



Gateway to the West



Lee County Historical and Genealogical Society P. O Box 231 Jonesville, Virginia 24263

January 2021



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Lee County HGS
P O Box 231
Jonesville, Va.
24263



President's Report

By Becky Jones

There is not a lot to report from the Lee County Historical and Genealogical Society in this newsletter. This pandemic has hit us and our community extremely hard. We have not been able to have a meeting since January 2020. The majority of our members are elderly and it hasn't been safe.

The Executive Board met three times to take care of the following business:

- *Cumberland Gap CD Song project
- *Civil War Relics
- *Grant Money received

The Cumberland Gap C.D. Song project with Jason Davis is moving right along. This is a collaboration of local artists and their music.

This summer several board members met at the Baker Farm in Jonesville with David Baker and Steven Starnes to decide what to do with the Civil War relics found by Mr. Starnes on the Baker Farm and other places in Jonesville.

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Richmond General Store *by Ken Roddenberry*

Recently I have been thumbing through an old general ledger of a store located in Turkey Cove, the eastern portion of Lee County near the Wise County line. I did not know much about the ledger except that it was obviously old and displayed at the Lee County Historical and Genealogical Society, Jonesville, Va. Little did I know that there was a treasure trove of information recorded on its 500+ pages of people who lived in one of the most beautiful and fertile sections of Lee County during the mid-1800s. Surnames like the Olingers, Slempts, Reasors, Richmonds, Skaggs, Colliers, Coldirons, Baileys, Kelleys, Riddles, Flanarys, and the list goes on and on are found within. Some names only appear a few times leaving me wondering what happened to them. At first glance I thought this would be so boring and I was right, it would be boring to read line for line, page for page. But what if I followed one person or family, the days they came to the store, what they "traded", the others who were there that day, what was the news that filled the air, or did someone receive a letter from a relative who had moved westward.

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LCHGS Member Judy Davidson Passes

by Katherine Cress



Judy Davidson (left) and LCHGS President Becky Jones (right)

Judith Anne Graham Davidson born July 16, 1941 in Maryville, TN passed away January 8, 2021 in Kingsport, TN.

Judy grew up in Jonesville and always loved Lee County. She attended the Jonesville Elementary School during her grade school years and graduated from Jonesville High School in 1959. Afterward she attended Georgetown Bible College in Kentucky.

She married Frank Davidson and they had a long and happy marriage until he passed away. They had two daughters Dorothy Denise (Dee Dee) who also passed away and Debby.

Judy worked as a school aide during the years Dee Dee taught at Flatwoods Elementary School and greatly enjoyed it. She seemed to remember every child that was in school during this time. Her other daughter Debby is also a teacher.

She then worked for some time as a secretary at the First United Methodist Church in Jonesville, where she was a member from childhood until her death. Judy was devoted to the FUMC and very active in church concerns, especially Sunday school classes and projects of young members. She was a member of the Day Circle of the United Methodist Women from young adulthood until her death.

Judy was a charter member of the Jonesville Woman's Club and served in many offices including president of the club during the 1995-2013 years. She was very active in club concerns such as Festival in the Park, the club scholarship for a deserving senior.

She was a member of the Historical Society and worked on the cemetery books and the Lee County Pictorial History. She was very proud of the conservation of the old Friendship Church which now houses the historical societies collections of genealogies histories and artifacts of Lee County. She was especially knowledgeable about Lee County family genealogies and loved answering question and aiding those working on a family tree.

She served as head of the Over 50 High School reunion and was active in the annual Graham family reunion. She also enjoyed her membership in the Red Hat Society.

Judy was active in so many areas but always kept up with family and friends. She seemed to never meet a stranger and if they were a stranger they soon were not. She leaves a legacy of good work, kindness and many contributions to Lee County and its organizations. Judy will be greatly missed.

The History of the Jonesville League *by Judy Davidson*

I found this article in some old papers that I was going through and thought it was an interesting read for our Historical Society newsletter.

"The Jonesville Community League was organized on April 1, 1923, at which time Mr. J.C. Boatwright was superintendent of schools. Mr. J.E. Carter was Principal of Jonesville High School. The first meeting was held in the old High School Building. This same building is now being used for the Grammar Grades, and was then known as the Jonesville Institute. This organization took its name from the fact that it had the civic interest of the entire community, as well as the school as its goal.

