



# THE GUARDIAN

Newsletter of the Jefferson County WV Historical Society  
Volume VIII Issue 3 July 2010

## *Annual Picnic at Beall-Air August 4*

The Wormald Companies, owner and developer of the Beallair Community, will host the Jefferson County Historical Society's picnic on the grounds of the Beall-Air mansion, one of several former Washington homes in Jefferson County. The picnic begins at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, August 4th. As, in the past, Magnolia Tree will provide fried chicken, barbeque, lemonade, plates and tableware. The membership is asked to bring a covered dish with serving utensils and a beverage. After a brief history of Beall-Air, visitors will be invited to walk through the mansion.

## *Historic Speaker Series Continues*

Building upon its successful partnership with the Shepherdstown Men's Club, The Jefferson County Historical Society is partnering with other local non-profits to host a series of presentations by local experts on aspects of Jefferson County History. Watch for monthly bulletins about each of the upcoming presentations, or email [cmasonwhf@aol.com](mailto:cmasonwhf@aol.com) for more information.

- September 20; Partner: Charles Town Historic Landmarks Commission; Speaker: Don Wood; Topic: Early Berkeley/Jefferson County Homes and Researching Historic Properties; Location: Jefferson County Courthouse.
- October 18; Partner: City of Ranson; Speaker: Bob O'Connor; Topic: History of Ranson; Location: Ranson Senior Center
- November 15; Partner: Harpers Ferry Foundation; Speaker: Mayor Jim Addy; Topic: Impacts of John Brown Raid on Harpers Ferry; Location: Camp Hill Methodist Church
- December 13; Partners: Shepherdstown Men's Club and Historic Shepherdstown Foundation; Speaker: Dr. Jim Price; Topic: To be Determined; Location: Byrd Center Auditorium.

## *2010 Washington Family Homes Tour*

Every American knows that George Washington was a general in the American Revolution and our nation's first president. His famous home, Mount Vernon, is a national treasure and receives a constant stream of visitors. Yet few know the story of George's early adulthood and his and his family's settlement in the rich lands between the Potomac and the Shenandoah Rivers – now known as Jefferson County, West Virginia, just 70 miles from Washington, D.C. The Washington family built at least 10 estates in Jefferson County, but not all remain.



On September 18, 2010, the non-profit Friends of Happy Retreat will present the Washington Family Homes Tour to provide the rare opportunity to visit four privately owned Washington homes that still stand: Happy Retreat (shown above), the gracious 1780 home of Charles Washington, Charles Town's founder and George Washington's youngest brother; Harewood, the 1770 estate of George's oldest brother Samuel; Beallair, built in the 1790s and expanded in 1850 by Lewis Washington, a great-grandnephew of George Washington; and Claymont Court, the 1840 mansion built by the president's grand-nephew Bushrod Corbin Washington.

Visitors to the four historic landmarks will be greeted by docents eager to share their knowledge of the architectural features of the buildings, stories



about George Washington’s early surveying expeditions, his planning for westward expansion at Happy Retreat, Dolley Madison’s wedding party, as well as historic events, and genealogical information. History buffs, lovers of early American architecture, historic preservation, and the just plain curious will discover stories of the people and the landscape that shaped our American character. Children’s activities, live music and living history enactments also will be featured.

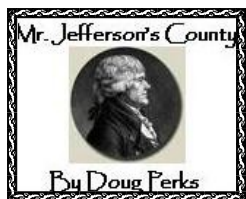
Advance tickets are \$20 for the tour, or \$10 per home. On the day of the tour, single-admission tickets are available for \$10, and \$25 for all four homes. Visit [www.happyretreat.org](http://www.happyretreat.org) for more information.

Proceeds will benefit Friends of Happy Retreat, a non-profit organization working to purchase, restore, develop, and operate the historic Charles Washington’s Happy Retreat for public enjoyment and education, for the encouragement of area economic development through heritage tourism, and for the enrichment of community life through programs in the arts, culture, and history.

