

Orange Oracle

An electronic bulletin from the Orange County Historical Society

Time to renew your OCHS membership!

By Ray Ezell

As with any other organization, it takes the generous support of our members to maintain the Society's Research Center, pay the part-time staff, produce our bi-annual newsletters, offer monthly programs on local history, as well as meet the myriad of other costs associated with an organization of this type. We encourage members to renew their 2024 membership at the same level as last year or increase their membership to a higher level.

If you have not received your membership renewal letter or would like to become a member for the first time, please call the Orange County Historical Society office at (540) 672-5366. You can pay by credit card over the phone or by mail to OCHS, 130 Caroline Street, Orange, VA 22960. Or, you can stop by our office during business hours (Monday through Friday, 1 to 5 p.m.).

If you have already paid your 2024 dues, we appreciate your support and generosity. We'd also like to encourage 50 members to give Society memberships as gifts this Christmas to friends and family and others as a way to introduce people to the rich heritage of Orange County. Help us meet this threshold.

Additional tax-deductible general contributions to support the Society's mission are much appreciated as well. The Orange County Historical Society is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization where membership fees and general contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.



PHOTO BY LYNNE LEWIS

Historical Society accomplishments for 2023

Below are 15 reasons to renew/upgrade/give OCHS membership:

- Completed extensive renovations and dedicated the **Sandra and William H. Speiden Auditorium** at our Research Center.
- New **audio/visual technology** to record and broadcast live programs to reach our community in the comfort of their own homes.
- Held **off-site programs** at Bloomsbury, Woodley, Mayhurst, Montpelier, and Grymes Memorial School.
- Published the monthly electronic bulletin the *Orange Oracle* with expanded content and an enlivened format (<https://www.orangecovahist.org/orange-oracle.html>).
- Produced 12 new episodes of *History-to-Go* on the Society's YouTube channel for on-demand viewing. (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQvPfUSloS7GZW4P-ce_17XQ/about).
- Published our bi-annual Society newsletter, the *Record* to engage

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members and the community with in-depth, informative, historical content.

- Increased **collaboration with county teachers** by conducting a history bus tour, adding online historical resources for their use, and facilitating a workshop at the research center.
- Installed a **corrected Marquis de Lafayette interpretive marker** on the Society's front lawn, drawing attention to this significant episode in county history.
- **Published** Garland Tyree's book, *Old Blue Run Baptist Church, the First One Hundred Years*. Order yours here: (<https://www.orangecovahist.org/books-dvds.html>)
- Designated a **FamilySearch affiliate library** with expanded online records access to help those conducting genealogical research.
- Collaborated with the Orange County Geographic Information Services (GIS) office to provide **historic map overlays** of the towns of Gordonsville and Orange on current aerial photography to aid research.
- Partnered with the Orange County Court Clerk's office to provide our staff with **electronic access to county land deeds and wills** to facilitate local and genealogical research.
- Collaborated with the Orange County African American Historical Society to **clean up the Little Petersburg Cemetery**.
- Hosted a community-wide **document scanning day**.
- Provided our hourly **staff** with a much-needed **salary increase**.
- **Increased** our dues paying **membership** to 265 members which, when combined with our non-dues educator and honorary memberships, brought our membership total to 349.

Holiday shopping help

Having trouble finding the perfect gift this holiday season? You need go no further than the Orange County Historical Society bookstore.

Although Frank Walker's most recent book, *Reflections*, is sold out, his highly readable *Remembering: A History of Orange County, Virginia* is a "must have" for any local library. It is the perfect gift for friends and family who are new to Orange County.

Want to learn more about the origins of Freedom of Religion in our area? Garland Tyree's *Old Blue Run Baptist Church, The First Hundred Years* is a good start.

How about a fascinating glimpse into daily life in Orange Courthouse during the Civil War? *The Fanny Hume Diary of 1862* is free to all dues-paying Society members.

Many more publications, too numerous to mention, are available. Just visit the Society's bookstore in person or on line at (<https://www.orangecovahist.org/books-dvds.html>)

A word about DVDs

You may have noticed that DVDs are going the way of the Dodo bird. That's because all of our historical documentaries are available for free on the Society's History-to-Go YouTube channel: (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQvPfUSloS7GZW4Pce_17XQ/about) But some people still want to own a hard copy disc. If you are one of those people, act now. Supplies of our documentaries on DVD are dwindling and they will not be replaced.



Membership

Interested in Orange County history? Become a member of the historical society. Visit www.orangecovahist.org.

Little Petersburg Cemetery fall cleanup

By Patrick Colby

Since the fall of 2021, a group of friends and neighbors has held bi-yearly clean-ups to stabilize the condition of the Fisherman's Lodge Cemetery located in the Little Petersburg freedman's village just off Route 15 near Madison Mills. In addition to 13 formal markers, there are 60-80 burials marked by field stones or depressions in the ground.

Progress has been steady: access is much improved, the cemetery lot is now clear of "junk," fallen limbs have been removed, numerous "weed" trees cut, and bushes and brush have been cleared. Unfortunately, the Fisherman's Lodge building itself is untouched and may be unsalvageable.

Highlights of this fall's effort

- Mike and May Saxton have entered cemetery information including: data, photos, and GPS



PHOTO BY MARCIA COLBY

Detrick Monroe (squatting), Bruce Monroe (center) and Mike Saxton (right) inspect one of the 13 formal gravesites at the Little Petersburg cemetery.

locations to register the cemetery in the Find a Grave website. The cemetery will soon be accessible using this link: <https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2790555/fisherman's-lodge>

- Greg Monroe once again gen-

erously contracted to have tree removal work completed prior to the workday.