The League had the support and backing not only of the women in the town, but the influential men. We find the names of Judge Duncan, Judge Cridlin, Mr. J.E. Carter, Mr. J.C. Boatwright, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Pennington, Mr. Charley Sprinkle, Mr. and Mrs. W.E. Wynn, Miss Zelma Albert, Mr. Edgar Couk, Mr. Charles Brown, and a score of other patrons among the charter members.

The Community League has continued its activities throughout the years from 1912 to the present time, but has gradually given its particular attention to the needs of the school, becoming in later years the counterpart of the Parent Teacher Association. Up until the last few years the League has been affiliated with the State and National Cooperative Education Association with Dr. Abner Robertson as Executive Secretary-Director.

In addition to the personal interest the members have put into the school activities they have made possible a great many improvements in the material way to the school. Playground equipment has been purchased and installed; books, magazines and newspapers contributed for individual rooms as the need arose and in 1942, they sponsored and began the School Lunch Room, which has been their main project, and it's today, and accomplished fact.

The Lunch Room Project was begun in the

basement of the new Home Economics building, using borrowed equipment, second-hand furniture, donations from the patrons and fifty dollars borrowed from Community League Treasury, to try to operate for the first month. From the beginning the project has proved to be a great success; in 1948 it had far outgrown the quarters assigned to it, so the Lee County Board of Supervisors approved a fund of \$5000 for the construction of a modern Lunch Room and Library Building.

This building, modern in every detail, is now operating daily with the most up to date equipment, purchased with community League funds, an accumulation of the profits from the Lunch Room over the years. In addition to equipping this building, this fund has also contributed \$500 toward the purchase of the beautiful Baby Grand Piano which is now in use in the Music Department. A few months ago, the League also contributed \$500 to the High School Band, to be used in purchasing new instruments.

Jonesville Community League has been host to the Natural Tunnel District Cooperative Education Association meetings on several occasions, bringing to our community and school some of Virginia's finest educators as speakers and advisors. on these programs."

I was unable to get information as to when the years of the Home Economics Building was built. It is still used to date as the Head Start offices.

The other buildings remain the same with the exception of the gym which was torn down a few years ago.

Does anyone remember the Baby Grand piano? I recall it being on stage in the High School building. Mae Gibson was the music teacher and she held at least two piano recitals each year. One for high school students and one for elementary students.

If you have any details or would like to share what you remember, please send them to us.



Civil War artifacts found on David Baker farm and other Lee County locations donated to the LCHGS by Steven Starnes.

President's Report *continued from page 1*

Mr. Starnes gave the Historical Society several pieces that he found and has offered to help set up an exhibit with maps of discovery. We are looking forward to getting this display on exhibit for our community. Last spring, Brenda Goins donated a showcase to our building. Ken Roddenberry took the time to restore it for us. This showcase will make the perfect display for the Civil War relics.

The other time the board met was to decide how to use the grant money we got from the community foundation fund. This money can only be used for improvements on our building. There are several things we need to do to keep our building in good shape: the outside needs to be power washed, painting the inside, our water from the spring is dirty and we need to update our computers. With the pandemic we have not been able to get these things done.

Few books have been sold and very few people have paid any dues. We have had to dip into our perpetual fund to pay our monthly expenses and stay afloat.

We have had a few donations which we greatly appreciate. This fall we had several people visit our building to do research. If you would like to use our research library, we ask you to please make an appointment. That way we can insure we can have someone there to help you. Our building is run by volunteers and not open at set times.

The Society lost one of our local members due to the virus, Judy Davidson. Judy and I joined the Society about the same time in 1990. She knew the area and all its people. She could tell me where the area was and who the people were, parents, grandparents and children. Be sure to see the article written by Katherine Cress.

God Bless each of you!! Hope we all get back to normal real soon.

Richmond General Store *continued from page 1* by John Smith

Would these stories reveal themselves?