The Friends of Happy Retreat is accepting individual and business sponsorship for the Washington Family Homes Tour. Please contact Robin Huyett Thomas for additional information at [06redleg@aol.com](mailto:06redleg@aol.com) or 304-725-2305.

The Holiday Inn Express Charles Town hotel is sponsoring a special rate of \$119 per night for Washington Home Tour visitors from September 17 – 19 which includes one tour ticket. The total with tax is \$147.56. For reservations, visit [www.hiexpress.com/charlestownwv](http://www.hiexpress.com/charlestownwv) or call 304-725-1330. The reservation deadline is September 5.

**NOTE!! If you haven’t paid your 2010 dues yet, please do so by September 15<sup>th</sup> in order to receive your copy of the Society’s 2010 Magazine.**



**Mr. Jefferson’s County  
“...and it was a hell of a crossroads.”**

Several years ago I was speaking to an Elderhostel group at Harpers Ferry. During dinner, the

conversation turned to a discussion of the American Civil War, or, as a couple from Georgia referred to it, The War of Northern Aggression. With great passion the Georgians described in detail General Sherman’s “March to the Sea.” As the account unfolded, I noticed that one gentleman had a look of bemusement on his face. He waited politely until the southerners were finished and said, “You talk about the Civil War as if it happened just yesterday.”

His comment sparked a lively discussion. Back and forth around the table everyone had an opinion about the significance of “The War” and wanted to get their “two cents worth in.” What occurred was not a debate, but instead an honest attempt by the group to understand why some folks have such a deep interest in this chapter of our Nation’s history.

In his book, *The Civil War: A Narrative*, Shelby Foote provided one possible explanation:

*“Any understanding of this Nation has to be based, and I mean really based, on an understanding of the Civil War. I believe that firmly. It defined us. The [American] Revolution did what it did. Our involvement in European wars, beginning with the First World War, did what it did.*

*But the Civil War defined us as what we are and it opened us to being what we became, good and bad things. And it is very necessary, if you’re going to understand the American Character in the Twentieth Century, to learn about this enormous catastrophe in the Nineteenth Century. It was the crossroads of our being, and it was a hell of a crossroads.”*

But, there is also a much simpler explanation. Some people have great passion for “The War” because for one reason or another they have a personal connection to what happened those many years ago. Maybe their great-great Uncle Bill served in Company A of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Virginia Regiment. Or their maternal great-great grandfather was killed at the Battle of Sharpsburg. Or their family’s farm was destroyed during the Battle at Cameron’s Depot. Each one is a different circumstance, but each one is a personal link to those four terrible years.

April 2011 will mark the sesquicentennial of the start of the American Civil War. During that time we will have numerous opportunities to remember the people and events that were a part of “... the crossroads of our being.” To have a complete understanding of the American Civil War it is



important to examine not only what happened on the battlefield but also what happened at home. And there is no better place to investigate “The War” than Jefferson County, Virginia.

Over the next several issues the focal point of my “Mr. Jefferson’s County” articles will be an examination of some of things that occurred happened here in Jefferson County during those four years. Where possible, I’ll use existing documents written by men and women who were Jefferson County residents who experienced those four years “up close and personal.” My goal is that by 2015 each of us will have a better understanding of how “The War” not only changed the lives of the men who fought it but also how it changed the lives of the men, women, and children who remained at home in Jefferson County, Virginia.

Please understand that my purpose is not to prove that Jefferson County, Virginia’s experience during “The War” was any worse or any better than any other place in The Valley, east or west of the Blue Ridge, or north or south of the Potomac. Every community touched by “The War” has its story to tell. I simply know Mr. Jefferson’s County best. I also know that for Jefferson’s citizens, “The War” “...was a hell of a crossroads.”

