

Orange Oracle

An Occasional Electronic Update from the Orange County Historical Society

History-to-Go

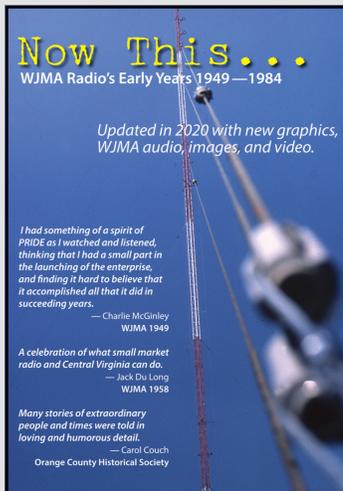
Next up: "Now This," a history of WJMA Radio station, produced by former radio station Program Director, Ross

Hunter. The documentary focuses on the "glory years" of a small rural radio station. He writes, "I began with WJMA founder Welford Sherman in the fall of 2006. Eventually I had almost 40 hours of video tape and a couple of audio only interviews. Of the 28 people included in the video, 11 have died since it was completed."

To view "Now This," click on this link:

<https://youtu.be/hPLm1P140nU>

Next up will be "Now This...Extras," a collection of outtakes that didn't make it into the original documentary but which offer an informative and sometimes humorous glimpse into behind the scenes at our local radio station. It will be presented via Zoom at 7 pm, Monday June 28th. WJMA alums, Ross Hunter, Phil Audibert and, we hope, a few others will be available to answer questions in this our first attempt to slowly bring back live programs on the last Monday of the month. Instructions for joining the Zoom meeting will appear in the next *Oracle* and/or by email.



Recycled Rails

By James Luther and Frank Walker-

Luther writes, "As I was walking down Spicers Mill Road I noticed the unusual culvert over Baylor Run.

The railing support posts were also RR rails.

Given the unusual shape of the culvert I assumed it was likely built by Town forces and the rails may have come from scrap they had lying around. But then I thought the likely place the Rapidan Railroad would have run was down Baylor Run. This got me to thinking: these narrow gauge rails around the property might have been rails from the Rapidan RR that were left in place when the line was abandoned."



Frank Walker responds: "The Rapidan RR might not have been a source of those rails. Their exit from our region was apparently quite orderly.

As I understand it, they pulled the spikes and removed the plates and rails. The more likely source of scrap light rail would be the PF&P when

Langbourne Williams converted from narrow gauge to standard gauge in 1926 with the intent of shuttling C&O freight between Orange and Fredericksburg, something that never materialized."



Barboursville Ruins scanned

This past March 31st the UVA Scholar's Lab, School of Architecture and Center for Palladian Studies presented a program entitled "Building Barboursville : Scanning and Modeling the Ruins." Here's the link to this fascinating presentation:

<https://scholarslab.lib.virginia.edu/blog/building-barboursville/>

New Survey-

If you like history and want to become more involved, consider becoming a volunteer. A survey will soon go out to our subscribers asking about skills they have that they might consider contributing as a volunteer. Here's just a sample of what we need:

- Collections & cataloging
- Digitizing (scanning) collections
- Carpentry, electrical, plumbing building maintenance
- Interior design
- Landscaping
- Web site development
- Historic research
- Genealogical research
- Fundraising
- Accounting, book keeping
- Budget management
- Photography/Videography
- Publications
- Volunteer recruitment

Become a Society Member

We want to reach out to anyone interested in Orange County history. Please consider becoming a member of Orange County Historical Society. Just click here...

<https://www.orangecovahist.org/about-us.html>

From the Vault

By Ray Ezell

This month's column introduces an interesting collection of ledger/receipt book pages from more than 100 years ago. These documents provide a unique snapshot of the commercial activity in the county during the period 1890-1910. We see that Orange was no sleepy town; and even though the county was rural and population was relatively small, this collection confirms that a successful and diverse mercantile class was thriving.



Here's a list:

- James G. Field, Attorney-Gordonsville (1891)
- Mrs. L. L. Perry, Dry Goods/Grocery-Orange (1891-92)
- L. S. Ricketts, Pharmacy-Orange (1890)
- J. B. Robinson, Pharmacy-Orange
- Gordon Land Company-Gordonsville (1891)
- Williams & Company, Hardware-Orange (1890)
- Adams Express Company, Freight Shipping-Orange (1890)
- E. W. Row, M.D., Physician/Surgeon (1891)
- H. T. Holladay, Milling-Rapidan (1890)
- David May, Dry Goods/Clothing-Orange (1891)
- John McDonald & Son, Grocery-Orange (1891-1893)
- J. W. Ross, Dry Goods-Gordonsville (1890)
- William S. Grymes, Livery-Orange (1891)
- Jonathan E. Morris & Son, Milling-Orange (1890)
- West Gordonsville Land Company-Gordonsville (1891)
- G. A. Gaines, Whiskey/Tobacco-Orange (1893)
- Bury & Hopkins, Livery-Gordonsville (1891)
- D. L. Curry, Hardware-Orange (1908)
- R. N. Rogers & Company, Dry Goods-Orange (1890)
- R. H. England, Milling- Raccoon Ford (1889)
- *The Piedmont Virginian*, Newspaper-Orange (1890)
- William J. Crittenden, M.D., Physician-Unionville (1890)