Let's take a look at one day, say Tuesday, October 3rd 1854, and see who came into the store for it was a busy day:

- *David W. Cox's wife, Temperance, purchased a pair of fine Ladies shoes, 3 yds of Black Silk Fringe, and a large tablecloth.*
- *James H. Daugherty purchased 1 vial of Cordial, nutmeg, ½ yd. Red Gingham, and a pair of shoes for son Brittan.*
- *John Flanary purchased a vial of Laudanum perhaps to ease the pain of sore muscles.*
- *Elijah Flanary, John's son, purchased 1 lb. coffee for his brother Harvy.*
- *Isaac Flanary purchased a pair of scissors and a set of knitting pins.*
- *T.H. Mason purchased a Primer and a "bunch of envelopes". [Tilgman was the new school teacher and would purchase several high school level textbooks through the store]*
- *John Reasor sent his daughter Rebecca with a cow hide and was paid 10 cents for it.*
- *The Richmond & Fleenor tannery purchased two 'steelyards' for weighing bulk items.*
- *Marion D. Richmond [son of store owner Jonathan Richmond] purchased 1 ½ yds. blue cloth, 3 ½ yds. Nankeen, thread, and a vial of Balsam Fir and peppermint.*
- *Joseph A. Jones' wife, Valera, purchased 9 yds. of Domestic fabric and a set of paper pins for herself; she received a 93-cent credit toward her account from Jonathan Richmond's wife; Valera also purchased 3 yds. of plain Red Oil Calico, 2 yds. plain Green Calico, 1 ¾ yds. of Gingham, and 1 set of paper pins and charged these to her father, William Wilson, the local physician. [Perhaps Valera was earning extra money as a seamstress]*
- *Orren Oakley left the store with 1 lb. coffee, 4 yds. of Domestic cloth, 2 yds of Blue Calico, 2 yds. of Calico, a ¼ lb. Spice, a lb. Ginger, and 2 lbs. sugar [for his wife and five children].*

As I turned each page there were trends that revealed the day to day lives of the people of Turkey Cove. These would have been the stories that were shared at meal time in front of the fireplace with a cup of coffee or on the porch of the store. They provide us with a multi-generational glimpse of what life was like so many years ago.

For 164 years old the store ledger is in good condition, however, the front cover is missing. All pages are hand-numbered and accounts are written in ink and rarely with pencil. Page 1 begins on Oct 2nd 1854 and the last entry on page 586 is dated Mar 20th 1857. "Turkey Cove" is boldly written across each page header. There is a sequential 'day' book reference number and probably gives details too lengthy for the 'general' ledger. No store name or ownership was recorded and probably rests with the missing front hard cover. But two names appear with authority, Jonathan Richmond, Sr. and William Richmond, Sr.

The store belonged to the Richmond family in Turkey Cove. We know from Anne Wynn Laningham's book *Early Settlers of Lee County, Virginia and Adjacent Counties, Vol. 1*, that brothers Jonathan and William were born in Russell Co., sons of Isaac Richmond and Esther Osborne, settled in Turkey Cove in 1835 and acquired fertile valley lands near present day Deep Springs along the north side of Wallens Ridge to the foothills of Stockers Knob. They were farmers and merchants. Between them they owned 32 slaves in 1850 who supplied the much needed farm labor. It is uncertain when the store opened for business but it was probably in the 1840s. Jonathan built a large house and store from bricks 'burned' on his land. Their sons and daughters schooled locally at Seminary and the Franklin Academy, and learned the business hands-on. Jonathan's sons: Marion D. Richmond was a merchant in Jonesville; H.C.T. Richmond was a merchant in Rose Hill; Jonathan, Jr. schooled at Emory & Henry College, then studied law and was an attorney in Lee County; and James B. Richmond was a merchant in Jonesville and later studied law and was appointed Judge in Scott Co. William's sons: Jonathan was a

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Richmond General Store *continued from page 5 by John Smith*

merchant in Scott Co. and Ben Franklin was a merchant in Wise Co. The store served Turkey Cove with general merchandise, as an apothecary, a post office, and a "loaner" of cash. Purchases were charged to personal accounts or on behalf of another such as "*James M. Clarkston p[er] bro. Thomas*" and "*Joseph Gilley p[er] Katherine Elkins*". Slaves were never referred to as "slaves" but as "servants" and were named as making purchases or crediting their masters account with feathers or hides. Names like *Servt. Henry [John Skaggs]*, *Servt. Suse [Manatia Ann Haburn]*, and *Servt. Hubbard [John Slemp]* are recorded along with at least 25 more servant names. By the way, *Servt. Hubbard* had his own account with the store.

