

The Muse

Amherst County Museum & Historical Society

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(434) 946-9068

Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

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February 2011

Our newsletter is published every two months, so mark these dates on your calendar now.

Third Sunday Events at the Museum continue!

All railroad enthusiasts and county citizens will enjoy the **Frank Cash photo collection** of Monroe, Sweet Briar, and area pictures taken in the early 1900s. These glass negatives were a gift to the Museum, and they have been digitized for viewing.

The program starts at the Museum at 2:00 p.m. on **March 20**. You may be able to help us identify pictures and tell us more about them.

Program is **free and open to the public** – a Sesquicentennial Event. Our county is 250 years old.

In **April**, the Museum will be offering a special program for **members only** at **Geddes**. See details at right.

On Saturday, **May 14**, the monthly programs return to the Museum, featuring a panel of **Batteau Adventurers**, among them, Bob Wimer and Ralph Smith. We welcome them to bring stories of life on the James River. The program begins at 2 p.m. and is **free and open to the public**.

Mark your calendars now so you don't miss out on these events.

****MEMBERS ONLY special event: **
Sunday, April 17, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.**

GEDDES will be open for tour, the first opportunity to see this beautifully restored historic home in many years. It is one of the oldest structures left in Amherst County today.

This one-story wooden farmhouse is believed to have been built in several stages between 1745 and 1790 by Rev. Robert Rose, who owned 23,700 acres on the Piney and Tye Rivers. It was to this house that Thomas Jefferson fled with his family to avoid capture by the British in 1781. Robert's son, Hugh Rose, had inherited the property by that time.

Geddes has a stone foundation, wide plank flooring, two interior chimneys, beaded baseboard, chair rails, and feather-painted doors.

Four generations of Claibornes lived there following a marriage to a daughter of Charles Rose, brother of Hugh. It is now owned by the Harris family.

Directions to Geddes: Rt. 29 north of Amherst; left on Rt. 151 through Clifford; right on Geddes Mountain Road (Rt. 662), left on Jefferson Trail (Rt. 700), about a mile and a half to the entrance gate. The house is visible from the road.

New members are welcome that day! This is a great time to bring friends who can become members and see this special home.

2011 Events

Sunday, March 20—Frank Cash Photographs program at the Museum from 2-4 p.m.

Sunday, April 17—Members event at Geddes from 2-4 p.m.

Saturday, April 30—Amherst County 250th Birthday Festival at the High School

Thank You!

Patrons

Stan and Cherie Rawlings, UT

Donors

Walter Holcomb, TN

Sam Massie, Sr., VA

Friends

Virginia Campbell, FL

Forrest Gager, VA

Bob Sales, VA

Kathleen Whitehead, FL

...And especially for the Annex Fund

Shannon L. Compton, O.D. and Assoc.

Dr. R. Kelly Golden, DDS

Mr. and Mrs. Will Mays

Additional donations:

Thank You!

Susan Mays—donation of office equipment

Welcome New Members!

Pete Cunningham, VA

Walter Holcomb, TN

Shirley Hunt, VA

Lois Minton, VA

Mr. and Mrs. David Shapiro, FL

Thank you to Grady Davis!

Many thanks to Museum board member Mr. Grady Davis and church members of **Mt. Sinai Baptist Church** for an informative and interesting program of history and tour on Sunday, January 16. This was the first of our “Third Sundays” afternoon programs.

Thank you to

The William Cage Library Trust

For their grant to our research library

The William Cage Library Trust has give the Museum a grant of \$350 for library resources. This allows us to purchase many items that would not normally be possible. We have used this grant for purchase of reference books, and more recently, DVDs and microfilm. The Amherst County indexes to the Agricultural Censuses for 1870 and 1880 were made possible by the purchase of microfilm from the National Archives. These indexes are now on the Museum’s website.

Thank you to our Volunteers!

The following volunteers have assisted at the Museum (on site) working on library projects, providing back-up support for the director and more!

Ellen Craig

Midge Elliott

Jerry Elliott

Bill Hathaway

Shirley Hunt

Susan Mays

Kathryn Pixley

Tom Wallace

Mary Wilhelm

Teen Volunteer

Emily Craig



On Saturday, February 12, the Museum held its seventh Annual Vintage Valentines party. Above, Megan and Emmy show off some of the Valentines they created at the Museum, and also the frilly dress-up outfits they costumed themselves with. Cookies and punch were served and children and adults alike enjoyed the occasion. Many special thanks to volunteer Shirley Hunt for assisting with the arts and crafts!

