



South Mountain Tidings

November 2016

ANNUAL
CATALOGUE AND CIRCULAR
—OF THE—
Burkittsville Female Seminary
Session 1872-'73.

Highlights:

FEATURE: A Place for Learning

Spook Hill Race Draws Over 400 Participants

Heritage Society Receives Generous Donation from Ruritan

South Mountain Heritage Society

*Dedicated to the Preservation and Interpretation
of the History of Burkittsville*



South Mountain Heritage Society
Executive Committee

President: Catherine Cox
Vice President: Jody Brumage
Treasurer: Robert Young
Secretary: Jean Galey
Members-at-Large
Bill Susa, Mary Garwood, Maurine Young,
Beth Zang, and Shelby Beaver

Historian and Curator: Jody Brumage

Cover Image: Burkittsville Female Seminary
Catalog for the 1872-1873 session. *SMHS*
Collections

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Friends of South Mountain Heritage Society,

I hope you were able to see *The Story of Burkittsville in 30 Objects* this summer. Our historian and curator, Jody Brumage, mounted a wonderful exhibit. It began with the settlement of the village in 1741 and continued to the present day. Museum visitors tagged their favorite objects in the exhibit with a note about why those particular items spoke to them.

This newsletter's feature article is *A Place for Learning: Burkittsville's Historic Academies and Seminaries*. If you've imagined, for example, that the girls at the town's Victorian-era female seminary were taught just music and embroidery, this look at Burkittsville's progress educational institutions will make you think again.

Bill Susa is organizer extraordinaire of our Spook Hill Cider and Wine 4 Mile Run, and this fall he outdid himself. Five hundred runners registered for the race! We are more grateful than we can say to Distillery Lane Ciderworks, South Mountain Vineyard, and Wayne and Pat Guyton for letting the runners crisscross their beautiful properties.

Bill, by the way, was just presented by the Town of Burkittsville with its Volunteer of the Year Award. No one could ask for a better neighbor.

And speaking of great neighbors, the Burkittsville Ruritan Club has donated the proceeds from their most recent country breakfast to SMHS. Thank you to all those good people!

Please join us for our Museums by Candlelight open house on Saturday afternoon, December 10, noon-5:00. We'll offer refreshments, a children's craft, and music played on our 150-year-old pipe organ. We'll be open also for the last half-hour of 2016, as community members gather before ringing in the New Year on the bells of Burkittsville.

Lastly, stay tuned for a new spring race, the SMHS Makin' Hay 10K, which will begin at the Catoctin Creek Nature Center outside Middletown on April 15. (You guessed it: Bill Susa is at work again.)

Thank you, one and all, for your interest and support. We wish you happy holidays, and hope to see more of you in the New Year.

Catherine Cox, President



A PLACE FOR LEARNING

Burkittsville's Historic Academies and Seminaries

Needwood Forest, Site of Rev. Booth's School in the 1770s (Horsey Collection, SMHS)

By Jody Brumage

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the Burkittsville area was a regional center for education and over the course of 125 years, at least four separate educational institutions operated in the village and on the plantations and farms surrounding Burkittsville. Many of these institutions were rooted in the Classical School model where the curricula emphasized literature, philosophy, history, and the arts in order to teach the whole of human knowledge. This pedagogy had its roots in the Middle Ages and served as the chief form of educational instruction well into the 19th century in Europe and the United States.

The earliest schools to operate around Burkittsville were situated on plantations where the teachers had a secondary means of income and sustenance. This was the case with the first educational institution to be founded in the region. Around the year 1773, Reverend Bartholomew Booth immigrated to the colonies, taking up residence at Needwood Forest, a house which he may have contributed to constructing. Ordained a priest of the Anglican Church in 1758, Rev. Booth taught in parish schools in England prior to coming to the Province of Maryland. At Needwood Forest

he established a prestigious academy for boys. Counted among his patrons were Benedict Arnold, Robert Morrison, Richard Henry Lee, Samuel Washington, and Charles Washington.

