

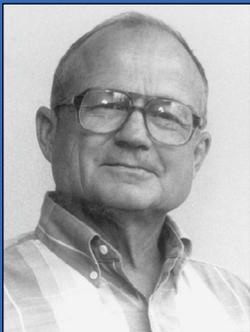
Orange Oracle

An electronic update from the Orange County Historical Society

Remembering Robert Duff Green

July 16, 1928 -
March 23, 2023

Duff's extensive commitment to community service extends to the Orange County Historical Society. He was on the Board and served as president in 1999. More importantly, with



his camera, he documented everyday life in Orange County for more than four decades for the family-owned *Orange County Review*. Even after the Greens sold the newspaper in 1984, he continued to publish historical vignettes with his "It Happened But Not Recently" column. Recently, thanks to former editor Jeff Poole, Duff's negatives were donated to the Historical Society. After they are cataloged and scanned, that priceless photographic record will be made available to everyone.

Thank you, Duff Green.

A Duff Green story: Never say "very"

By Phil Audibert

The first job I ever had, at age 16, was writing feature stories and taking photographs for the *Orange County Review*. That tradition became something of a pattern. In the 1980s when Patricia McArver was editor, and again from 2005 to 2012 when I penned the "Insider" series for Jeff Poole, I was doing the exact same thing, probably for less money in inflation-adjusted dollars.

But Duff was my first mentor. His nickname for me was "Sergeant Automatic." Why, I don't know. Perhaps it had something to do with my eagerness to snap to attention and do his bidding.

Back in those days, the mid-1960s, the *Review* was located on Chapman Street. It was a dark, dank, busy, fascinating place for a teenager with a good measure of printer's ink already flowing through his veins. I'd watch brother Andrew operate the Rube Goldberg-like Linotype machine, his arms scarred by hot lead. I'd watch as sister Nancy Moser would feed columns of copy through a wax machine and then stick them to a dummy page. Alongside fellow employees with nicknames like "Steamboat," "Tex," and "Speedy," I'd scoop

armfuls of freshly-printed newspapers hurtling from the new offset press. Wednesday nights we'd stay up late getting the paper out, hand-inserting the B section into the A. I'd come home and wake my mother to show her the week's paper before anyone else—literally hot off the presses.

Duff taught me how to take photographs. "Big and bright" he would say when talking about exposure settings on the camera. He taught me to "dodge" and "burn" images onto prints in the dark room. And he told me a good photograph for a rural weekly newspaper should have a child in it or a cute animal—preferably both.

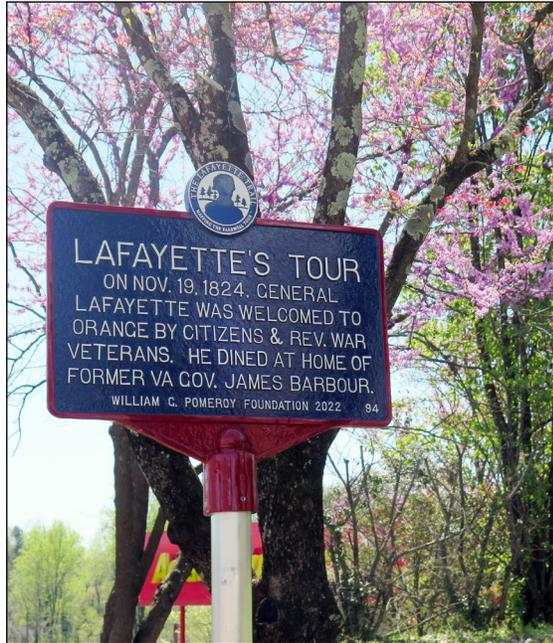
He also taught me how to write a sentence. One time I described something as being "very" big, or tall, or whatever; I forget. He turned to me and said, "every time you use 'very' I want you to use the word 'damn' instead." He paused a beat and added, "and because we're a family newspaper, I'll strike 'damn' from your story."

He was right. "Very" is a stupid word. I've never used it since. So, I conclude by saying, "Thank you Duff. You had a damn profound effect on me and I'm honored to have known you."

Lafayette sign update

The story gets curiouser and curiouser.

As you may remember, the wording of the sign commemorating the Marquis de Lafayette's 1824 visit to Orange was changed without notice to the Historical Society. And the new wording seemed to contain an error by stating that the Marquis dined at the home of James Barbour. But Barbour's home was in Barboursville, not Orange.



According to Julien Icher, a Frenchman who is leading the Lafayette Trail commemoration through 25 states, the change was made by the Pomeroy Foundation, which funds these sign installations. Icher pointed out the change was based on primary sources.

The 1824 visit was documented by Lafayette's secretary who was traveling with him, a man named Auguste Levasseur. As many as four translations of this account exist. One of those translations refers to the "house of" James Barbour. But when we asked our own resident (ahem) translator to look over the French text, he found no reference whatsoever to James Barbour's home.

