

Art-Full Orange

Lynne G. Lewis

The sight of the mountains refreshes the spirit; they elevate the mind and tend to put the imagination into play. Montlezun, September 16, 1816.¹

IT IS DOUBTFUL that anyone would dispute the assertion that Orange is a most beautiful place to live. When we take the time from our busy lives, we are blessed to be able to look out over the pastures and fields to the lovely Blue Ridge Mountains. Luckily, we residents are not the only ones to appreciate the beauty and the history of our fair county. Over the years, many noted artists have captured our landscape, people and events with paint or clay or engraving tools.

Today, a number of fine artists and sculptors live in and around Orange County. This article, however, will focus on renowned artists whose work has documented our county's history. The obvious inspiration for this article is that one such artist is coming to Orange this September. We are, of course, referring to Mort Künstler, one of the most respected and collected historical artists of our day whose passion for the Civil War and mastery of historical vignettes is undisputed.

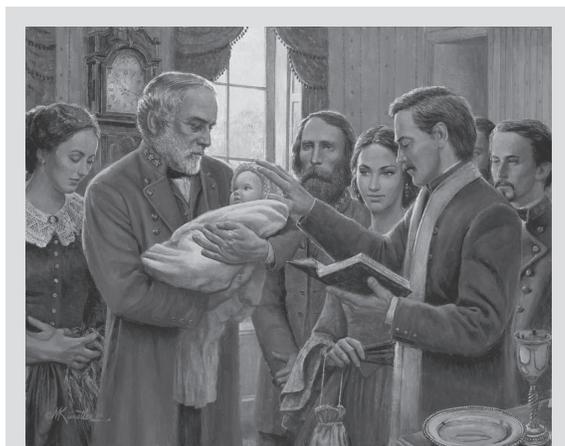
Born in 1931, Mr. Künstler studied at Brooklyn College in New York, U.C.L.A., and Pratt Institute. Early in his career, as with so many other fine artists, Mr. Künstler made his way by providing illustrations for magazine covers (*Boys' Life*, *True Detective Magazine*, *Newsweek*, for example), book dust jackets (Flanagan's *The Year of the French*, a paperback edition of Ferber's *Giant*) and even movie posters (*The Poseidon Adventure*). He also designed the 1994, 29-cent Buffalo Soldiers stamp.

It would take more than an entire newsletter to recount Mr. Künstler's extensive body of work (for detailed information, visit his web site: www.mortkunstler.com), but suffice it to say that Orange County has been privileged to be the venue for two of his Civil War series. And we are about to be the venue for a third depiction of a Civil War event in Orange.

You will remember that the first, *Soldier of Faith* (2002), shows Gen. Robert E. Lee in front of St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, having just attended services there. Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia were in Orange County for the winter of 1863-1864, and while he surely visited all the area churches attended by members of the army, he was most often at St. Thomas'. Mort conferred with his longtime friend and Civil War historian, Dr. James I. Robertson of Virginia Tech, for the date of a heavy Orange County snowfall just preceding a Wednesday evening vespers at St. Thomas', and he dated the scene accordingly.

Following Lee are members of his staff, two of whom are often recognizable in Künstler paintings. The red-kepied General William Nelson Pendleton was both the commander of the army's artillery and an ordained Episcopal minister. We know he preached at St. Thomas' when Confederate President Jefferson Davis was there the Sunday before Thanksgiving Day. The other staff officer is the young, Stetson-wearing Lieutenant Colonel Walter Herron Taylor. Taylor was Lee's fiercely loyal and capable Assistant Adjutant General.

The second, *Tender is the Heart*, is set on May 1, 1864, in the main parlor of Mayhurst, Orange, Orange County, Virginia. The scene is the baptism of Lucy Lee Hill, (born November 1, 1863), showing, among others, Lt. Gen. Robert E. Lee, godfather for Lucy, the proud parents, Lt. Gen. A. P. Hill and his wife Kitty Morgan McClung Hill and The Reverend Richard Terrell Davis,