I’ve heard it said that more has been written about the American Civil War than any other single topic. In my opinion, that also applies to “The War” in Jefferson County. It seems to me that there are more books written about the war here in Jefferson County than any other subject. So I think we’ll start with some of those books. I’ll list some, but by no means all, of the books that have been written about “The War” here in Jefferson County. I’ll start with several of the books that will give you an overview of the war.

NOTE: *CTL* means a copy is available to read at the Charles Town Library; *JCM* means a copy is available to read at the Jefferson County Museum.

***Historic Jefferson County (CTL/JCM)*** by Millard K. Bushong. Whatever the topic, this is always the place to start when you want to know something about Jefferson County. There are two editions – the first written in 1941 is available in paperback. The 2<sup>nd</sup> updated edition was published in 1972. In the 1972 edition Dr. Bushong covered The War in Chapter 11 (pp 205-249). As you can imagine forty

pages just skims the surface, but it sets the stage and you will get an overview of what happened in Jefferson County from 1861-1865.

***Military Operations in Jefferson County, Virginia (and West Virginia), 1861-1865 (CTM/JCM)***, is published by authority of Jefferson County Camp, United Confederate Veterans.

As you ride the roads of Mr. Jefferson’s County, have you ever noticed a three-foot concrete obelisk with a number at the top and wondered what it was? In 1910 the Jefferson County Camp, United Confederate Veterans, made plans to commemorate the 50th anniversary of “The War.” Under the leadership of Preston Chew, the Camp set about to permanently mark locations throughout Jefferson County where skirmishes or battles took place. Funds were raised by the Camp to place 25 obelisks. In 1911 it was decided to publish a pamphlet to accompany the concrete obelisks that would describe what happened at that spot. Again Chew provided the leadership that resulted in the publication of *Military Operations in Jefferson County Virginia (Now West Virginia) 1861-1865*. By reading accounts written by men who had first-hand knowledge of “The War” it is possible to have a clearer understanding of their experience. The pamphlet can be purchased at the Society’s web site: [jeffersonhistoricalwv.org/thestore.html](http://jeffersonhistoricalwv.org/thestore.html), and a description of each location and marker can be found at <http://jeffersonhistoricalwv.org/CWmarkers.html>.

***Chew's Ashby, Shoemaker's Lynchburg and the Newtown Artillery*** by Robert H. Moore, II.

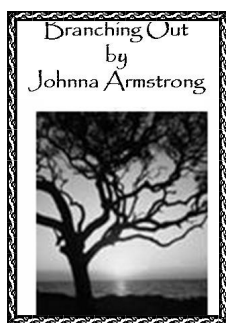
***1st Virginia Cavalry*** by Robert J. Driver, Jr.

***12th Virginia Cavalry*** by Dennis E. Frye.

***2nd Virginia Infantry (CTL/JCM)*** by Dennis E. Frye.

These books are a part of the *Virginia Regimental* series. Ten companies of men (approximately 1,500) from Jefferson County, Virginia served in the Confederate Army. Chew’s Battery served with Stuart’s Horse Artillery, Company F served with the 1<sup>st</sup> Virginia Cavalry, companies A, B, and D served with the 12<sup>th</sup> Virginia Cavalry, and companies A, B, G, H, and K of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Virginia Regiment were Jefferson men. Each book chronicles the regiment’s service during the war. At

the end of the book there is an alphabetized roster which provides a brief biography of each man. This will get us started on the journey. More books next time.



I took a trip to the Berkeley County Historical Society (BCHS) Archives recently, and after spending a couple of hours with Don Wood, the BCHS Historian, it became abundantly clear that it is a terrific resource for Jefferson County genealogists and that it is impossible to do it

justice in the space allotted. I'll just say this: Go, you won't be sorry. And go soon, because the rose garden at the Belle Boyd House is in bloom and it's heavenly. Here is an admittedly abbreviated list of what you will find when you visit the BCHS:

**General genealogy resources.** Two large shelves of family genealogy books for the area, and an entire wall of file cabinets that houses the surname files. (A listing of surnames available is on the Archive page of the BCHS website; see below.) The Archives also has a good selection of Jefferson County-related history books, including a copy of the Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church records. The Archives has the entire set of the Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society, with indexes.

