



# **CAROLINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER**

October 2019

P.O. Box 324, Bowling Green, Virginia 22427

Vol. 39, Issue 4

## **MEETING LOCATION**

**The Caroline Historical Society, Inc., will meet at 3 p.m. on Sunday, October 27, 2019, in the Caroline Community Services Center, 17202 Richmond Turnpike, Milford, VA 22514**

### **From the President**

Our guest speaker's program will fit right in with our new exhibit on 1800s Farming and Farm Life in Caroline. Stop by and view some very interesting artifacts and antique items that were common items on the farms of our relatives and residents. New exhibits will be coming soon.

### **Guest Speaker—Jeff Eastland—Collecting Antique Fruit Jars**

Guest speaker for the meeting will be Jeff Eastland, well known collector and authority on antique fruit jars and bottles. Jeff's presentation will include the history of fruit jars, commonly called "Mason Jars" or "Canning Jars" and their various sizes, colors, and shapes that were developed over 160 years ago.



Jeff currently lives in Stafford County, Virginia, and has been involved in antiques since moving to Virginia in 1975. While working as a probation officer, Jeff began collecting old bottles and fruit jars while buying antique furniture for his home. As time permitted, he attended bottle shows and sold bottles to help pay for his growing hobby of collecting. Over time Jeff was able to turn his hobby into a part time business as an antique dealer. As his business grew, he was able to resign his position as a probation officer and diversified his interests into a variety of antiques including collecting and selling vintage post cards. It was at this point in his career collecting old fruit jars and bottles slowed down while his business grew.

Following his retirement from the antique business two years ago, Jeff returned to his original interest in collecting vintage fruit jars and bottles. With more time to enjoy his hobby, he has been able to expand his collection through buying, selling, and trading the many unique shapes and sizes of fruit jars and bottles. Through his many years of collecting, Jeff has become very knowledgeable on the history of vintage fruit jars and has agreed to share that knowledge with our membership and guests. This should be a most interesting presentation.

## **New Exhibits—Farming and Farm Life in the 1800s**

Our lifestyles, methods of cooking, type of tools, and farming techniques have changed over the years. Our newest display shows visitors what things used to be like on local farms years ago through the three-dimensional objects on exhibit. There are many very interesting and unique pieces that represent the somewhat primitive yet practical way to life in days gone by. The exhibit also provides us with a local history “flashback” of an era of difficult times.



*Vintage Pie Safe—used to store home-made pies, canned goods, and other foods.*

*A few farm items currently on display are a scythe, spinning wheel, sharpening grindstone, and meat hook.*



*Few items from the Farm Exhibit include a musket, ice tongs, corn grinder, butter mold, wooden bowl, jug, biscuit cutter, and crock.*



## Caroline Residents in History

Who was Caroline County native Maj. Gen. John Bankhead Magruder?

John Bankhead Magruder was born in Port Royal, Caroline County, Virginia, May 1, 1807. His parents were Thomas and Elizabeth Bankhead Magruder. John's father practiced law in Fredericksburg, Virginia, while raising his family of nine children. The family faced serious financial issues during his childhood.

John started his formal education at the University of Virginia, but transferred after receiving an appointment to the United States Military Academy (West Point). The idea of a military career was always at the top of the list for young John Magruder. Many of his relatives had served with distinction in the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812.

Magruder graduated from West Point in 1830 and began his colorful military career in 1830 as a brevet second lieutenant in the 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment. He married Henrietta von Kapff on May 18, 1831. Their marriage produced three children, Isabella, Katherine Elizabeth, and Henry R. Magruder. His military assignments kept him away from his family for long periods of time. Mrs. Magruder lived in Baltimore, Maryland, with her children for many years while John's duty stations covered tours of duty in North Carolina, Florida, Maryland, and Maine. John was a very popular officer among his men and soon earned the nickname of "Prince John" by displaying theatrical qualities. He also attained a reputation for his charming wit, social grace, and proper etiquette expected of an officer and a gentleman.

Itching for more action, in 1845 he volunteered for an assignment in Texas to join Gen. Zachary Taylor's army. In less than a year, his wish came true when the War with Mexico broke out on April 25, 1846. During the Mexican War, Magruder was directly involved in several major battles such as Palo Alto, Cerro Gordo, Chapultepec, and Mexico City. Slightly wounded in battle, he received praise from Gen. Winfield Scott and was promoted to "brevet" major. His lessons learned during the Mexican War would prepare him for future military conflicts.

War clouds again formed as the War Between the States began in April 1861 while Magruder was on assignment in Washington, D.C. Being from Virginia originally, Magruder's true loyalty was with his home state of Virginia. After 30 years of military service, John resigned his commission from the United States Army four days after Virginia seceded from the Union. Magruder was appointed colonel in the Confederate States of America Army by John Letcher, governor of Virginia.



*Maj. Gen. John Bankhead Magruder*

In the spring of 1862, Union General George McClellan initiated an attack on the Virginia eastern peninsula in order to capture the Confederate capital of Richmond. Magruder, through his previous military experience, helped turn back the Union Army. For his efforts, he was promoted to major general because of his leadership abilities and transferred to take command of the District of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. He served with distinction in this position for over 2½ years. The war officially ended in April 1865, but Magruder did not formally surrender his forces until June 2, 1865.