Below, Lynn Kable delivers the Museum’s balloons and valentines for a party at Fairmont Crossing sponsored by AGAR.



Some Notes About the Early Years of Rose Chapel Baptist Church

What follows are the first four pages from an unsigned sixteen page manuscript history of the Rose Chapel Baptist Church, found in the research files at the Amherst County Museum. Printed here with thanks to the unknown author.

The Rose Chapel Baptist Church of Madison Heights was founded in 1886 by Brother James T. Rose. It was in honor of its founder that the church received its name "Rose," which is a part of its name. On the third Sunday in August, 1886, the church was organized by a delegation from the Court Street Baptist Church of Lynchburg. The delegation acted under the leadership of its pastor, the Rev. F. P. Morris who called the meeting to order at 3 p.m.

Rev. Ananias Stewart had the honor of being the first pastor of Rose Chapel Baptist and the deacon board consisted of the following: Deacon Jessie Thornhill, Deacon Dan Davis, Deacon James Payne, Deacon Charlie Ellis, Deacon Scott Booker, and Deacon William Garland. Trustee Board: Brother Jessis Thornhill, Brother William Garland, Brother Dan Davis. Clerk: Miss Alberta Gunner. Treasurer: Brother Jessie Thornhill.

Rev. Stewart served the church about eight or nine years and then he resigned.

In 1896, Rev. Edward Staples, D.D., became pastor of the Rose Chapel Baptist Church. Rev. Staples was a meek gentleman, a Christian, and always respected the feeling of others. During his pastorate, the church grew in spiritual fervor. It was under his leadership that the church had a stand built for the choir in back of the church.

The deacons who served during Rev. Staple's term of office were: Deacon Jessie Thornhill, Deacon Willie Thompson, Deacon William A. Thornhill, Deacon M.C. Williams, Deacon George Wade, Deacon Abram Eubanks, Deacon Abram Pendleton. Rev. Staples resigned in 1916. Following Rev. Staples the church elected Rev. Arthur Mack Sullivan who was a teacher at Virginia Seminary and College.

It was during Rev. Sullivan's administration that they began raising funds in order to erect the building in which we now worship. Rev. Sullivan was a hard physical laborer as a Christian worker and church organizer. He was successful in organizing the "Ladies Aide," and Willing Workers Club, who were very faithful in raising money for the erection of the new building of an edifice. Rev. Sullivan left the church after a few years, but he has the distinction of

having left the church with a reasonable bank account.

Rev. A. L. Jones, D.D., was the next pastor of Rose Chapel Baptist Church. He became pastor while the present church was being erected. At that time the church services were held in the Madison Heights Public School. He continued to add to the bank account and did so well that his name was placed on the cornerstone. Rev. Jones also pastored another church at the same time and the Sunday he was absent Rev. C.N. Hawk served Rose Chapel. Rev. Jones resigned.

Since Rev. C.N. Hawk, a ministerial student at Virginia Theological and College, was assisting Rev. Jones, the church made selection of Rev. Hawk for her fifth pastor. Rose Chapel called a council composed of ScottZion, Rivermont Baptist and others for the purpose of ordaining Rev. Hawk, A.B.B. He was the first pastor in the building in 1922. Rev. Edward Staples, former pastor, preached Rev. Hawks' installation sermon. Rev. Hawk was an educator, church organizer, and worker and a Christian gentleman.

One of the most impressive services held during Rev. Hawk's administration was a memorial service in honor of Rev. Edward Staples. Rev. Staples' widow was present and unveiled the picture. A slab which commemorates Rev. Staples as pastor and W.M. Thornhill as superintendent of the Sunday School was placed on the wall.

Some of the officers who served during Rev. Hawk's administration were as follows: Deacons James Thornhill, Deacon John Thornhill, Deacon Edward Chambers, Deacon Alfred Wood, Deacon Junius White, Deacon C.H. Cabell, Deacon Charles Carter, Deacon W.M. Cabell. Treasurer: Mr. C.H. Winfree. Clerks: Mr. F. A. Sales, Mrs. Mildred Thompson Jordan, Mrs. Hannah Williams Colmore.

After serving the church about eight years, Rev. Hawks resigned. The next pastor to be called was Rev. W. S. Fields of Lynchburg. When Rev. Fields became pastor, the church was in debt to the Building and Loan Association. He and the members, Brother C. H. Winfree, the most interested, saw the need and worked toward the remodeling of the church building. An amount of \$316 was spent on the roof. The walls were replastered and white shingles were put on the outside of the church.

