



THE GUARDIAN

Newsletter of the Jefferson County WV Historical Society
Volume VIV Issue 1 January 2011

Historic Speaker Series Continues

Building on the successful series of presentations by local historians sponsored by the Society and several other Jefferson County historical organizations during 2009/10, the organizers met in December to lay out a schedule of similar presentations for 2011. The priorities of each organization were identified regarding their preferred location, timing, topics, and speakers for the presentations. The draft schedule for the presentations shown below was agreed upon. Final details will be agreed upon by each organization after which the group will reconvene to finalize the schedule, which will be forwarded by email to all Society members and included in the March edition of the Guardian.

- Shepherdstown Men's Club & Historic Shepherdstown Commission: March 21 (tentative)
- Charles Town Historic Landmarks Commission May 16 (tentative)
- Harpers Ferry Town Foundation July-August
Shepherdstown Men's Club/HSC; September 19 (tentative)
- Ranson CVB: October 17 (tentative)
- Jefferson County Historical Society Fall Program November 7
- Others as announced.

Jefferson County History Events Calendar Established

At the meeting referred to above, representatives from several historical organizations in Jefferson County discussed ways in which they could go beyond the historic speaker series to develop some common and efficient methods to increase communication between the many historically-oriented organizations in the county. Benefits of such communication include reducing any scheduling conflicts between activities of the groups and enhancing the public's awareness of events

which celebrate the county's history.

As a first step, it was agreed to establish an online Jefferson County History Events Schedule in calendar format that would serve as a community source for learning about upcoming history-related events being held by the many historically-related organizations in the county. As a result, a Jefferson County History Events Schedule calendar has been posted on the Historical Society's web site at <http://jeffersonhistoricalwv.org/events.html>. This page is linked to a similar Google web calendar maintained by the county Historic Landmarks Commission and the calendar has been initially populated with a limited set of information about upcoming events by both organizations. If you are interested in providing information to this calendar or in linking it with your own Google calendar, please contact Curt Mason at cmasonwhf@aol.com.

Thar's Gold in Them Thar Hills!! California Trip Yields Rare Find

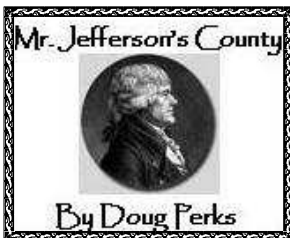
Imagine yourself in the early 21st century, finding an unpublished book written in 1880 by Ward Hill Lamon, a Summit Point native and very good friend of Abraham Lincoln. That is exactly what happened when nationally recognized author and JCHS Board Member Bob O'Connor's visited the Huntington Library in San Marino CA in 2008. Researching his book about the life of Ward Lemon, he discovered the rare and forgotten manuscript in the library's Lamon papers collection. Returning to West Virginia, O'Connor transcribed the document and added footnotes to identify the characters and define the 19th century legal terms used by Mr. Lamon.

Born in Summit Point, Virginia, Lamon grew up in Mill Creek, Virginia, now Bunker Hill West Virginia. He moved to Illinois in 1846 and became an attorney for the 8th Judicial Circuit of Illinois, where he befriended Abraham Lincoln and served with him on the court for several years. One of three men from Illinois selected by Lincoln to accompany him to Washington, Lamon had more access than



any other man to the President. Lamont spent many nights sleeping on the floor outside the Lincoln bedroom to protect his friend from harm. But when the war ended, Abraham Lincoln sent Lamont on assignment, choosing to ignore his bodyguard's advice to avoid going to Ford's. The rest is history.

O'Connor's 519 page book, *The Life of Abraham Lincoln, As President*, contains an extensive bibliography and index. Published by Mont Clair Press of West Conshohocken, Pennsylvania, the book is available on Amazon.com, Buybooksontheweb.com, and from the author's website at www.boboconnorbooks.com. Copies are also available at the Jefferson County Visitors Center in Harpers Ferry, The Charles Town Visitors Center in Charles Town, and at Four Seasons Books in Shepherdstown.



Union or Secession

Abraham Lincoln was elected President on November 6th, 1860. Six weeks later on December 20th, 1860, the state of South

Carolina seceded from the Union. By February 1st, 1861 six states (Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas) had followed suit. These seven states met in Montgomery, Alabama and on February 8th, 1861 announced the establishment of the Confederate States of America.

All eyes were fixed on the Commonwealth of Virginia – what would she do? To answer that question the Virginia General Assembly met in special session on Monday, January 14th, 1861 and called for a convention to decide whether or not Virginia would remain in the Union or secede. Each county would elect delegates on February 4th, 1861 who would then assemble in Richmond on February 13th to decide Virginia's fate. Once a decision was made, the General Assembly required that it must be ratified via a statewide referendum to be held in May.

