme To Be Announced

Check our website [www.graysonvahistsoc.com](http://www.graysonvahistsoc.com) for updates



for

### **Guidelines Glimpses of Grayson**

The Publicity Committee of Glimpses of Grayson has established the following guidelines for material submitted for publication:

- The committee reserves the right to accept or reject materials sent for publication and to edit all materials if necessary.
- Any material copied from a printed publication must be identified and accompanied by written permission of the author or copyright owner before it can be published.
- Materials will be placed in the society's archives unless otherwise specified.
- There is no charge for publishing queries for GCHS members.
- Be concise and be specific. Do not abbreviate. Be sure to include sender's name and address.
- All queries should be mailed to the society's post office box.
- The committee cannot assume responsibility for accuracy of data submitted.

## Spring Reception

*The following is a recollection of the Roosevelt Dress Reception as experienced by Mrs. Wanda Lineberry*

May 12, 2012

Reception for the Eleanor Roosevelt Dress/Cabinet Display

Presented by the Grayson County Historical Society

1908 Historic Courthouse –Independence

4- 6:00 pm

As guests arrived, the Mt. Rogers Ramblers band was performing old time music. Guests wore casual to dressy attire. There was an air of excitement as everyone was greeted by myself, and Roger and Bonnie Marshall. Attendees were then directed to "the dress cabinet" which displayed the Eleanor Roosevelt dress that had been donated to the Grayson County Historical Society in the mid eighties by Mrs. Earl (Virginia) Nuckolls.

The guests were members and other guests socialized and enjoyed the served by society members: Waller, Barb Spears and her Auditorium had been from Shirley Gordon's

Around 5:00pm, introduced special guests and President Amelia Waller. former office manager, Ann she had done for the Society with a gift.

David introduced the He then told the story about build the cabinet from his that it was built to museum

Mr. Bill Nuckolls, mother and how she obtained

David recognized our Society that kept the dress on permanent

David introduced (100 years in June). David professor of Women's

about Eleanor Roosevelt's (wife of President Franklin Roosevelt) visit to White Top Mountain Music Festival in the 1930's. Mrs. Roosevelt's visit to Whitetop was a personal experience, owing to the fact that her father, Elliot, had lived in Abingdon for several years and had visited Whitetop and the surrounding communities any number of times. From her remarks, you could tell that Dr. Foreman had done extensive research of the subject. Her story telling fashion was so intriguing that everyone was spellbound. It was a wonderful presentation.

Other Society members who participated in various ways were: Jim Waller, Mike Spears, Dewey Lineberry and Laura Bryant. Thanks are given to anyone else who participated.



informally introduced to Society that had already arrived. Everyone buffet that had been prepared and Vicki Hauslohner, Amelia Bland friend. The foyer and Baldwin beautifully decorated with flowers garden.

David Hauslohner, GCHS Treasurer our program speaker. David introduced Mrs. Waller then introduced our Winans and thanked her for the work for the past 2 years and presented her

builder of the cabinet, Roger Marshall. how Roger had obtained the wood to mother's front yard in the eighties, and standards.

son of Mrs. Earl Nuckolls, spoke of his the Roosevelt dress in the 1930's. Dove Carrico, who was "the voice" in reminding us that we needed to have display.

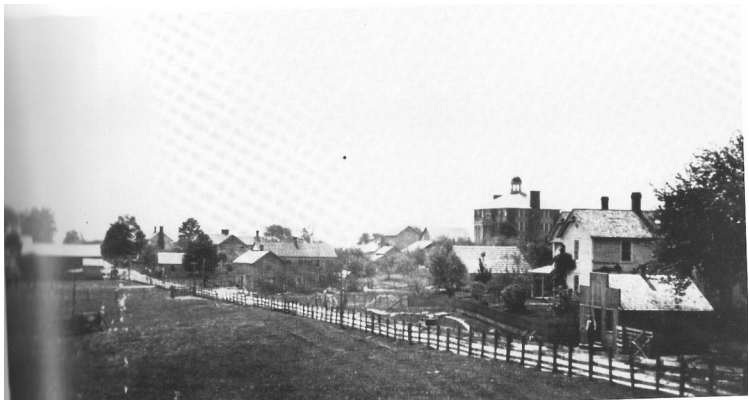
Dona Cox who is our oldest member then introduced Dr. Kate Foreman, History from Radford who spoke to us



Harvesters using "grain cradles" on Leff Wright farm in Comers Rock. Two boys in front, Wade Harrington and Everett Hale. Behind boys, L to R: Sam, Worley, and Tate Hale, Dow Comer, Jim and Eulas Harrington (behind Jim), Lucious Hale, Walter Hall, Arch Hale, John Hall, Freel Hale, and Leff Wright.

Photographer, Glenn Bland

*This photo of Hale and Hall family members was taken from Grayson County: A History in Words and Pictures, published by the Grayson County Historical Society.*



*View of Elk Creek in 1909*

**Grayson County Historical Society**  
P.O. Box 529  
Independence, Virginia 24348

**Today's news is tomorrow's history.  
Help us preserve it.**