**Land grants.** Copies of the original land grants, both the King's Patents and the Lord Fairfax Grants. The grants are all beautifully mapped and indexed to the file cabinets that hold the documents themselves. The BCHS got a grant to acquire all of the Berkeley County grants from the Richmond Archives and at the same time, was able to get many (but not all) of Jefferson County grants.

**Survey and insurance records.** Survey records for properties in Jefferson County, again not all, but a very good collection. These are also mapped and indexed. Those researching houses in Shepherdstown will want to take a look at the Mutual Assurance Society file in the same room, which holds insurance records (starting in the 1790s) for buildings in that town.

**Tax records.** For Jefferson County from 1801 to

1900. There are also some personal property tax records.

**Newspapers.** There is a nice index for the Martinsburg Journal (1810-55) and an index of deaths for the Potomac Guardian (1791-1855).

**Wills.** Jefferson County wills (1801-1900) are on microfilm and are indexed.

**Photos.** A well-indexed collection of photos from the area.

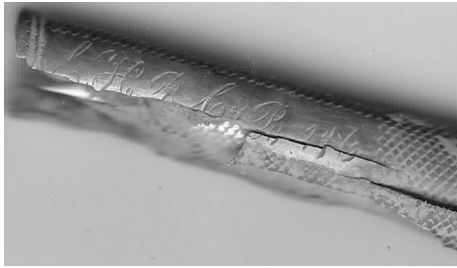
**Vital Records.** You can get copies of Jefferson County vital records (births and deaths from 1853; marriages from 1854). The BCHS has the original records, not the Register entries available at the courthouse. And the cost (\$5.00) is a dollar less than at the courthouse (this applies to wills too.) There is also a book of marriages in Jefferson County (1801-1884) and a book on marriage bonds from Berkeley County from 1781.

The Archives are located at 135 Race Street in Martinsburg. When you go, park in the Society lot; the spaces right outside the building are for the railway station. The staff are extremely knowledgeable and happy to help you with your research.

The BCHS website [<http://www.bchs.org>] has a nice list of genealogy and local history resources available at the Archives; follow the Research Archives & Genealogy link. There you can also find information on copying fees as well as research fees for those who live out of the area or aren't able to come in person. The website also gives information about upcoming events, like the Fall Tour of Homes, and has a listing of Jefferson County books and maps for sale.

*The Museum Corner*  
*By Jim Glymph*  
*The Silver Mechanical Pencil*

The Jefferson County Museum displays an interesting silver mechanical pencil that although damaged, contains the lead-holding device and four pieces of usable lead. If you look carefully at the image on the following page, you will notice that the pencil is inscribed **G. H. R. Co. A PA 116.**



After reading the history of the 116<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Regiment by Brevet Major General St. Clair Augustin Mulholland, we believe the pencil belonged to Lieutenant George H. Roeder, Company A, 116<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Regiment. It was apparently lost or thrown away during an encampment in Charlestown on the site where John Brown was hanged, for Mulholland’s account states: “On October 16, 1862, “[t]he division occupied Charlestown without further opposition.....”

“The regiment bivouacked in the field where old John Brown had been hanged, and great interest was manifested when the men learned of the fact.”

***O'Connor Strikes Again!***  
***100 Years of Ranson History***



Local historian, author, and Jefferson County Historical Society Board Member Bob O'Connor is writing the closing chapters in another book "The Centennial History of Ranson, WV--1910-2010" with its debut set for October, 2010. The book is being produced by the Ranson City Council. O'Connor may be the only person on earth to have read through and taken notes on the City council meetings for the past 100 years for the town of Ranson. And his findings are quite interesting.