According to Jefferson County Historian Dr. Millard K. Bushong, "one of the most important meetings [in Jefferson County] ever held" occurred on Monday, January 21st, 1861. Men who had just weeks earlier cast their vote viva voce in the 1860 presidential election met at the Jefferson County

Courthouse to discuss who would represent Jefferson County at the secession convention.

The Friday, January 25th, 1861 edition of the Alexandria Gazette had this to say about that meeting:

"The Southern Rights party in Jefferson Co., Va., has nominated the Hon. Wm. Lucas and Andrew Hunter, esq., as candidates for the State Convention. The Union party in the same county have nominated Col. A. M. Barbour and Logan Osborne, Esq."

Who were these men?

William Lucas of the Southern Rights Party was born on November 30th, 1800 at Cold Spring, the Lucas family home located near "Five Corners" just to the south of Shepherdstown. He was the son of Robert Lucas who was married to the former Sarah Rion. The Rion family owned the land near Halltown where Rion Hall was built. Upon his father's death in 1826 William inherited Rion Hall and oversaw its expansion.

Lucas first studied law under Henry Berry of Shepherdstown and later Judge Henry St. George Tucker in Winchester. He married Virginia Bedinger, daughter of Daniel Bedinger. They were the parents of Virginia and Daniel Bedinger Lucas.

Lucas began his practice of law in Shepherdstown and then moved to the county seat in Charles Town to be closer to the action. He represented Jefferson County in the Virginia General Assembly from 1837-1838, and was a U. S. Congressman in 1839-1841 and again in 1843-1845. Lucas was a delegate to the Virginia Constitution Convention held in 1850-1851

Andrew Hunter of the Southern Rights Party was born on March 22nd, 1804 in Berkeley County. Hunter was the son of Colonel David H. and Elizabeth Pendleton Hunter. He graduated from Hampden-Sydney College and then studied law. In the 1850s he built Hunter Hill along the eastern boundary of Charles Town.

Hunter started his law practice in Harpers Ferry, but following the trend moved his practice to Charles Town. He was a Whig presidential elector in 1840 and served in the Virginia General Assembly in 1846. Like Lucas he was a delegate to the Virginia Constitution Convention in 1850-1851. Following the capture of John Brown at Harpers Ferry, Hunter was appointed by Governor Wise to



assist in the prosecution of Brown and his men.

Alfred Madison Barbour represented the Union Party. Born on April 17th, 1829 in Culpeper County, VA, Barbour was from one of Virginia's oldest families. His father was James Strode Barbour who represented Virginia's 15th District in Congress. A cousin, James Barbour, was Virginia's 19th governor and a U. S. Senator from Virginia. Another cousin, Philip Pendleton Barbour, was both the Speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives and an Associate Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court.

Barbour was a graduate of the University of Virginia and Harvard University School of Law. He began his practice of law in Charlestown. While there on December 24th, 1858 he was appointed superintendent of the U.S. Armory at Harpers Ferry.

The armory suffered severe budget cuts early in his tenure, but Barbour proved to be a competent administrator. When John Brown attempted to seize the armory in the fall of 1859 Barbour was in New England touring the Springfield Armory and the Ames Manufacturing Company.

While visiting Samuel Colt in Hartford, Connecticut Barbour learned of the raid and immediately planned to return to Harpers Ferry. He arrived three days after Brown's capture to an understandably chaotic situation. During the attack on the armory the acting superintendent Archibald Kitzmiller, the master armorer Benjamin Mills, and the master machinist Armistead Ball had all been held hostage by Brown and his men. Restoring order was left up to Barbour.

Logan Osburn also represented the Union Party. Osburn was born on March 23rd, 1810 in Loudoun County, Virginia the son of Joel and Massie Osburn. As a youth he attended Loudoun County's Catoctin Academy. Osburn first married Hanna Leslie and after her death he married Margaret Chew Osburn who lived at Avondale in Kabletown, Jefferson County, Virginia.

In the early 1830s Osburn moved to Ohio, where he tried a variety of occupations. In 1838 he returned to Loudoun County and owned and operated a store at Snickersville. In 1843 he moved to Jefferson County, bought the Avon Bend property, and started the renovation of a house there.

From 1843-1848 Osburn owned and operated a store in Kabletown. In 1848 he moved his family to

Avon Bend. From 1851-1852 Osburn was co-owner of Shannondale Springs. In 1856 he built and moved to Avon View. In 1857-1858 he represented Jefferson County in the Virginia General Assembly. Logan Osburn became a successful farmer holding all told about 1,300 acres in the Kabletown/Myerstown area including farms at Avon Bend, Avon Hill, and Avon Wood.

The choice presented by the candidates for election to represent Jefferson County at the secession convention was clear. Lucas and Hunter favored following South Carolina's lead – they both wanted Virginia to secede. Barbour and Osburn supported remaining in the Union. The debate swirled as Election Day approached.

