

Orange Oracle

An Electronic Update from the Orange County Historical Society

A Message from our Prez-Annual meeting going virtual

Our Annual Business Meeting will be held via Zoom this year due to the Covid situation.

Regardless, I hope that you will all join us remotely. I will present the Annual Report of the Society, and we will elect a slate of new members to the Board of Directors. Following the business portion of the meeting, we will present a new history program by Frank Walker.

Please use the link below to join the meeting on Sunday afternoon, **January 30, 2022 at 2:00 PM.**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88692388101>
Meeting ID: 886 9238 8101

I will send out a digital copy of the annual report and link to Frank Walker's presentation a few days before the 30th. I hope to see you all then.

History-to-Go: Robert S. Walker and His Legacy, Woodberry Forest



Five Year Strategic Plan Adopted

By Bill Speiden

In January 2021 our hard-working long-term leader, Lynne Lewis, stepped down and Ray Ezell became President of the Orange County Historical Society. Soon afterwards, I made a motion to start a design and fundraising project, but that discussion soon bogged down. Instead, I suggested we do a Five-Year Plan to help us focus on our needs and their possible solutions.

To explore this further, Ray Ezell appointed Mike Saxton, Clara Colby, Bernice Walker, Frank Walker, and Joe Wayner to a committee with me serving as chair. We sought input from committee chairs, staff, and members. Twenty eight meetings later, we finished examination of our Vision and Mission Statements, and came up with a plan that addresses each of the society's objectives.

Hopping between rabbit holes, Mike Saxton did a Herculean job of helping us craft wording acceptable to the committee for each set of Goals and Actions. During the Holiday season Mike and I received input to a suggested Preamble and Executive Summary. We incorporated as many pertinent inputs as space allowed.

Please note: this plan is to be used as a guide only. It is not mandatory. It is a fluid document subject to change at any time by the Board of Directors.

The Plan was presented to the Board of Directors on January 18, 2022 and was unanimously adopted as our official Five Year Strategic Plan. Copies are available for anyone's perusal at the OCHS research center.

From a Captain in Mosby's Rangers to a simple farm hand, from an astute businessman to the founder of a prestigious boarding school in Virginia, Robert Stringfellow Walker is a study in perseverance and determination. This fascinating story is told by his grandson, Frank Walker, Junior, and it is illustrated by family and archival school photographs. Here's the link:

<https://youtu.be/r-I8RrsEJT8>

Gentle Reminder– Dues due

If you haven't renewed your OCHS membership, please do so by Jan. 31. Send renewals to OCHS, 130 Caroline St., Orange, VA 22960

Know someone who might like to receive the *Oracle*?

Send us their email address!

ocvahistorical1965@gmail.com

Interested in Orange County history?

Become a Society Member!

Want to help?

Become a volunteer!

Click here-

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

Little Petersburg Cemetery Clean Up Project

This past November 6, volunteers gathered to work on the Little Petersburg Cemetery. After clearing away brush, vines and fallen limbs and collecting trash, they identified 13 headstones and found an additional 65 graves. Some may pre-date the Civil War.

The cemetery has been surveyed and the deed updated to reflect the current Bethel Baptist Church trustees. The cemetery is now thought to be secure for the foreseeable future.

Mrs. B. Wood's: A Green Book Site in Orange County

Editor's Note- Ann Miller, always on the lookout for some transportation-related history, sends the following:

Between 1938 and 1967, *The Negro Traveler's Green Book* was a guidebook listing safe and welcoming venues for black travelers in that segregated era. Founded and originally published by New York City mailman Victor Hugo Green, this yearly publication provided information on establishments in the U.S. offering automotive service and transportation, lodging, food, entertainment, personal care, and other services.

Among the Virginia locations, one Orange County site was noted in the Green Book. But the exact location is uncertain: entries between 1950 and 1956 list lodging provided by "Mrs. B. Wood, R.F.D. 2, Orange, Virginia." Does anyone remember Mrs. Wood, her business and its location, or know if the building still stands? If you do, please contact the historical society at info@orangecovahist.org We'd love to have more information on Mrs. Wood--and make sure that she has her place among Orange County entrepreneurs of the era.



Cemetery clean up volunteers, left to right: Detrick Monroe, Melvin Monroe, Greg Monroe, Bruce Monroe, Alexis Kemper, Patrick Colby, Wayne Kelly, Angie Kelly (in front of Wayne) and Anita Kelly. (Volunteers not in photo: Alyson and Larry Sappington, May and Mike Saxton, Marcia Colby, Sabra and James Monroe).