It just goes to show that even primary sources can be in error.

The sign may or may not be changed. Stay tuned!

Call for volunteers

We are looking for four volunteers to serve on the outreach committee. This group will develop a marketing plan and enact, as necessary, methods to publicize OCHS programs, initiatives and products. The committee will continue to support the *Oracle* and the "History-to-Go" YouTube channel, as well as the Society website. If you are interested and/or have any questions, please email volunteer coordinator May Saxton at OCHistVolunteers@gmail.com.

2023 programs update

> **Sunday, April 30, 3 p.m.**

History of Clore Furniture, presented by Troy Coppage

Meet at the Orange Baptist Church Pine Room. Enter through the door across the parking lot from the old Bank of America building.

> **Sunday, May 28, 4 p.m.**

Traditional Blacksmithing with the Rev. Charles McRaven

Meet at the shelter at Veterans Park off of Newton Street. Bring a picnic, if you'd like.

> **Sunday, June 25, 6 p.m.**

The History of Mayhurst with Jason Cashell

12460 Mayhurst Lane, Orange.
Bring a picnic.

> **Sunday, July 30, 6 p.m.**

Grymes School 75th Anniversary with Margaret Hill

13775 Spicer's Mill Rd., Orange.
Bring a picnic.

> **Sunday, August 27, 6 p.m.**

The History of Woodley by Steve Sanford

Woodley Road. Bring a picnic.

> **Sunday, September 24, 3 p.m.**

The History of Bloomsbury with Bethany Sullivan

Bloomsbury Road. Bring a picnic.

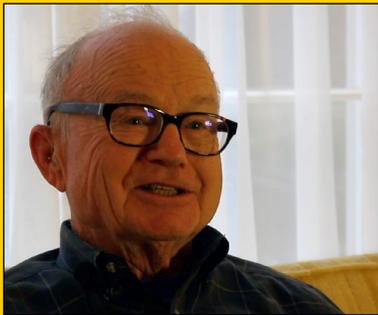
> **Sunday, October 29, 3 p.m.**

Preservation Virginia (formerly APVA) Revolving Loan Fund with Gordon Rohr

Meet at the newly renovated OCHS Sandra Speiden auditorium at 130 Caroline St., Orange.

History-to-Go

> Duff Green Stories



A collection of memories told by a pillar of the Orange County community who passed recently at the age of 94. This video was gleaned from interviews with Duff Green for several documentaries and

oral histories for the Orange County Historical Society and the James Madison Museum. It premieres on May 13 when this link will become active. <https://youtu.be/r8WkBgVwVgY>

> Montpelier Archaeology: the Home Farm Site

Presented April 16 by Dr. Matt Reeves, Director of Archaeology at James Madison's Montpelier. Here's the link: <https://youtu.be/Rt9TUvadNdY>



> Knights of the Golden Horseshoe



Ann Miller's thorough study of the "before, during, and after" of the 1716 Knights of the Golden Horseshoe Expedition, where Lt. Gov. Alexander Spotswood led a company of men over the Blue Ridge

Mountains from Germanna. Here's the link: <https://youtu.be/gMCv2osUz2g>

> Memories Greatest Hits, Part II

Following on the heels of Part I, this is another collection of our favorite snippets from the Memories Oral History Project. This program was shown at our annual meeting in January. Here's the link: https://youtu.be/OtRRJDzhV_I

Board of directors retreat

By Ray Ezell

On Saturday, April 1, the Society's Board of Directors met at Orange Baptist Church for their retreat. The meeting covered a number of essential topics and served to acquaint new and returning directors with the mission of the Society and the methods for accomplishing its goals. The directors at the meeting included: Patrick Colby, James Luther, Carla Passarello, Margaret Hill, Mike Saxton, Joe Wayner, Jennifer Conley, the Rev. Darryle Crump, Jess Cifizarri, Mark Hoerath, and Ray Ezell.

The group reviewed the financial footing of the Society, including significant anticipated expenses for the coming year. The board considered and prioritized opportunities for improving the appearance and maintenance of the interior and exterior of the building. Other topics covered included: improving and revamping the appearance/utility of the Society's website, participating in the approaching Virginia commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, increasing visibility to the general public and members, striving for operational excellence, facilitating member participation, implementing the planned audio/visual upgrades to the auditorium, and continuing our support for Orange County educators.

The board assessed the existing committee structure, and directors volunteered for service on several committees. Lastly, the board reviewed the implementation of the goals included in the 5-year strategic plan (adopted in 2022), and the directors committed to one or two specific ways in which they would bring their expertise and passions to bear for the success of the Society.

As an added bonus, the retreat allowed the group to get to know one another on a more personal level and build the bonds of fellowship that create a productive collaborative working environment.