On February 4th, 1861 the men of Jefferson County went again to their polling place. The result of this election left no doubt. Barbour (1,433 votes) and Osburn (1,350 votes) were overwhelmingly elected over Lucas (430 votes) and Hunter (467 votes). In addition by a vote of 1,424 in favor and 394 opposed Jefferson County passed a resolution instructing their delegates to vote to remain in the Union at the Virginia secession convention.

Keep the results of the February 4th election in Jefferson County in mind as we approach the 150th anniversary of the American Civil War. Remember that by that vote Jefferson County overwhelmingly voted to reject secession and stay in the Union.

**The Museum Corner
About, not by, Susan Collins,
Curator**

The Jefferson County Museum is the proud owner of one of George Washington's last letters that he wrote before his death. It was written to Burgess Ball of Leesburg and it concerns the death of his brother Charles. The letter, along with a portrait of The General, a very rare 1800 copy of his will, and a portrait of the great Virginian George Mason were the gifts of a descendant of the Ball family. The donor had contacted several institutions including Mount Vernon as a home for her possessions. She found the museum through its website and gave Sue Collins, the curator, a call. After several contacts with Sue, the donor was confident that the Jefferson County Museum was the place. Why would someone entrust such treasures to a county



museum? The answer is: Sue Collins. Her knowledge of history, skill as a curator and most important, her heart-felt sincerity give confidence to the many donors who have enriched the museum with artifacts and donations. And she never forgets a written, not electronic: "Thank You!"

Sue started working at the museum in August, 1987. She had some experience, but she learned her trade, and learned it well, on the job. When John Ingalls, the curator, passed away in 1996, Sue was the logical choice to follow him as curator. Since that time, the museum has thrived. The museum is a wonderful place to visit because it is well-organized, the displays are enlightening and when you leave, you know you have been in a special place.

When the Stuart Horse Artillery Flag, another of the museum's treasures, needed conservation and remounting, Sue took on the job of raising the considerable funds needed for the work. Once again, she got the job done and the beautifully conserved flag is there as proof.

Sue has guided countless tours through the museum. She is the same sincere, knowledgeable person, whether she is with a youngster or an academic group. She is the hostess of museum parties, the museum history roundtables and is always ready to make you feel at home.

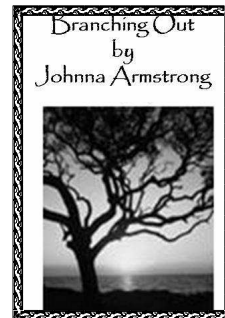
She has contributed a number of articles, including one on the Stuart flag and the John Brown trial, to the Society magazine. Additionally, her museum articles appear in this spot every other issue.

And now for the bad news: Sue Collins is retiring in March, 2011. We will all miss her as the curator, but even more as a person. With a grandson in Florida and one in Sweden, we know what she will be doing.

Bullskin Run National Historic District Proposal Returned to WV SHPO

The proposal to create a Bullskin Run Historic District that was resubmitted by the West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office to the National Park Service (NPS) was returned unapproved. This is unfortunate, for the district, bounded roughly by Leetown Road, Huyett Road, Berryville Pike, and Withers-Larue Road, contains about 80 properties, the vast majority of which are important elements of Jefferson County's rich history. Sites include

Claymont, Blakeley, White House Farm, Beverley, a Quaker cemetery, and George Washington's early land purchase, the Bullskin Plantation.



Church Records

Church records can be invaluable when we have an ancestor who, from birth to death, appears never to have crossed the doorway of a courthouse or county clerk's office. Even if our ancestors were traipsing in and out of the courthouse all the time, church records reveal different facets of our ancestors' personalities than do civil records, which can make them seem that much more like real people. The problem with church records is that there are many different religions and denominations. Narrowing down which one your ancestor identified with can be difficult. It is also often difficult to know if records exist and where to find them.

Most early Virginians, not surprisingly, were Church of England, which after 1786 became the Episcopal Church. In the counties that would later become West Virginia, the two other dominant religions were Presbyterian (predominantly Scots-Irish) and Quaker (predominantly English); both denominations were well established by 1740 or so. The Baptists settled in Berkeley County a couple of years later and by 1778 there was also a Methodist circuit.^[1]

A History of Jefferson County 1719-1940, by Bushong (online at Google Books and available in print at several local repositories), has a nice survey of the churches that existed from about the 1740s onward. Bill Theriault's book *How and Where to Look it Up: Resources for Researching the History of Jefferson County, West Virginia* has a good section on Church records and histories (online at the Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission website <http://jeffersoncountyhlc.org>, and in print at several local repositories.)

¹ Eichholz, Alice, Red Book, *Third Edition*, Ancestry, Provo, Utah, 2004, pages 708 and 738.