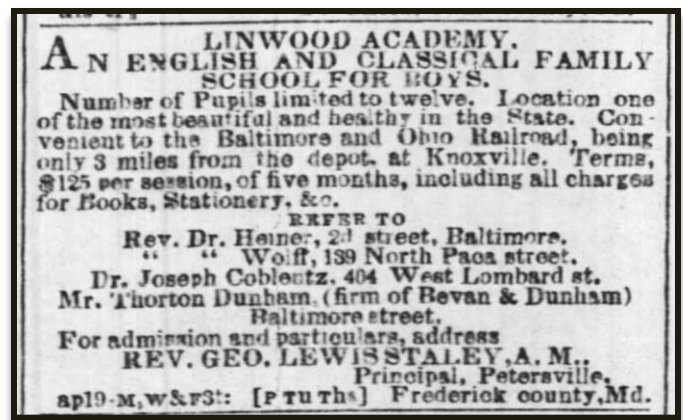
The exact duration of time in which Rev. Booth resided at Needwood Forest is questionable. Despite his reputation among leaders of the Revolutionary cause, the local population turned hostile towards Rev. Booth and accused him of sympathizing with the royalist cause at the onset of the Revolutionary War. Sometime in the late 1770s, Rev. Booth closed his school at Needwood Forest and moved to a plantation along Antietam Creek near what is today called "Devil's Backbone," a point about five miles northwest of Boonsboro. There he reestablished his school at "Delamere," which he named for his ancestral home in England. Rev. Booth died in 1786, after which his school closed permanently.

Another parallel among the various educational institutions that operated in and around Burkittsville is their affiliation with religious institutions. The second school to be founded in the region was operated under the auspices of St.

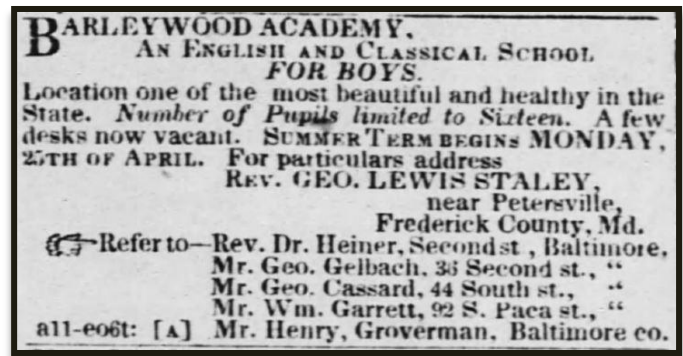
Mark's Episcopal Church in Petersville. In 1835, Reverend Richard H. Phillips established a female seminary at Barleywood, a plantation built by Erasmus West in the 1790s. This school was the first institution for women to operate in the Burkittsville area. Female seminaries were the foundation of women's education in the United States dating back to the early 19th century. These schools often prepared their students to pursue careers as educators themselves and some did eventually evolve into modern colleges and universities. The Frederick Female Seminary, founded in 1840, became the Women's College in 1893 and was renamed Hood College in 1913.

Rev. Phillips left St. Mark's Parish in 1841 and the fate of his school at Barleywood is not known. However, another school was operating at Barleywood by the early 1850s, founded by one of Burkittsville's most prominent early educators. Rev. George Lewis Staley was born in Shepherdstown in 1823. The son of a German Reformed pastor, Rev. Staley attended Marshall College and was ordained in 1846 by the Maryland Classis of the Reformed Church. His first pastoral appointment was Burkittsville's Resurrection Reformed Church, and he served as its pastor until 1849 when he left to assume a pastorate in Philadelphia. He returned to Maryland in 1852 and established Linwood Academy at Petersville. Rev. Staley's school grew quickly, prompting him to move the school to Barleywood where he was able to accommodate four additional students per session. A highly selective institution, Rev. Staley's Barleywood Academy limited its acceptance to sixteen students who paid \$85.00 for a five-month session. After three years of operation, in 1856, Rev. Staley moved to Baltimore and founded the Mount Washington Female Seminary, later College. This school too was short-lived, being forced to close at the onset of the Civil War.

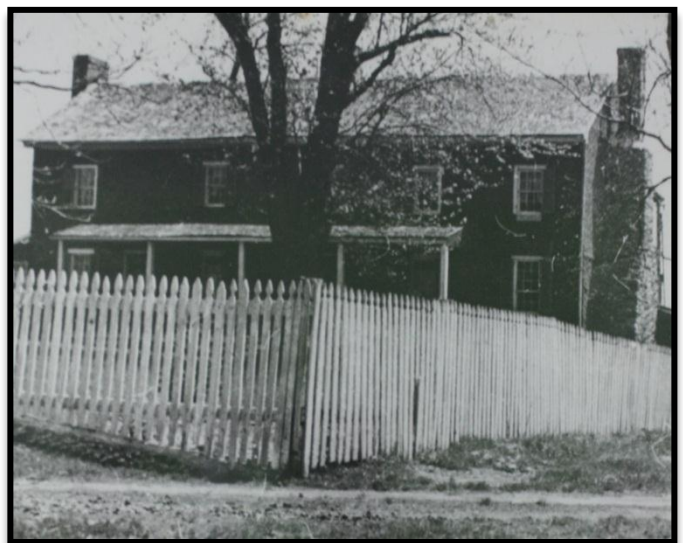
Rev. Staley's commitment to education did not waver. Within a few months of the closure of his school in Baltimore, Rev. Staley purchased