- More detailed clearing around the graves was performed, much improving the area containing the formal markers.
- The area directly in front of the lodge was also given additional attention making access to the site easier.

Looking ahead

- Assuming some snow cover or a timely rainy spell, the accumulated brush piles will be burned this winter.
- Scout Troop 14 will be contacted to see if any Eagle Scout candidates would be interested in tackling the project of improving access to the cemetery.
- Craig Jacobs has agreed to take a look at the Fisherman's Lodge building to see if it can be stabilized or even restored.



PHOTO BY MARCIA COLBY

Pictured above are the Little Petersburg Cemetery clean up volunteers, from left to right: Patrick Colby, May Saxton, Mike Saxton, Matt Reeves, Greg Monroe, Bruce Monroe and Detrick Monroe.

Upcoming programs

> No December Program

> Jan. 28, 2024, 3 p.m.
Annual meeting

Kelly Arford-Horne, Archaeological Site Director at Historic Germanna, will present a program on recent archaeological discoveries at the ca. 1720 Enchanted Castle and ca. 1724 Town of Germanna sites in Orange County. This past season, archaeologists completed excavations of a cellar associated with one of the Enchanted Castle's dependencies and uncovered an impressive array of food-related artifacts, including thousands of animal bones and burned plant materials, along with several intriguing personal objects. Artifacts like these, and others, bring us closer to understanding the experiences of individuals living in Orange County at the time of its formation.

Meet at the Speiden Auditorium, 130 Caroline St., Orange.

> No February Program

Got a news item for the Oracle?

Send your stuff to: Phlodbear@aol.com. The deadline for the next issue is Jan. 14.

Call for volunteers



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY MIKE SAXTON

Our heartfelt thanks to all of our volunteers, including OCHS Board members, who have given many hours of their time to lend a hand in many capacities during the past year. Be on the lookout for more volunteer opportunities in the New Year!

Searching for an ancestor...

Lansley Marshall

**By Brett M. Tyler and
Donna Tyler Hollie**

Lansley (Lansing/Lansy/Lanzie) Marshall (born ca. 1820) was our second-great-grandfather. He was a native Virginian and appears to have lived most of his life in Orange County. He and his wife, Elizabeth Holladay, were the parents of at least three daughters. Here are the primary facts we've been able to uncover:

Orange County Chancery Records indicate that prior to his marriage to Elizabeth Holladay, Lansley was married to an enslaved woman named Ann Wood. Her enslaver, Capt. William Wood, of Louisa County, had children who were relocating to Kentucky. They took Ann and an unnamed daughter

with them and, as far as we've been able to determine, Lansley never saw or heard from them again.

On Jan. 31, 1866, according to records of the Freedmen's Bureau, Lansley signed a contract to work for Louisa County resident, Mrs. J.B. Strange, for three months at the rate of \$9 per month.

After many years of researching, we are still looking for the names of his parents and possible siblings, the date of his death and whether or not he is related to the numerous Orange County residents with the Marshall surname. Any assistance, suggestions or directions Historical Society members can provide will be much appreciated. Donna Hollie can be contacted at dth1800@aol.com.

Mayhurst and *The Call of the Wild*



By Jason Cashell

In 1866, a family that would unknowingly impact one of America's most legendary literary authors moved into Orange County, Virginia. Judge Hiram Bond was appointed to the bench at Orange Courthouse. Bond moved his family to Orange and found

what they considered to be the perfect home, Mayhurst. While Judge Bond served in Orange, his son, Marshall Bond, was born.

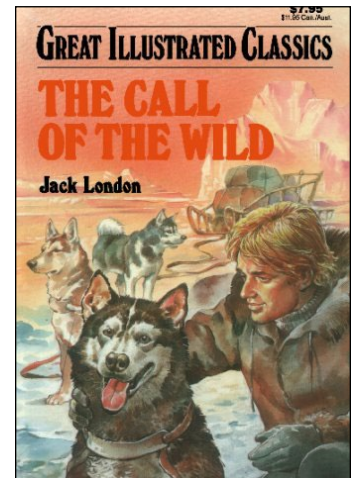
Fast forward to 1895, when the Bonds set out on a westward journey to Santa Clara, California. Little did they know that their narrative would intertwine with the legendary

Klondike Gold Rush of 1897. In a curious turn of fate, Judge Bond's sons, Louis and Marshall, went to the Yukon and established a camp (pictured at left) that would soon host a young and aspiring writer, Jack London.

There in their Yukon home, a significant friendship formed between the Bonds and London. The connection found its muse in the form of the Bonds' Saint Bernard/Collie mix, a steadfast companion to the budding author. In a heartfelt letter dated Dec. 17, 1903, London unveiled the secret behind his literary masterpiece, *The Call of the Wild*. The famous

"Buck" was inspired by the Bonds' loyal canine, while the character Judge Miller was a direct nod to Judge Hiram Bond, Marshall's esteemed father.

Thus, the pages of history reveal a fascinating and unexpected connection between Mayhurst and Jack London's timeless tale.



History-to-Go

The Berry Hill Restoration Program



A detailed look at the ongoing restoration/stabilization effort and architectural analysis of this historic Orange County structure. The program was delivered by Casey Squyres (architectural historian) and Sam Biggers (Dominion Traditional Building Group). To view, click here: https://youtu.be/_pYqWi7V9X-w?si=oPn0YWHid2P_o35i

What is your Legacy...?

Did you know that you can designate the Orange County Historical Society in your will? Yes, your investment in the future of the Society will provide a long-lasting impact, ensuring that our mission is upheld. And it will help educate future generations of Orange County residents. Consult your attorney about including the Society in your estate planning. This can be completed quickly and easily. Charity begins at home but its impact serves our entire community