The Shepherd University Library has some records, particularly for the Lutheran and Reformed Churches in Shepherdstown. The Works Progress Administration did an inventory of church archives for the Protestant Episcopal Church in West



Virginia and the library has a copy of it. There are also quite a few church histories.

The Berkeley County Historical Society has records for the Trinity Episcopal Church in Shepherdstown as well as records for Berkeley County, particularly Norborne (Protestant Episcopal) Parish. Other denominations include: German Reformed, Methodist, and Baptist.

St. James Lutheran Church in Shepherdstown has made photocopies of its records, which you can view at the Parish House. Contact them to make an appointment. Their website is <http://shepherdstownlutheranparish.org>. To contact other local churches, ChurchAngle.com (<http://www.churchangel.com/westvirg.htm>) lists contact information for churches by town.

This is not an exhaustive list. If you know of a good source for local church records, please let us know about it and we will add the information to our website. Contact information for local repositories mentioned in this article can be found in the Genealogy Resources section of the JCHS website: <http://jeffersonhistoricalwv.org/genealogy>.

Virginian Who Might Have Saved Lincoln, the story of Ward Hill Lamon, a Jefferson County native who was Lincoln's personal bodyguard; "Catesby: Eyewitness to the Civil War," the story of a blacksmith who lived at Beall Air as a slave to Colonel Lewis Washington; and the non-fiction book *The U.S. Colored Troops at Andersonville Prison*. He has also just completed *The Centennial History of Ranson, West Virginia -- 1910-2010*. His latest effort, *The Life of Abraham Lincoln: As President*, was originally written circa 1880 by a native of Jefferson County, Ward Hill Lamon, but never published. O'Connor bought the rights to publish the book and added over 1700 footnotes to the original manuscript. Please check the Society's online store at <http://jeffersonhistoricalwv.org/thestore.html> to see which of his books are available for purchase.

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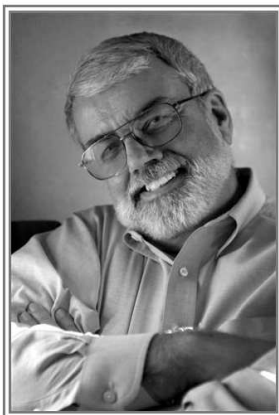
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**Meet the Board:
Robert (Bob) O'Connor**



Bob O'Connor earned a bachelor's degree from Northern Illinois University. He has 25 years experience working in Maryland, Pennsylvania and West Virginia in tourism and public relations. He is currently employed by the Jefferson County Convention and Visitors Bureau. Bob is a board Member of the Washington Heritage Trail organization. He is responsible for founding the Independence Day Patriotic Symphony Concert and Fireworks and the Memorial Illumination, both at Antietam Battlefield.

In recent years, he has written three historical novels and one non-fiction book: *The Perfect Steel Trap Harpers Ferry, 1859*, a historical novel about the John Brown raid, trial, and execution; *The*



Harewood in about 1860 (east elevation, sketch is not historically correct)



Harewood in about 1933 (east elevation)



Harewood in 2008 (east elevation)

Attracted by the fertile farmland of the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, George Washington and his brothers began buying land in present Jefferson County, West Virginia (then Virginia) in 1750. First to leave the relatively unproductive Tidewater area of Virginia was Samuel Washington who moved from his 600-acre farm on Chotank Creek in northern Stafford Count to his new stone mansion, Harewood, in September 1770. Harewood was designed by the Virginia architect John Ariss, who had also designed Kenmore, a more elaborate mansion in Fredericksburg, Virginia, for Fielding Lewis, the husband of Betty Washington, George and Samuel's sister. Harewood is an outstanding and little-altered example of a large Georgian stone mansion with a very finely paneled drawing room of great distinction.

When Samuel died in 1781 he had accumulated some 3,800 acres. Over the years, the estate has been subdivided to the point that the Harewood farm now consists of only 260 acres. George Washington's diary records several visits to Harewood. The house's most notable event occurred in 1794 when it was the site of James Madison's wedding to Dolley Payne Todd, whose sister Lucy was the wife of the owner of Harewood, George Steptoe Washington, one of Samuel's sons who shared the name of his famous uncle.

The Washington family moved from Harewood into nearby Charles Town in 1899, placing a tenant farmer in the old mansion. In 1951, John A. Washington and his wife Margaret began the renovation of the old house. Now owned by John's son, Harewood is maintained as a private residence and not open to visitors. Much of the property was recently place under a preservation easement and will remain undeveloped in perpetuity.

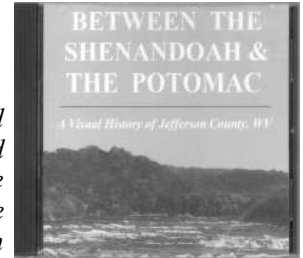


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Free Shipping on ALL Orders!!

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**

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