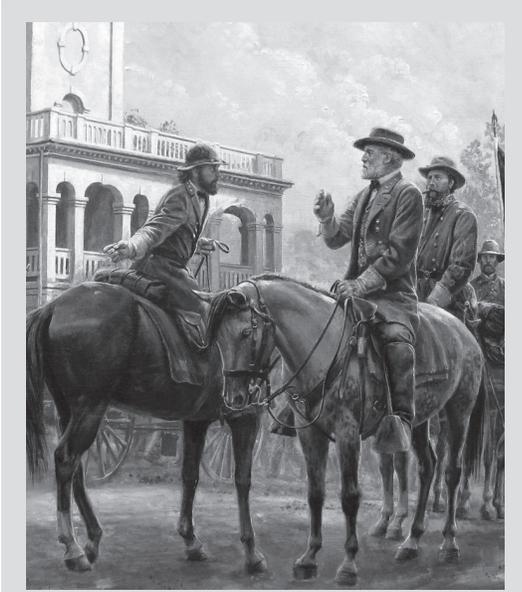
Tender is the Heart by Mort Künstler

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www.mortkunstler.com

¹ *Voyage fait dans les années 1816 et 1817* as translated and published in "A Frenchman Visits Norfolk, Fredericksburg and Orange County, 1816" by L. G. Moffatt, J. M. Carrière and J. G. Moffatt, *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 53, No. 3 (Jul., 1945), p.201. Published by: Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Virginia. Montlezun visited James Madison and the descriptions of the nearly two weeks spent with him at Montpelier are delightful and detailed. Clearly, the Piedmont of Virginia suited M. Montlezun quite nicely.

Art-Full (continued)

Rector of St. Thomas' Episcopal Church in Orange (1859-1866). During the Civil War, he also served as the Chaplain for the 6th Virginia Cavalry Regiment, and he is shown in uniform.



Detail, *Unconquered Spirit* by Mort Künstler
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And so we come to the newest Künstler work featuring Orange, *Unconquered Spirit*, which shows a meeting between generals A. P. Hill, Lee and Longstreet in front of the Orange County Courthouse. It reflects the mood of the Army of Northern Virginia as it returned from Gettysburg. Even before Gettysburg, the Confederacy's political leadership had been warned by Lee that the Union forces were growing stronger as the Confederacy's were growing weaker. Their orders, however, remained "fight on." True to that era's concept of duty and for the protection of their homes and families, the army prepares to do just that.

On September 18, 2010, Mr. Künstler will be in Orange to unveil and sign his newest creation. The signing will take place in the foyer of the 1859 court house starting at 10:00 a.m. St. Thomas', Lee's church, will be open, and walking tours between the church and the court house will be offered. The Farmers Market will be in operation, and period music will be performed on the court house lawn.

We should also note that it is largely thanks to the initiative and persistence of Frank Walker and several other town dignitaries that the importance of Orange County was brought to Mr. Künstler's attention.

What about those earlier artists? Well, in the early days, many who came to Orange County were here to visit and "capture" the likenesses of James Madison and his family. While not an exhaustive record², among those who visited were Charles Peale

Polk (1767-1822), nephew of noted artist Charles Willson Peale; Giuseppe Valaperta (1764-1817), who did a wax portrait of Nelly Conway Madison, ca. 1816, probably at the same time as he did a red wax profile of Madison, both now at the New York Historical Society. Several sculptors visited Orange County, including William John Coffee (1774-1846) in April 1818. His terra cotta bust of Dolley Madison is now at Montpelier.

A most charming painting of Montpelier was done by the Baroness Hyde de Neuville (unknown-1849), wife of the French minister to the United States. On an 1818 visit she painted the façade of the main house and, with a bit of artistic license, squeezed in the Temple/Ice House. In 1825, John H. I. Browere (1790-1834), a New York born artist, travelled to Virginia in order to take life masks of Thomas Jefferson and James and Dolley Madison, among many others. The life masks were then used to create busts of the subjects.

Near the end of Mr. Madison's life, he was visited, and painted, by Asher B. Durand (1796-1886), a renowned American artist known for his picturesque landscapes. Durand came to Montpelier in 1832 or 1833. The last existing portrait of Madison was executed by James B. Longacre (1794-1869) in 1833. What is believed to be the original of the Longacre portrait can be found at the James Madison Museum in Orange.