Following the surrender of his army, Magruder traveled to Mexico and offered his services to the Emperor Maximilian, who had been installed by the French as part of their takeover of Mexico. While in Mexico, he became a naturalized Mexican citizen. The Maximilian government collapsed and Magruder safely made it back to the United States in 1867. He traveled throughout the country for several years making public speeches and lectures.

After a unique and colorful military career, Caroline County native John Bankhead Magruder died in Houston, Texas, on February 19, 1871, and was buried in Galveston, Texas. He had the distinction of serving as a high-ranking officer in the armies of three different nations, the United States Army, the Confederate States of America Army, and the Imperial Mexican Army of Emperor Maximilian.

## Recent Donations

CHS has been very fortunate to receive several donations of local interest over the past few months. James Farmers, Jr., recently donated several hundred photos from the Farmer/Hicks/Wright families. These photos cover a time period between the early 1900s to the 1990s. The original family photos were scanned by CHS and are now a part of our collection.

Mr. Farmer has also generously loaned CHS items from his father's well-known local business, "Jimmy's Texaco." Jimmy W. Farmer, Sr., operated the service station on Main Street in Bowling Green from the early 1960s until the 1990s. Future CHS exhibits on local businesses will highlight many of these items.



*Memorabilia from "Jimmy's Texaco."*



*Grinding wheel used to sharpen axes and other tools on the farm or railroad.*



Mr. Farmer's loans included a vintage grindstone wheel and a rare early 1900s metal railroad road watering can made by Henry Giessel Co. of Chicago, Illinois. It was used on the old steam railroad locomotives by his grandfather, Wilson "Big Daddy" Farmer, who worked many years locally for the RF&P Railroad.



*Vintage railroad steam engine watering can made by Henry Giessel Co.*

CHS also received a fantastic donation from members of the DeJarnette family, Jo-Dee Davis and Dan Hansen, consisting of a custom-framed copy of a Caroline County map made during the War Between the States (1861–1865) by the Confederate Engineer Bureau, under the direction of Maj. Gen. J. P. Gilmer, Chief Engineer. The original was donated to the Virginia Historical Society many years ago by General Gilmer's daughter. The framed map measures approximately 30 inches by 36 inches and will make an excellent display in our exhibit area.

### **More on Donations—Permanent or Temporary**

The Caroline Historical Society, Inc., welcomes donations of all types related to people, places, or things from Caroline County's past. Our mission is to preserve and display these items whereby residents, visitors, and future generations may learn more about Caroline's rich history. It is the goal of CHS to make others aware of the importance of saving old family photos, tools, documents, war relics, etc., that may give us additional clues or facts about various time periods. This is especially true for old photographs. CHS would be very pleased just to be allowed to copy old local photos of farms, families, individuals, houses, barns, etc., to enhance our collection.



*Photo of local Boy Scout Troop 173 of Bowling Green taken in the early 1960s Scout Master Henry Steigleder, top right.*



*Photo of the old jail in Bowling Green and a confiscated moonshine still. Photo dated 1917.*

The Caroline Historical Society, Inc., and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 10295, are sponsoring a Memorial Brick Program whereby individuals can purchase a brick to honor a veteran



or current service member of the United States Armed Forces. The brick will be placed around the base of the Veterans' Memorial Clock on the county courthouse lawn in Bowling Green, Virginia. The cost of inscribing a brick and having it installed is only \$100.

Application forms are available at the Caroline Historical Society, Inc., 121 Main Street, Bowling Green, Va. 22427, Thursday, Friday, & Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. or may be printed from our Web site at [www.carolinehistoricalsociety.org](http://www.carolinehistoricalsociety.org)



*"Sample" memorial brick.*

**New CHS Members:** Patricia (Pat) Holt, Milford, Virginia  
Dr. Linda Nassie, Magalia, California  
Ed Simmons, Bowling Green, Virginia

**Refreshments for Meeting:** Please feel free to volunteer your services to bring refreshments such as cookies, brownies, snacks, soft drinks, water, etc., to our meetings. See contact information below. It is always appreciated.

### **Dates to Remember**

October 19, 2019—Harvest Festival, Bowling Green, Virginia  
October 27, 2019—CHS Membership Meeting, 3 p. m., Caroline Community Services Building  
January 26, 2020—CHS Membership Meeting, 3 p. m., Caroline Community Services Building

### **Caroline Historical Society, Inc., General Contact Information**

R. Wayne Brooks, President—[wbrooks@bealenet.com](mailto:wbrooks@bealenet.com) Cell Phone (804) 513-9069  
Facebook—Caroline Historical Society, Bowling Green, Va.  
Web Site—[www.carolinehistoricalsociety.org](http://www.carolinehistoricalsociety.org)  
Location—Sidney E. King Arts Center, 121 Main St., Bowling Green, Virginia 22427  
Mailing Address—P.O. Box 324, Bowling Green, VA 22427-0324  
Hours of Operation—Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Special tours by request