Ranson's history actually predates the founding of the town, dating back to the Charles Town Mining, Manufacturing and Improvement Company which laid out the town's streets and advertised to

attract industry into the area starting in the 1890s. Among the industry the CTMM& I Co. attracted to the town prior to 1910 when the town was incorporated were the A. D. Goetz Company, the Shenandoah Brass and Iron Works (later renamed Powhatan Brass), the Elmer Beachley Saw and Planing Mill, the John Farrin Boiler and Machine Shop, the Vulcan Road Machine Company, and the Hotel Powhatan. The hotel, located on Third Avenue just east of Mildred Street, was a magnificent building. The CTMM&I Co. built its headquarters just east of Mildred at Third Avenue. Today that building still stands as Ranson Town Hall.

The story of the town, one of the first in the whole area designed as a planned community, includes 100 years of interesting ordinances, long standing business success, and citizens who came and stayed their whole lives. In addition to searching through the town's records, the author interviewed many of Ranson's citizens to get their recollections of what Ranson had been like in the past. An outstanding collection of photographs including many from the Bill Theriault collection will also be included in the hard bound book. The *Spirit of Jefferson* newspaper has been publishing excerpts of the book each month.

The Town of Ranson is taking orders. To reserve a copy please call Cheryl Mills at the Ranson CVB at 304-724-3862. The author is scheduled to make several talks about the history of Ranson later this fall.

***Freedom’s Run: A 2010 ReRun***

In October, 2009, the first “Freedoms Run” marathon and several shorter running and walking events took place in West Virginia’s Eastern Panhandle and adjacent Washington County MD. The events showcased many of the great cultural assets that we in the “Land Between Two Rivers” enjoy and provided an opportunity for 1,859 runners from over 39 states to experience them first hand as well. Feedback received by the organizers validated their goal of promoting outdoor recreation events in places of historic significance, typified by this comment by a runner from Illinois – “Running through the historic parks, the early start in the

moonlight and running though Murphy's Farm was great."

In 2010, the Run will be held on October 2, and will once again allow participants and their families to enjoy the small-town hospitality of Shepherdstown, Harpers Ferry, Sharpsburg, and other nearby villages and to experience a living museum, preserved for future generations. The Run will start on a loop at Murphy Farm, where 12,000 Union troops surrendered during the Civil War and where John Brown's fort was rebuilt after its journey to the Chicago World's Fair, before it was returned to Lower Harpers Ferry. The Run will pass through the town and by the fort, tracing part of the route Brown and his collaborators took when they marched from the Kennedy Farm in Maryland on the eve of his famous raid. Crossing the Potomac River, where Lewis and Clark tested their boats before leaving to carry out Thomas Jefferson's grand "Voyage of Discovery," the runners will turn upstream onto the towpath of the historic C&O Canal, an engineering marvel that supported George Washington's vision of expanding commerce to the West using the Potomac River route. Several miles later, the runners will pass the site where Lee retreated over the Potomac returning from the one of the most solemn and revered battlefields in America: Antietam, where 23,000 Americans either lost their lives or were wounded in the bloodiest day of our history.