Cash was often paid on accounts but 'trading' was a means to an end. Animal skins such as beef, sheep, pig, racoon, and opossum were frequently 'traded' at the store. Feathers were probably the most regularly traded commodity and brought 35c per lb. The store sold bags of feathers to Henry's, Smith & Townsend of N.Y. who regularly purchased +1,000 lbs a year. Ginseng brought 33c per lb. and was shipped to Landstreet of Baltimore generally on the same day the feathers left Turkey Cove. Beeswax brought 20c a lb. and tree sugar 8c. Handmade gloves and knitted socks paid 25c a pair. And if you were industrious then weaving "Jane or Jean" a twilled cotton/wool fabric was a resale item at the store. We know from the store ledger that three barrels of salt, a total of 1,134 lbs., were purchased at the Goose Creek Salt mine in Clay Co., Ky. in Nov. 1854. John Riddle was paid for the haulage. In Dec. 1854 John hauled 1,754 lbs of produce for the store. He also hauled "goods and produce" in Feb. 1855 like soda, allum, indigo, powder, and tobacco. He supplied a 'team' to haul 2,000 lbs. of bacon to Wytheville in April 1855 for Sebastian S. Slemp. And John spent 4 ½ days hauling sand for Jonathan Richmond. There were brick masons, John Kelly and Abraham Schoolcraft, who traded with the store and perhaps they were the masons who built many of the brick homes, schools, or churches in Turkey Cove.

In Feb. 1855 Jonathan Richmond hired

Uriah G. Hiatt, a cabinet maker and wheelwright, to haul 350 lbs. of cotton, "50 bunches" of cotton yarn, and 256 ½ yds. of domestic fabric from the King's salt works near Abingdon. John C. Greenway owned a mercantile near the 'works' and was a vendor for Richard Gwyn's Elkin Manufacturing Company who supplied cotton textiles to western North Carolina and southwestern Virginia. Other stock purchases were 100 lbs of lead, 65 lbs of coffee, 50 lbs madder [red dye], and a gross of Ivory Combs. William Richmond purchased 150 bunches of cotton yarn from a textile factory in Mossy Creek, Tenn. and 2 boxes of 8x10 window pane glass from Knoxville. Several window panes were resold to the Trustees of the Franklin Academy along with nails, putty, sand paper, plank boards and 41 yds of curtain Calico fabric.

The store served as the post office for Turkey Cove and carried mail to Jonesville and back twice a week and were paid \$200 a year. Gladeville [Wise Co.] was added to their contract. Daniel Olinger and Elisha Cox were the mail carriers employed by the Post Office Depart. at the Richmond store. Daniel Olinger was paid \$3.48 for the 4Q 1854 and Elisha Cox was paid \$2.60 to carry the mail for the 2Q 1855.

The store ledger was given to the Lee County Historical & Genealogical Society by Mary Ruth Thomas Cooper. She was a lifelong resident of Appalachia, Va. and a member of the LCHG Society. She passed on Oct. 6, 2009 at her home. It is not clear how she became the recipient of the store ledger. However, one clue may lie with a photograph found inserted between the pages. [see below] On the reverse was written *My Grann & Cousin Rosa Pridem[ore]*. I searched and found that Rosalie Pridemore and Mary Ruth Thomas Cooper were first cousins [twice removed]. Rosa's father was Hiram Pridemore who married Susan Slemp of Turkey Cove and Mary Ruth's g-gf was Auburn L. Pridemore [bro. of Hiram]. "*My Grann*" may have been Mary Caladonia Justice Pridemore (1869-1931). Perhaps there are other connections.

If anyone has additional information please contact the Society.

See photo on page 8.

Toys *by Libby Laforce*

There was a time when simple toys brought great pleasure to children. Many of these toys are still around after hundreds and even thousands of years later. Come and walk with me and remember the toys of our childhood. I am sure it will bring back some happy memories.

Little girls always had dolls to play with, either store bought or hand made. They could be made from clay, corn husk or paper give a girl a doll and she can play for hours. Long after they have grown up they will always remember their dolls. I remember playing with "The Lennen Sisters" paper dolls I also remember cutting out Betsy McCall paper dolls out of the magazine. Later, I cut pictures out of magazines and catalogs and pasted them to the inside of a shoe box to make a doll house. Later, my father built me one. We also played with Jump ropes and Jack Rocks.