The church had her mortgage burning which was attended by Rev. Harry H. Cabell, Rev. Ferdinand Shelton and other ministers. Rev. Cabell struck a match to the papers and Rev. Shelton preached the sermon.

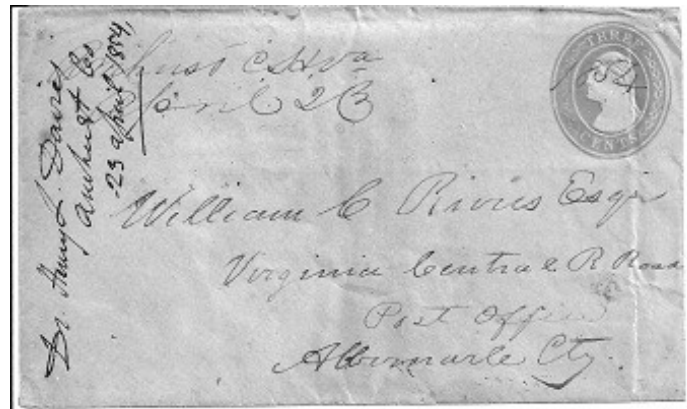
Post History or, From the Amherst County Mail Bags

Historically, postal business was near the top of the agenda when Congress convened in January. This was the time when new postmaster appointments were made, although appointments were sometimes done at others times during the year as the need arose. For some communities, these early appointments would be among the earliest records known of a community's existence. Pedlar Mills was one such community. On January 22, 1806, the inhabitants petitioned Congress for establishment of a postal route to include Pedlar Mills and also nearby Bethel. (An earlier record places Ellis' store at Pedlar Mills in 1802.) In 1807, Charles Ellis was appointed postmaster at Pedlar Mills. In 1810, Mr. Garland proposed a redirecting of the mail route between Charlottesville and Lynchburg to include New Glasgow (present day Clifford) and Harrison's in Amherst County. Later, in 1828, Congressional representative Mr. Rives proposed this resolution: "That the Committee on the Post Office and Post Roads be instructed to inquire into the proposed establishing of a post route from New Glasgow, or Rose's Mill, [in the county of Amherst], to Liberty [now the city of Bedford] to pass through Sandidge's Tavern, Pedlar Mills, and Waugh's Ferry."

Of course, many of these were already established communities, but the creation of post offices points to thriving businesses in these towns. And Amherst County was full of many such communities!

Postal research also records other momentous events. In March of 1861, the Richmond Times reported that "R. B. Tucker, Esq., postmaster at Amherst Court-House, Va., has resigned his office for the reason that he will not consent to serve under Abe Lincoln." The statement speaks to the tumultuous events of early 1861.

The town of Madison Heights was incorporated and de-incorporated twice and its identity has sometimes been blurred. In July, 1903, the Richmond *Times Dispatch* reported that the Post Office Department would be establishing rural delivery service for James River starting September 1. Don't know where James River Post Office is? Today it is Madison Heights. Another notable "name change" recorded in postal records is that of Monroe, which identified the establishment of a new post office in Amherst County in September, 1897. "The Potts post office has a Mr. James Watts as postmaster." Potts was the first name of the town of Monroe.



Above: Amherst Court House, April, 1854, manuscript cancellation



Above: Coolwell, November, 1873, manuscript cancellation

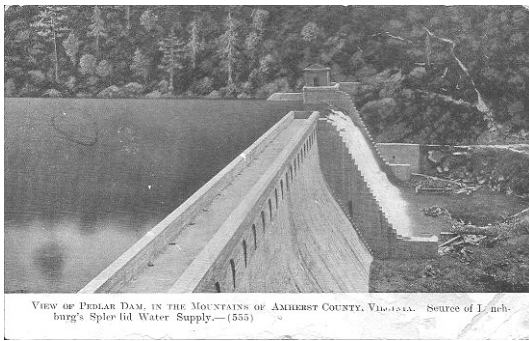


Above: James River (now Madison Heights), January, 1910. circular stamped cancellation.

