

# Orange Oracle

An Occasional Electronic Update from the Orange County Historical Society

## History-to-Go

Did you know that shoes were a popular item to be hidden behind the walls of Colonial and Antebellum homes...in particular left shoes? To find out more about this method of warding away evil spirits, be sure



to watch this month's episode of History-to-Go, "Buried Above Ground." Board member Ray Ezell takes us on a fascinating journey into the superstitious concealment of artifacts in Virginia's Piedmont. Just click on this link to access the society's History-to-Go YouTube channel.

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQvPfUSloS7GZW4Pce\\_17XQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQvPfUSloS7GZW4Pce_17XQ)

Next up is Frank Walker's "Brief History of Orange County, Virginia."



## What was in the news 100 Years Ago?

by Phil Audibert

As we bid a not-so-fond farewell to 2020, we thought it might be interesting to see what was going around here exactly 100 years ago. Behold the Dec. 26, 1920 edition of the *Orange Observer*, the newspaper of record at that time. A few observations:

- First, a general comment: the print point size is tiny... almost illegible. How anyone over the age of 60 could read this stuff escapes me.
- Although this edition was published on Boxing Day, 1920, there is hardly a mention of Christmas. The lead story is about the 300th anniversary of Thanksgiving! There is an ad buried on an interior page "For a Merry Musical Christmas," but that's it...no mention of Christmas. Hmhmhm.
- There's an interesting article on Page 1 about peacetime use of surplus gas masks, a poignant reminder that World War I was a recent memory, as was the Spanish flu.

## Some good that came from Covid-

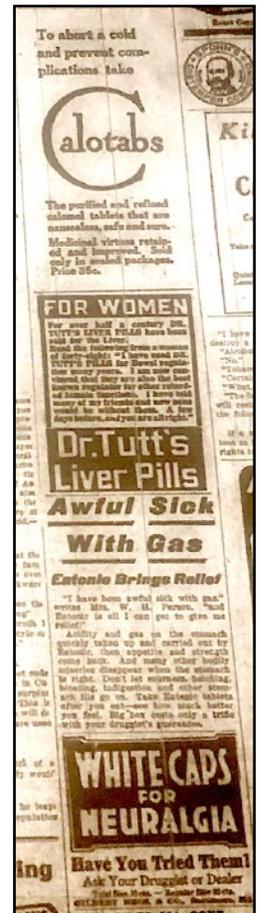
Despite being handed lemons (Coronavirus), the Orange County Historical Society has managed to make some lemonade over the past nine months.

- The publication that you are now reading, the *Orange Oracle*, an “occasional” electronic update, is now in its ninth issue since it was first launched this past April.
- ‘History-to-Go’- bringing our monthly programs (that we couldn’t present in person) right into your home, thanks to modern technology. This month marks our fifth episode, with more to come.



Happy New Year  
from  
The Orange County  
Historical Society!

- It is interesting to note that two banks, Citizens National and National Bank of Orange chose to list all of their liabilities and assets in the newspaper.
- It seems back then everyone was obsessed with personal health and the various concoctions and treatments that had been developed to improve it. Just about all of page 2 is taken up with ads and articles with headlines like this: “After Sickness Hypo Cod Built Me Up Quickly,” and “Had Nervous Breakdown, But Health Restored to Texas Lady, Who Is Now Well and Strong and Able to Do All Her Housework and More.”
- And of course the ads are always interesting: Here’s one for Wrigley’s gum: “after smoking, cleanse your mouth, moisten your throat, sweeten your breath with WRIGLEY’S, Still



only 5 cents a Package.”

- Ads for local businesses abound: W. W. Ware Hardware, located in the building where the Music Room is today at the corner of Main and Byrd, offered everything from

housewares to motor vehicles. And Jos. Samuels Realty ...in business 100 years ago, still going strong today, making it the second oldest business in town. The oldest continually operating business in the Town of Orange is Mason Insurance Agency. But we didn’t see an ad for them in the Dec. 26, 1920 newspaper.