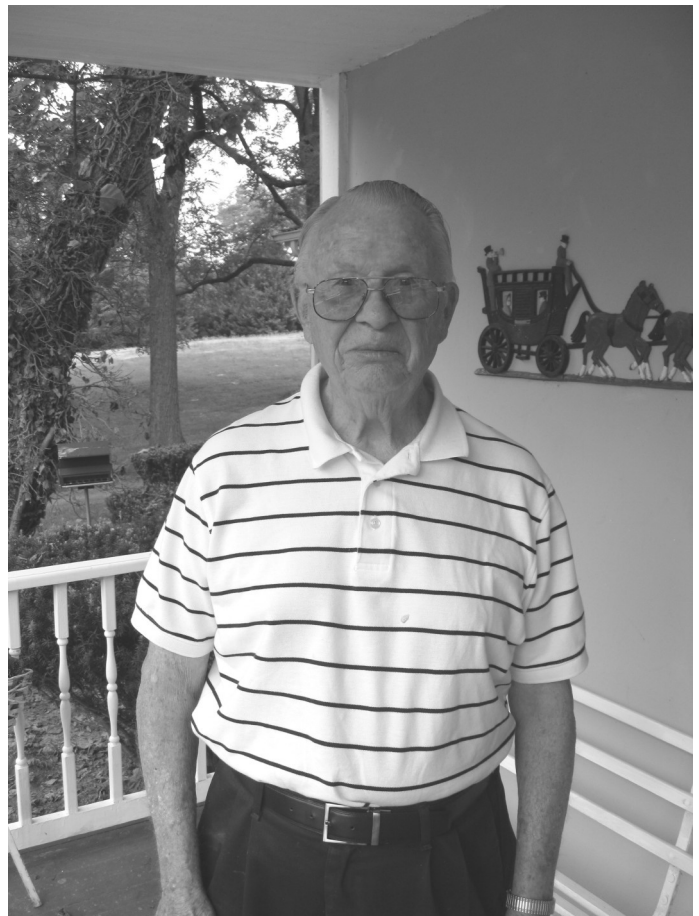
**Burnside Bridge, Antietam Battlefield**

After a quick sprint through the streets of Sharpsburg, MD, the Run will climax in historic Shepherdstown, the oldest town in West Virginia and the place where the first steam-powered boat

was built and tested in the waters of the Potomac.

Runners and walkers are encouraged to visit the web site at <http://www.freedomrun.org/> and to sign up for the October 2, 2010 events, where they can help celebrate one of the most historic regions in America.

*Meet the Board: Hugh Voress  
Curator and Membership Chair*



Hugh Voress is a native of Charleston, WV. He holds a BA degree from WV University and a Masters in Bacteriology/Biochemistry from Kansas State University. He is a veteran of World War II, serving three years in the Army Air Corps medics. He served 30 years as a Technical Information Officer with the Atomic Energy Commission and one of its successor agencies, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. He has been the Membership Chairman for the Jefferson Co. Hist. Society for over 25 years and has collected annual dues from the membership throughout that period. Hugh has been very interested in the history of



Jefferson County and served on the Bicentennial Committee of Charles Town in 1986 and the Bicentennial Committee of Jefferson Co. WV in 2001. He is an avid genealogist and has prepared numerous family histories. He is a treasurer of the General Adam Stephen Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution. He is a member of the Charles Town Library Board and has been active with the Meals on Wheels program, having driven for them for the past 25 years.

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**BEALL-AIR THEN AND NOW**

Beall-Air in 1864



Beall-Air in 1933

BEALLAIR in 1933

Beall-Air in 2008  
Front            Rear

The rear portion of the Beall-Air mansion was built in the late 1700s by Thomas Beall of Georgetown. In 1807 Beall's daughter, Elizabeth, married George Corbin Washington, General George Washington's grand-nephew. When Thomas Beall died in 1819, he left Beall-Air to George and Elizabeth Washington. Their son, Lewis William Washington, moved into the mansion in 1840 and shortly thereafter added the large south-facing brick and stucco portion to the home. In 1859 John Brown's raiders kidnapped Lewis William and several servants and confiscated a sword given to General Washington by Frederick the Great. On their way to Harpers Ferry, Brown's raiders stopped at Allstadt's Ordinary where they captured J. H. Allstadt and several of his servants. Col. Washington and the others were taken to "Brown's Fort" in Harpers Ferry where they were held by Brown as hostages. The following day then-U.S. Army Colonel Robert E. Lee stormed the Fort and captured John Brown who was wearing Washington's sword.

After an extensive restoration of the home in the 1990s by the owners, the Kinnards, the property was sold to the Wormald Companies, which built a collection of gracious single family homes and villas surrounding a central green and the stately Beall-Air mansion, which will be the site of the 2010 Historical Society picnic. Although the original owner of Beall-Air was not a Washington, Beall-Air is considered to be a Washington home today because of its historical connection to the Washington family.