Little boys played with cars and trucks. They made dirt roads, hills, valleys. Houses of sticks and stones. They imagined they were racecar drivers. Your imagination had no limit.

Both girls and boys played with hoola-hoops, roller skates, bubbles, coloring books, cap pistols, we played Hide and Seek, Red Rover, Kick the Can, King of the Mountain, Kick Ball, Yoyo's and Baseball.

We played homemade board games like Fox and Goose using beans as game pieces. We made a button spinner, with just a large button and piece of string.

We got our first TV in the 1950's. We had three channels and no remote. We had to get up and turn the dial to change the channel. Everything was in Black and White. Mostly, we still played outside. It didn't matter how bad the weather got. We were out door kids. Dad made us stilts and they were the hit of the neighborhood. Dad ended up making stilts for many of the other kids. We made our own fun.

Toys today have become so expensive. I wonder what will still be popular years from now. What toy do we have today that will withstand the test of time? Below I have listed the age of some toys. I was surprised to find the history and age of these toys. These have withstood the test of time.

Jump Ropes: 160 AD in Egypt

Skates: 1743 London

Hoola Hoop: 1958

Yoyo: Medieval times, 500 BC became popular 1920's

Marbles: 4000 BC Also found them in the ashes of Pompei

Dolls: Ancient Egyptian Dolls have been found in tombs as early 21st century BC.

Coloring Books: Called painting books 1879

Crayons: 1902

Paper Dolls: 1810 London

Teddy Bears: 1902 Named after Teddy Roosevelt

Kaleidoscope: 1816

Cap Guns: 1860's Most popular 1940-1960

Puzzles: 1760 England

Game: Fox and Geese Middle Ages 1300 AD

Jack Rocks (Knuckle bones) Ancient (Undetermined)

Mr. Potato Head: 1952 (used real potato for body)

Plastic body appeared 1964

Rag Dolls: 1630's

Slinky: 1943

Red Ryder BB Gun: 1938

Toy Cars: 1901 England (Match Box Cars Mid 1950's)

An interesting note about marbles. Collectors have paid up to \$27,730 for a shooter marble and \$13,200 for an onion skin marble. It is hard to imagine something that cost just pennies could be worth that amount today.



Lee County
Historical and
Genealogical Association

P.O. Box 231
554 Old Friendship Rd.
Jonesville, Va. 24263-0231

*Located in the
Old Friendship Baptist Church Building*

Office Hours by Appointment

PHONE:
(276) 346-0005

E-MAIL:
leecovahistsociety@hotmail.com

President:

Becky Jones

Vice-President:

Ada Vandeventer

Secretary:

Libby Laforce

Treasurer:

Greg Edwards

Office Assistant:

Libby Laforce

Directors:

Jean Martin
H. Ronnie Montgomery
Ken Roddenberry

Researchers:

Kim Hurst
Libby Laforce
Jean Martin
Nell Newman

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www.leecountyvahistoricalandsociety.org
contact us on our website or at:
leecovahistsociety@hotmail.com



Rosalie Pridemore and Mary Ruth Thomas Cooper –
first cousins [twice removed].

Historical Society Books on Sale!

Bicentennial History of Lee County 1792-1992

Regular \$65.00 – Sale \$52.00 Book
2.75 Tax (VA Residents) 5.00 S & H \$59.75 Total Cost

Volume I Cemeteries of Lee County

Regular \$40.00 - Sale \$32.00 Book
1.70 Tax (VA Residents) 5.00 S & H \$38.70 Total Cost

Volume II Cemeteries of Lee County

Regular \$45.00 – Sale \$36.00 Book
1.90 Tax (VA Residents) 5.00 S & H \$42.90 Total Cost

Volume III Cemeteries of Lee County

Regular \$50.00 – Sale \$40.00 Book
2.10 Tax (VA Residents) 5.00 S & H \$47.10 Total Cost

A Pictorial History of Lee County

Re-print of the First Volume
Regular \$49.99 - Sale \$40.00 Book (Tax Included) 5.00 S & H 45.00 Total Cost

Our Library and resources are available for use by appointment.

Please contact:

Becky Jones (276) 346-2010 Jean Martin (276) 546-3924
Libby Laforce (276) 346-3562 Ada Vandeventer (276) 346-2464