An advertisement for the Linwood Academy from *The Baltimore Sun* (1852)



An advertisement for the Barleywood Academy from *The Baltimore Sun* (1853)



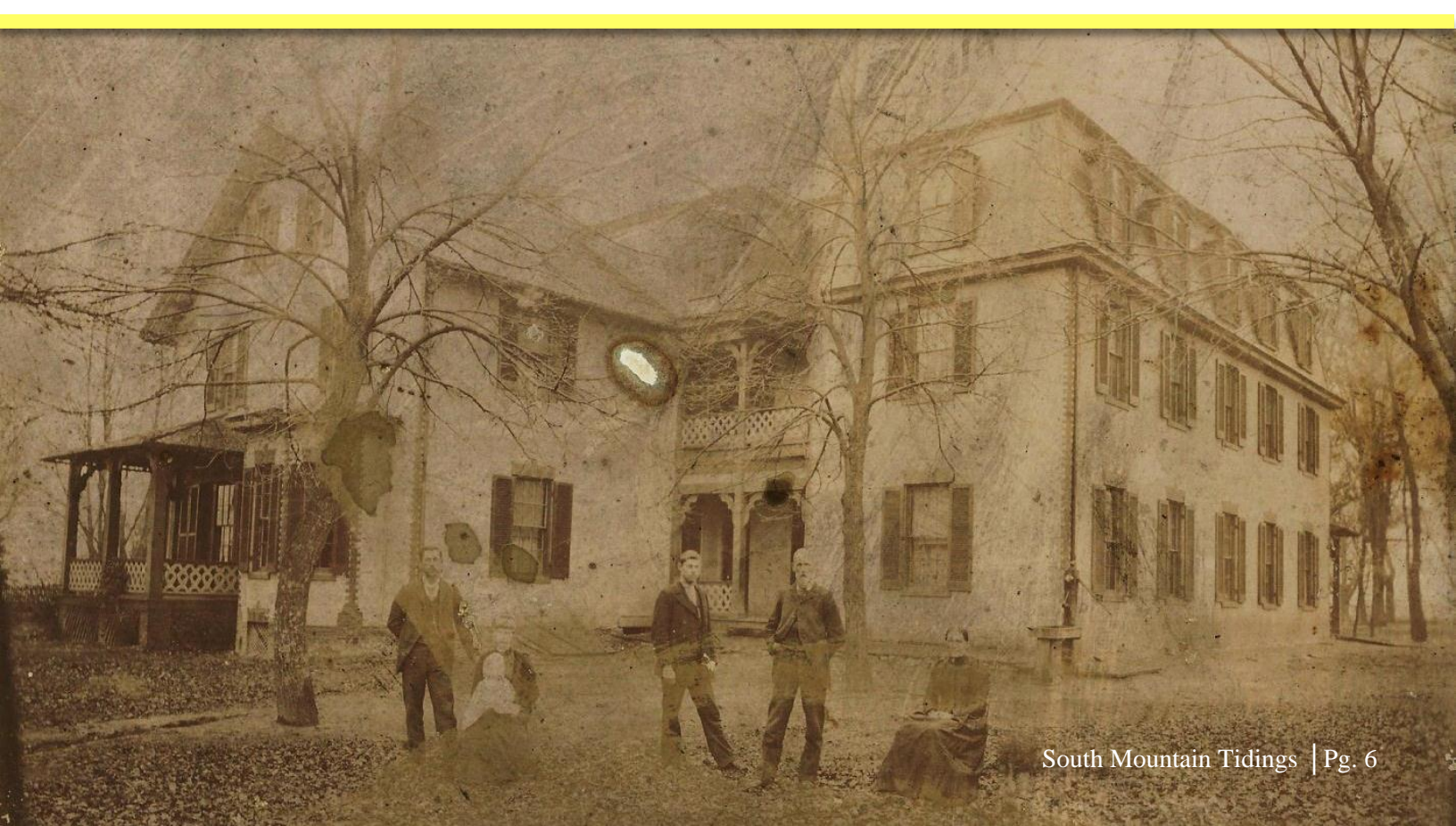
Barleywood, site of Rev. Phillips' female seminary (1840s) and Rev. Staley's boys' school (1853-1856)