John Toole (1815-1860), known today as a primitive artist, was born in County Wicklow, Ireland. He and his sister were sent to live with their uncle in Charlottesville after their father's death. Despite briefly attending the University of Virginia, Toole decided that the artistic life was more to his liking. He painted landscapes, miniatures and historical subjects, but it was through his portraiture that he made his living. Among those portraits were noted Orange County residents, Mr. and Mrs. Philip P. Barbour.³ Toole visited Orange County several times during the 1840s. He was a prolific painter (over 300 of his works have been identified) and his images provide a glimpse of the lives of middle class Virginians of the time.⁴

In 1877, Benjamin Henry Latrobe, Jr. came to Bloomingdale as a paying guest. He was the son of the famous Benjamin Henry Latrobe, architect of the capitol in Washington. The younger Latrobe visited Orange County several times, and was at Bloomingdale hoping to find relief from declining health. Unfortunately, he died the following year.⁵ While in Orange County he evidently indulged in his family's artistic bent, making charming drawings

Virginia). Most helpful, too, was Theodore Bolton's "The Life Portraits of James Madison" in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 8, No. 1, James Madison, 1751-1836: Bicentennial Number (Jan., 1951), pp. 25-47. Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1920732>, accessed July 12, 2010.

3 William B. O'Neal, *Primitive Into Painter: Life and Letters of John Toole*. The University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville, Virginia, 1960.

4 http://www.alexandria.lib.va.us/lhsc_online_collection_guides/archive/box_067.pdf, accessed July 14, 2010.

5 Joe Rowe, "Bloomingdale: the Golsans" Orange County Historical Society *Newsletter*, Winter 2004/2005, Volume 35, No. 4, p. 4.

2 The following information comes from a number of sources, including the author's culling of various records for visitors to Montpelier, and Ann Miller's "Visitors to Mr. Madison: Travellers' Accounts by Some Early Nineteenth Century Visitors to Montpelier" (unpublished manuscript on file at James Madison's Montpelier, Montpelier Station,

Art-Full (*continued*)

of at least two local homes, Somerset in Orange County and the Woodberry Residence in Madison County.⁶

Skipping ahead to the 20th century, as part of a New Deal program, funded by the Section of Fine Arts under the Treasury Department (and not the WPA), New York City artist Arnold Friedman (1874-1946) came to Orange and executed the mural that can still be seen today in the Orange post office. The work is titled "Upland Pastures" and was completed in 1937.

Emil Schnellock (1890-1958) is thought to have been born in New York to German parents. Perhaps best known today as the lifelong friend of Henry Miller (they attended school together in New York), as a young man Schnellock studied art in Europe for several years. By 1920 though, he was back in New York, where he established himself as a commercial artist.

There are two versions of how Schnellock met the Grays of Montebello in the 1930s. The first has them meeting in Europe during a trip by the Grays, while the other maintains that Schnellock and a friend were in Lake George, New York, one year and apparently saved the daughter of Leslie Gray from drowning. In either case, Schnellock was invited to Montebello, was commissioned to paint murals in their dining room, and liked Virginia and his cottage behind the house at Montebello so well he stayed for the next seven or eight years, becoming a family friend. He took a part time teaching job at Woodberry Forest, then in 1938, after giving a lecture on art appreciation at Mary Washington College (now the University of Mary Washington), he was hired as an instructor. He remained a member of the faculty until his death in 1958. Mr. Schnellock is buried at Montebello.⁷

Carroll K. Bassett (1906-1972), served for many years as Marion duPont Scott's principal trainer and jockey. Bassett supervised the early schooling of Battleship, a horse he later rode to victory in the U.S. Grand National and two National Steeplechase Hunt Cups, 1933-34. He had also studied at the Art Students' League in New York City and became a highly accomplished sculptor of equine subjects later in life. The Carroll K. Bassett Memorial Building, which is home to Camden, South Carolina's Fine Arts Center of Kershaw County was named for him and houses a collection of his work. He was inducted into Thoroughbred racing's Hall of Fame in 1972.⁸

And here we close our brief look at some of the artists who have come to (and sometimes stayed in) Orange County, knowing that there were – and are – many more than we have had space to detail. These were very special visitors to Orange County, indeed.

⁶ Frank S. Walker, Jr., personal communication, 20 July 2010.

⁷ This mini-biography of Emil Schnellock is based on material gathered from V. R. Shackelford (Sr.) and Lyne M. Shackelford's *Some Orange Blossoms*, pp. 37-38 (self published, n.d.) and from <http://cosmotc.blogspot.com/2007/06/emil-schnellock-biography.html>, accessed July 21, 2010.

⁸ <http://www.nationalsteeplechase.com/chasing/history/> and <http://www.racingmuseum.org/hall-of-fame/horse-jockeys-view.asp?varID=9>, both accessed July 24, 2010.