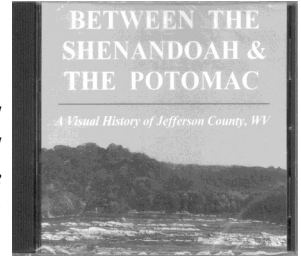


**JCHS PUBLICATIONS**  
**Free Shipping on ALL Orders!!**

Publications of the Society and our partners are available for purchase by mail or on our web site, which also includes brief descriptions of each of the following products. (<http://jeffersonhistoricalwv.org/thestore.html>)

- **"Between the Shenandoah and the Potomac,"** a DVD presenting a comprehensive illustrated history of Jefferson County, West Virginia. (\$14). In an online review, Susan Scouras of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History states:

*"The Jefferson County Historical Society has produced a wonderful history of their homeland through the combined use of beautifully scenic videotape photography, interesting still photos and artists' representations of the natural landscape and resources, the man-made structures and the people themselves that comprise the past and present of Jefferson County. As the title indicates, the influence of the county's location between the Shenandoah and the Potomac Rivers is woven through both the narrative and the visual images from beginning to end. Strategically placed commentary by local experts and representatives of various agencies and organizations add support to the factual history of Jefferson County as drawn from *Historic Jefferson County*, by Millard Kessler Bushong. Excellent narration by Charlie Glaize and well-chosen background music round out the presentation of Writer/Producer Melissa Wallace."*



- ***Between the Shenandoah and Potomac: Historic Homes of Jefferson County, WV. Color pictures and descriptions of over 100 of Jefferson County's most historic homes, 178pp, hardbound book. \$49.95***
- ***The Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society*** is mailed annually to each member and contains articles about local historical places, people, and events. Prices for purchase and shipping of back issues of the magazines are as follows:
 

1935-1964:	\$20/copy
1965-1994:	\$15/copy
1995-Current:	\$10/copy
- ***The Washington Homes of Jefferson County. \$10.***
- ***Prominent Men of Shepherdstown. A.D. Kenamond, 1962 \$10***
- ***Between the Shenandoah and Potomac: Historic Homes of Jefferson County. Hard-bound \$50***
- ***Calendar & Index to Recorded Plats in Jefferson County, WV (VA) Courthouse, 1801-1901. Michael. D. Thompson \$25***
- ***Tombstone Inscriptions, Jefferson County, W. Va 1687-1980. Compiled by Bee Line Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), 1981. \$22***
- ***Burials in Jefferson County, West Virginia, 1978-97. Compiled by Hugh E. Voress, 1998, \$18***

**GUEST PUBLICATIONS**

- ***West Virginia Encyclopedia, A new "must have" reference book loaded with information. \$45***
- ***Military Operations in Jefferson County-A guide to the Sons of Confederate Veterans network of Civil War Markers \$15***
- ***The Perfect Steel Trap, Harpers Ferry, 1859*** This historical novel, written by Bob O'Connor, JCHS Board member, provides eye-witness accounts of the John Brown insurrection. Read about the preparations, the raid, the trials, the executions and the aftermath and then decide: was John Brown a hero or a scoundrel? **\$23**
- ***The Virginian Who Might Have Saved Lincoln*** President Lincoln's trusted friend, former law partner and heavily armed body-guard, Ward Hill Lamon, a Summit Point, VA native, was not at Ford's Theater the night of April 14, 1865. Learn of his whereabouts that fateful evening by reading this historical novel by Bob O'Connor. **\$16**
- ***The Night I Freed John Brown.*** This exciting new young adult novel for ages 12 and up, written by Harpers Ferry native John Cummings, centers on 13-year-old Josh Connors who, to free himself from his shy, sheltered life in the historic town, idolizes the fierce spirit of the controversial figure of John Brown. **\$15**

Please mail a check with your name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address to:  
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