More Amherst county postal cancellations can be viewed at:
www.amherstcountymuseum.org/postal.html

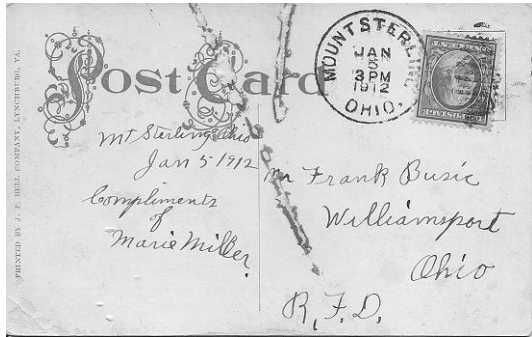
New to our collections!

This postcard was discovered in Mt. Sterling, Ohio, and was post-



VIEW OF PEDLAR DAM, IN THE MOUNTAINS OF AMHERST COUNTY, VIRGINIA. SOURCE OF LICH-BURG'S SPILLER-DAM WATER SUPPLY.—(1855)

Found in a desk in Bedford County, this framed picture is both a thermometer and an advertisement for the Amherst Milling Co., R.M. Wydner, Owner, Merchant and Exchange Milling, Phone 4131, Amherst, Va. Thank you, Doug Cooper!



marked on January 5, 1912. The Museum has a number of postcards of the Pedlar Dam, but this is one

not found before in our collections. Thank you, Lori Butler!



New to our Giftshop

The Monacan Indian Nation of Virginia: The Drums of Life, by Marjorie Clark Whitlock (University of Alabama Press, 2008), is available for \$24.95. This and other giftshop items can be mail ordered using the form at:

www.amherstcountymuseum.org/giftshop.pdf

Wanted: Now that the information from the survey of historic resources has been placed in the research library, we now need a larger filing cabinet. If you know of a FIVE drawer filing cabinet looking for a home, please call us at the Museum! 946-9068



The Perfect Gift!
The Town of Amherst: Celebrating 100 Years
 Published by the Amherst County Museum and Historical Society
 Available now in our Gift Shop



The Mission of the Amherst County Museum & Historical Society is to discover, collect and preserve objects related to the history and genealogy of Amherst County. The Museum & Historical Society shall exhibit, interpret and offer those collections to provide educational experiences for people of all ages.

Special Contributions

- Friend \$25 to \$49
- Donor \$50 to \$99
- Patron \$100 to \$499
- Sponsor \$500 to \$999
- Benefactor \$1000 and up

If you would like your donation to go to a certain purpose, please check one of the funds at right.

Categories for Donations

- Operating Fund _____
- Endowment Fund _____
- Conservation Fund _____
- Programs _____
- Technology Fund _____
- Annex Fund _____
- Library & Genealogy Resources _____

Sunday, February 20, at the Amherst County Museum from 2 to 4 p.m. Sandy Esposito will present a program on the county's historic resources survey. **Open to the public.**

Sunday, March 20, 2 p.m. at the Amherst County Museum. Slide show of selected images from the collection of Monroe photographer, Frank Cash. **Open to the public.**

Sunday, April 17, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. History and tour of the historic Clifford home, Geddes. This event is a special **Members Only** event. For directions to Geddes, see page 1.

Saturday, May 14, at 2 p.m. at the Museum. Adventures on the River, with Bob Wimer, Ralph Smith and others share their batteau stories. **Open to the public.**

The Museum plans to have a special event on the third Sunday afternoon of each month during 2011. Programs at the Museum are open to the public; programs offsite are *members-only* events. Encourage your friends and family to join the

Saturday, April 30, at the Amherst County High School. Amherst County 250th Birthday Festival. **Public Program**

Many organizations in Amherst County are celebrating this 250th birthday with regular and special events. To keep up with these programs, monitor the Museum's Sesquicentennial Events page at:
www.amherstcountymuseum.org/county250events.html

Pieces of the Past

February 12, 1704 Robert Rose was born in Wester Alves, Scotland. (Cabells and their Kin)

Snow Measures Over Three Feet, from the *Amherst New Era-Progress*, **March 8, 1962**. Snow began falling on Sunday night, (March 4) and did not subside until Tuesday night. School was closed for three days.

From the Acts of the Assembly, March 11, 1916, *An act to prohibit the sale of any cider whatever or of any other drink containing more than one half of one per centum of alcohol, within the corporate limits of the Town of Amherst, Virginia, or at any point within two miles of the corporate limits of said town. Such offense shall be classified a misdemeanor resulting in a fine of not less than five dollars nor more than fifty dollars. Due to the urgent nature of the crisis, this act shall go into effect April 15, 1916.*

Address Service Requested
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