New 1734 Map of Orange County



This is a case of an unfortunate incident having a happy ending. Not too long ago, Harley-Davidson dealer Don Waugh's copy of a 1734 Ansell map that hung in his show room was stolen right off the wall. This is the map that shows the boundaries of Orange County as it was originally formed – extending all the way to the Mississippi River. Wishing to

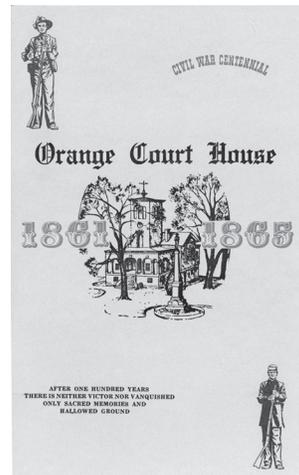
replace the missing map, Mr. Waugh consulted with Frank Walker about a possible source for one. As it ultimately transpired, it was decided that the best approach, given that there was no good source for a copy of the original, was to have a new, scalable, enhanced version professionally prepared.

Several years ago, Ken Clark created a version of the Ansell map for use by the historical society, and Ken graciously granted permission to use his version as the jumping off point for the creation of an updated, more generally usable document. Then, thanks to the interest and support of Mr. Waugh, the Orange County Historical Society, the Orange Downtown Alliance, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Orange Department of Tourism, enough was donated to employ Randy Beard to create a scalable amalgamation of several maps, including the Ansell and Ken Clark versions.

The excellent map is now in hand, and Mr. Beard and all those sponsors who contributed to its creation deserve a big thank you. Keep an eye open, because you may be seeing this map around town.

Book Corner

♣ *Orange Courthouse, 1861-1865: Orange in the Civil War*



A compilation of official records (OR) regarding Orange County in the Civil War and men who served from the area.

\$4.00 (softcover, 46 pp.)

10% discount for members of the Orange County Historical Society or the Orange County African-American Historical Society. For additional publications, be sure to see our website, www.orangecovahist.org, or drop by our Research Center (130 Caroline Street, Orange, VA) for a complete list.

The Restored Slave Quarters at The Kemper Residence, Town of Madison

Ann L. Miller

THIS LITTLE CABIN, the site of our June 2010 picnic, was part of a small complex of outbuildings that once served the house now known as the Kemper Residence in the town of Madison. The main house was built for Thomas Welch between 1852 and 1857. After passing through several owners the property was acquired by Cremora Cave, wife of county clerk Belfield Cave, in 1865. The Caves' son-in-law, attorney, former Speaker of the House of Delegates, and Confederate General James L. Kemper, bought the property in 1868, and lived and practiced law there until his election as the first post-Reconstruction governor of Virginia in 1874. After completing his term as governor, Kemper retired to his farm, Walnut Hills, in Orange County. He sold his house in Madison to his law partner Francis McMullan in 1886. The property remained in the interrelated McMullan, Christian, and Compton families until the 1960s. It then served as the site of extension classrooms for the University of Virginia (before the establishment of the Virginia Community College system), and was subsequently transferred to the county of Madison.

Today a number of county services are housed on the property, in addition to the Kemper Residence and associated historic buildings. The latter are administered by the Madison County Historical Society under an agreement with the county. The early buildings remaining on the site are the main house (ca. 1852-1857, with later additions), the slave quarters, and Kemper's law office. It appears probable that the slave quarters, along with some other now-vanished domestic structures, was constructed at the same time as the main house. Kemper's law office likely was built several years later.

Following the Civil War, the former slave quarters became housing for African-American servants. The little building continued as servants' housing well into the 20th century, then subsequently was used for storage until the restoration initiative by the Madison County Historical Society. In both size and finish, it should be noted that the sort of dwelling exemplified by the slave quarters was typical of the very modest housing of many early settlers, slaves, free blacks, and later low-income families, both black and white, up through the 19th century, and even into the early 20th century.

Like many small dwellings and outbuildings of the period, the one-room slave quarters, constructed of pine logs and set on low brick and stone supports, was crudely built. The log walls were covered with weatherboarding on the exterior (and even had decorative molding applied to the cornice) to complement the main house that stands only a short distance to the front. In contrast, the interior finish of the quarters consisted of logs crudely daubed with mud and covered with multiple coats of whitewash. An architectural assessment of the slave quarters in the early 21st



century revealed serious deterioration: nearly all of the logs were unsound due to termite damage. In many cases, the logs were so damaged that they could be crushed by the pressure of a hand.