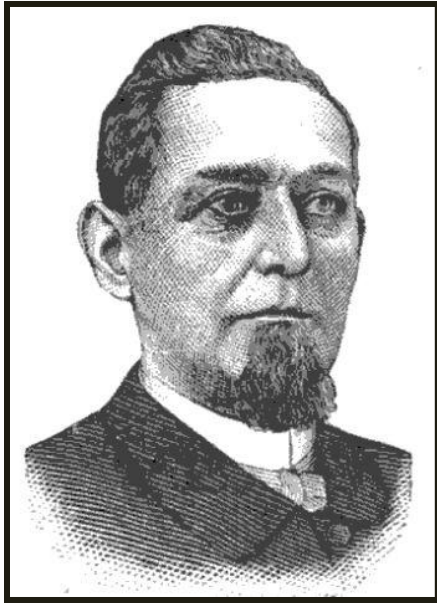
Tryconnel, a large farm along the road leading from Burkittsville to Berlin (Brunswick). Between 1864 and 1866, he opened St. John's Female Seminary at Tryconnel and began welcoming students from as far away as Baltimore and Washington D.C. Rev. Staley's school grew quickly and by 1874, Tryconnel had become too small to accommodate all of the students. A three-story dormitory, built in the distinct Second Empire style with a mansard roof, was added to the historic house, greatly expanding the school's capacity. Rev. Staley closed St. John's Female Seminary around 1879 and again removed to Baltimore, this time to focus on the education of the city's African American population. His efforts led to the creation of the first "Colored High School" in Baltimore in 1888, for which Rev. Staley served as principal until 1902. He died in Baltimore in 1908, having served as a progressive educator for nearly half a century.

Around the same time that Rev. Staley opened St. John's Female Seminary at Tryconnel, Rev. William C. Wire, pastor of Burkittsville's St. Paul's Lutheran Church was laying the groundwork for another female seminary. In



[Above and Below] Tryconnel, site of the St. John's Female Seminary (1864-1879). These photographs were taken in the 1890s when the Hightman Family owned Tryconnel. In both pictures, the original farm house and the three-story dormitory, added by Rev. Staley, are visible. (Hightman Collection, SMHS)





Rev. William C. Wire, Founder of the Burkittsville Female Seminary

students were admitted to the Burkittsville Female Seminary, which was granted a charter from the State of Maryland in the spring of 1867. Early classes were held in Rev. Wire's house until the three-story seminary building on Main Street was completed. The new seminary building housed public rooms and lecture halls on the first floor, living quarters for the students on the second and third floors, living quarters for employees in the attic, and kitchens and other service rooms in the basement.

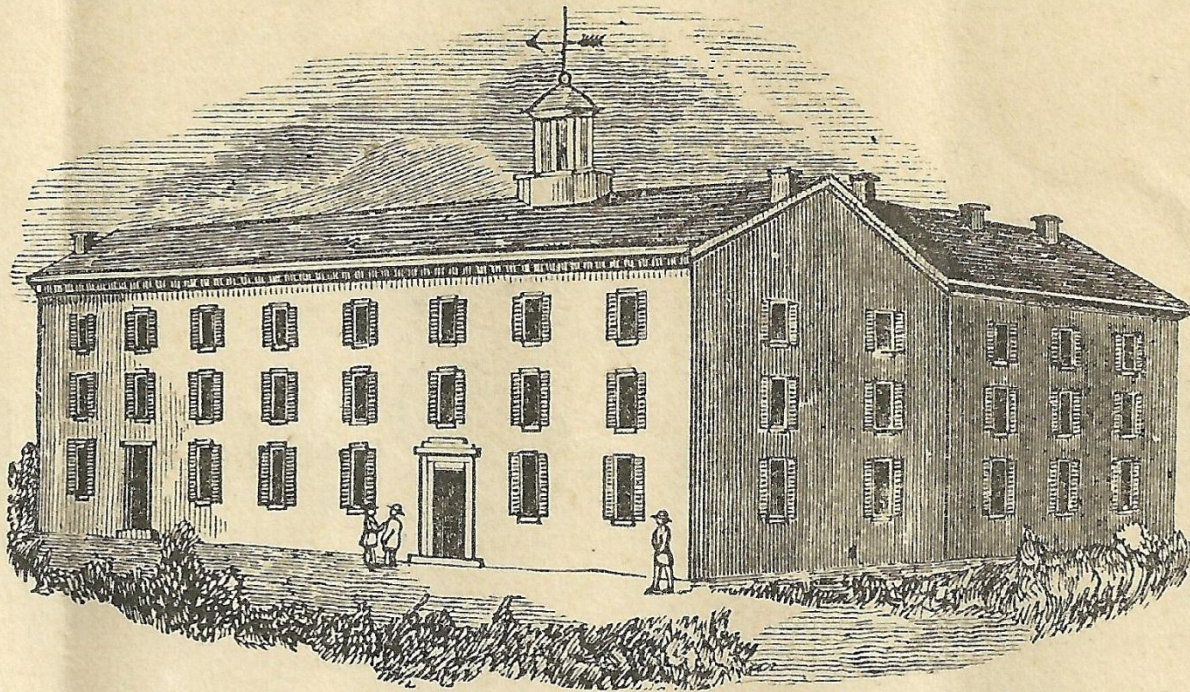
Students at the Burkittsville Female Seminary paid \$100.00 to board at the school for a year. The seminary's curriculum ran for three years during which students took courses in literature, grammar, mathematics, science, history, philosophy, language, and theology. Students could also take courses in painting, music, and other arts. Graduates from the seminary often became educators themselves, such as Mamie Horine Lamar who taught at Hagerstown's Kee Mar Female Seminary and Mollie E. Hightman who taught in Burkittsville's elementary school. Principals of the Seminary included Rev. William C. Wire, Rev. H. G. Bowers, Rev. J. H. Turner, Rev. M. L. Heisler, and Thomas J. Lamar.