Following several years of research, planning, and fundraising, and with approval from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, which holds an easement on the property, the Madison County Historical Society undertook the restoration of the slave quarters in 2009. Maury Hanson of the Society's Board of Directors was project manager, Joe

Wayner of Wayner Construction in Orange served as general contractor, and yours truly, Ann Miller, was the architectural historian for the project. The restoration work was done by Craig Jacobs of Salvagewrights in Orange, a specialist in historic log buildings. Many other volunteers participated in various phases of the project, as well.

Beginning in August 2009, restoration began. Due to its condition, the building had to be completely disassembled. The roof structure was removed intact (by crane) and set aside for re-use. The walls, doors, and windows were then removed, examined, and their condition assessed for re-use as well. Unfortunately, only a few of the upper wall logs were sound enough to be re-used, but replacements were secured from another small Madison County log house of similar age, which was being demolished to make way for a new house on its site. Some of the lower logs, the floor joists, and the floorboards proved to be 20th-century replacements, indicating that the building's minimal foundation and position nearly on the ground had caused previous problems.

One highly unusual feature of the house was the method of fastening the wooden chinking between the logs. Wooden chinking, which held the clay daubing placed between the logs, was often simply jammed between them. In the slave quarters however, the chinking, consisting of pieces of pine, was placed between the logs and secured with small pine wedges set into the logs. Although the restoration team had considerable experience in working with early log buildings, none of us had seen this sort of feature elsewhere in this region.

Various artifacts were also found behind the logs. These included a china doll and a metal plate with Middle Eastern motifs. It is still uncertain if these items got into these locations by accident or on purpose. Research on these artifacts is ongoing.

The doors and door frames were repaired and reused, as was the loft window, which appeared to be original. From architectural

See Kemper on page 5.

Kemper (*continued*)

evidence, the double-hung window in the north downstairs (gable end) wall was an early, possibly Kemper era, addition. There was also some evidence that this may have been an enlargement of an earlier window. The dimensions of the later window were retained since the eventual exhibits will include the building's time as a servants' quarters. The front window entailed a tougher restoration decision: sometime before the mid-20th century, a small window had been inserted beside the front door as a "cottage" or "slider" window, and the insertion of the 20th-century window had destroyed the structural evidence for any earlier, small window at this location. The small window in the restored quarters is conjectural, although likely, based on several surviving 19th-century photographs of similar quarters. A 20th-century loft stair was removed during the restoration. Fragments of a "ladder stair" support were found reused as replacement furring strips behind replacement

weatherboards; however, it is uncertain whether this ladder stair was originally located in the slave quarters, and pending further research, no ladder to the loft has yet been constructed.

The restoration deviated slightly from authenticity in raising the building a little above the ground level and grading the area in order to allow proper drainage. Replacement floorboards consistent with the era of the house were installed. The replacement logs were "daubed" with a soft mortar to mimic the original mud, and, as indicated by architectural evidence, the roof was covered with wooden shakes.

The restored quarters was dedicated at a meeting of the Madison County Historical Society on November 15, 2009. The final remaining structural phase, the restoration of the chimney, is on schedule to be completed by the end of 2010.

Programs and Picnics

Lynne G. Lewis

Tourism in Orange County

On Monday, April 26, historical society members had the pleasure of hearing Lynne Lochen speak about her job as the Director of Tourism for Orange County.

By way of introduction, Ms. Lochen noted that her background includes a degree in history, and a variety of tourism-related jobs. Among her numerous current activities, she is serving on the Board of the Virginia Civil War Trails. Ms. Lochen spoke about what tourism is doing for the Commonwealth of Virginia and Orange County, noting that her specific mission is to promote Orange County as a travel destination.

Tourism is one of the largest industries in Virginia. It provides revenue, a tax base, and jobs, with \$19.2 billion in revenue for the Commonwealth in 2009. There are more than 210,000 jobs related to tourism. Tourism is an investment, not an expense: every \$1 invested brings back \$5 in revenue. In Orange County, tourism last year brought in \$34 million in revenue, \$1.1 million in tax revenue and accounted for 487 jobs. Orange County's Tourism Department is located at the Visitors Bureau at the train depot, with one full time employee (Ms. Lochen), three part-time staff and 45 volunteers. It is a state certified visitor center that sees about 6,000 people annually.

Who are our travelers? Records indicate that 60% are visiting friends and family, 84% come by car, and 30% did not spend the night. While the number one "entertainment" for visitors to Virginia is usually shopping, the number one attraction, for the first time last year, was the Blue Ridge Parkway. Historic sites continue to be important to travelers and heritage tourism is rising (one of few niche markets to do so). Fifty percent of visitors listed themselves as extremely satisfied, and would return to Virginia.

Orange Tourism is exploring niche market visitors interested in the civil war, weddings, weekend getaways, wine tastings, and family history. Ms. Lochen plans to promote Gordonsville and eastern Orange County more than has been done in the past.

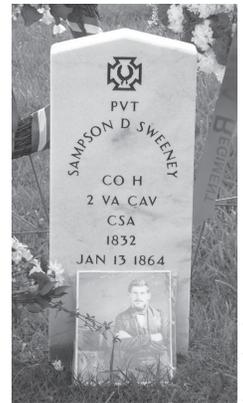
Sam Sweeney

On June 7, the Orange County Historical Society and the United Daughters of the Confederacy hosted a program at Graham Cemetery, just west of Orange, to remember "Banjo Sam" Sweeney and dedicate his newly installed grave marker in the Confederate soldier section of the cemetery. "Banjo Sam," a member of Confederate Gen. J.E.B Stuart's band, died in Orange on January 13, 1864, of undetermined causes.

Retired National Park Service historian Stuart G. Vogt, who had arranged with the Veterans Administration to provide the headstone for Sweeney, related some of the information his extensive research had revealed,¹ including the fact that Banjo Sam was almost certainly interred in Graham Cemetery.

Much to the delight of the more than 100 attendees, the memorial program included music by Keith Walters and the Virginia Serenaders (Glenway Walters and Joe Bianchini), who played period tunes on a variety of instruments including the fiddle, banjo, percussion and bones. Musicologist Joe Ayers, banjo player, provided historical vignettes and also played music of the era.

The light was fading from the sky as the last of the participants, who had partaken of the refreshments thoughtfully provided by the UDC members, finished speaking with the presenters and finally headed home.



Lynne Lewis

¹ Stuart G. Vogt, "What Happened to 'Banjo Sam' Sweeney?" *Orange County Historical Society Record*, Volume 40, No. 2, pp. 1-2.

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Programs (*continued*)

Kemper Slave Quarters



Lynne Lewis

On June 28th, Bill Scholten, President, and the Madison County Historical Society, hosted the Orange County Historical Society at the Kemper Residence, their headquarters in Madison. The picnic focused on the newly restored slave quarters. After Ann Miller's presentation, members were invited to tour the cabin and Kemper's Law Office. It was a most enjoyable evening and the Orange County Historical Society members were most appreciative of the chance to see the wonderful work of a fellow society.

Upcoming

The August 30th picnic will be held at the Robertson Memorial Fountain, adjacent to the train station/visitors bureau in the Town of Orange. Appropriately, the program will be about railroads in Orange County, presented by Frank S. Walker, Jr. Plans are still being developed, but we hope to have additional material on display. Remember that the August picnic starts at 6:00 p.m.

On September 27, Holly C. Shulman, Editor in Chief of *The Dolley Madison Project* (<http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/madison/index.html>), will be our presenter. At this time the precise topic has to be determined, so keep a lookout for the announcement postcard for details.

Please Join Us!

We invite you to join the Orange County Historical Society. Please provide your name and contact information as you wish it to appear in our records and select the appropriate dues level. Mail the completed form, along with your dues payment to The Orange County Historical Society (OCHS), to 130 Caroline Street, Orange, VA 22960.

The Orange County Historical Society is a non-profit organization. Your membership fees are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Name: _____

(If business/organization member, name of business or organization)

Street: _____

City: _____

State: _____ **Zip:** _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Membership Status: New Renewal Address, Name, etc. Update

Would you be willing to receive meeting notices via email in lieu of a postcard? Yes No

Membership Level: Society dues are for the period of January 1 - December 31, 2010.

Annual Individual Member: \$20

Annual Student Member (High School or College): \$12.50

Annual Family Member: \$30

Annual Sustaining Member: \$100

Annual Patron Member: \$200

Annual Sponsor Member: \$300