Synopsis of Study.	
IN REGULAR COURSE.	
PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT.	
Spelling and Defining,	Arithmetic,
Reading,	History,
Writing,	Geography,
Grammar,	Composition.
COLLEGIATE DEPARTMENT.	
SOPHOMORE.	
Grammar,	Algebra,
Geography,	Rhetoric,
Arithmetic,	Watts on Mind,
Composition,	Paradise Lost, (critical reading,)
History of United States,	Latin.
Natural Philosophy,	
JUNIOR.	
Ancient Geography,	Botany,
Astronomy,	Intellectual Philosophy,
Geometry,	Elements of Criticism,
Chemistry,	Latin,
General History,	Moral Science.
SENIOR.	
Natural Theology,	Trigonometry and Mensuration,
Geology,	Logic,
Political Economy,	History and Antiquities of Jews.
Review of Course.	

The "synopsis of study" for the Burkittsville Female Seminary 1872 catalog (SMHS Collection)



Mollie Hightman's 1874 diploma from the Burkittsville Female Seminary (Demming Collection, SMHS)



BURKITTSVILLE FEMALE SEMINARY, FREDERICK COUNTY, MD.

Throughout its forty years of operation, the Burkittsville Female Seminary faced financial difficulty. Originally operated by St. Paul's Church, mounting debts forced the seminary to sell stock to support its operation in the mid-1870s. The school finally closed in the early 1890s after a failed attempt to transition the institution into a public high school. The seminary building became a boarding house attracting visitors to Burkittsville and was later renovated into an apartment building in the early-20th century.

By the time that Burkittsville's last Female Seminary closed in the 1890s, Frederick County had established free public education, open to both male and female students. While the process of fully equalizing the field in education continues to this day, much of our progress is owed to the forerunners who laid the foundation early in our nation's history. This effort continued into the twentieth century as Burkittsville's residents lobbied for improved facilities and the resources to offer the best education possible for their community. Burkittsville's African American residents overcame the limitations imposed on them through legal segregation to establish successful schools that educated generations of professionals. Recalling the stories of Burkittsville's long ago educational institutions, a remarkable legacy emerges of the progressive effort of ensure a solid education for all.

[Above] An engraving of the Burkittsville Female Seminary from the 1872 school catalog (SMHS Collection)

[Below] A group of students in front of the Burkittsville Elementary School with their teacher, Mollie Hightman (Demming Collection, SMHS)





SPOOK HILL RUN

4th Annual Race Draws Over 400 Participants

By Bill Susa

The 4th annual SMHS Spook Hill Cider & Wine 4 Mile Run was held on the cold and windy October 22nd 2016. 2016 was the second year the race sold out more than 3 weeks before the race event though the participation cap was raised from 360 to 500 this year.

We had 417 runners come out to face the first really cold and windy weather of the season for the chance to run through Burkittsville's vineyard and orchard. The wind may have been biting, but the atmosphere and scenery helped to keep everyone warm in spirit!

There were a host of photographers out on the course, snapping up wonderful pictures of the event and our participants. You can view the photo albums on the Spook Hill Cider and Wine 4 Mile Run Facebook page.

The purpose of the runs (Spook Hill and our new [Makin' Hay 10K](#)) is to provide much needed funding to cover SMHS operational expenses and maintenance costs associated with the circa 1829 former Resurrection Reformed Church building which houses our museum and offices. The 2016 Spook Hill run raised more than \$10,000 for this cause.

To learn more about the run, you can go to spookhill4mile.org

IN THE SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

SMHS Receives Proceeds from Burkittsville Ruritan Club Country Breakfast

South Mountain Heritage Society wishes to express its sincere appreciation to the Burkittsville Ruritan Club for their generous gift of the proceeds from the November 2016 Country Breakfast. Vice President Jody Brumage accepted the donation from the club during its most recent meeting on November 15.

The Burkittsville Ruritan Club was chartered in 1953 and since 1968 has preserved the former Burkittsville Elementary School which serves as its meeting hall and community center. The country breakfast from which SMHS received this gift is a club tradition going back over 50 years. Each winter, the Ruritan Club holds three Country Butchering and Breakfast fundraisers. These events bring hundreds of people into town and continue a cultural tradition which has existed in Burkittsville since its settlement.

In a letter to the Ruritan Club, we expressed the following sentiments: “We appreciate the distinguished roll the Ruritan Club has historically and continues to play in the community of Burkittsville. In the truest sense of community, we are thankful to be partners with you in preserving the culture of our unique town.”

Scenes from an early Burkittsville Ruritan Club country butchering in the 1960s (Crone Collection, SMHS)

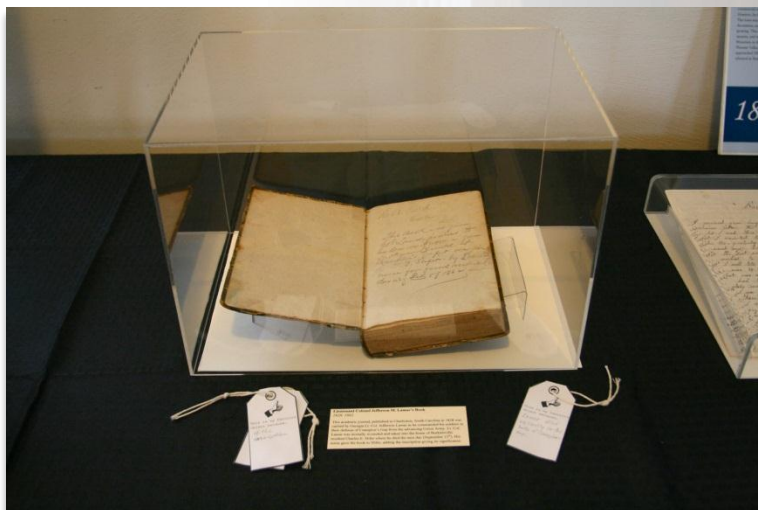


OUR PATRONS SPEAK

Visitors Chose Their Favorite Exhibit Objects

This summer's special exhibit, *The Story of Burkittsville in 30 Objects* ran for six months during our regular museum season, guiding visitors through the story of our community. Designed to present the full narrative chronology of Burkittsville's history, the exhibit took visitors from the arrival of the first European settlers in 1741 to the present day. As people viewed the exhibit, they were encouraged to place a paper tag near their favorite of the 30 objects on display and, if they wanted, to write their reason for choosing that specific object.

The feedback we received from museum patrons over the summer was particularly illuminative. The favorite object overall was the 1872-1873 Catalog from the Burkittsville Female Seminary. Visitors placed many tags on objects dating from the Civil War and the Battle of South Mountain. Also popular were items from the early 20th century, especially a segment of wooden water pipe from the ill-fated Burkittsville Water Company, which was among the top five favorite objects. We thank everyone who offered their feedback and look forward to using this information as we continue to plan exhibits at the museum in the future.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Sat., Dec. 10: Museums by Candlelight

South Mountain Heritage Society will be one of 20 museums and historic sites open from 12:00 pm thru 5:00 pm for Frederick County's annual Museums by Candlelight celebration. The historic church will be decorated with period trimmings and refreshments will be available. Children are invited to make a special craft to take home. Learn about the museum's historic pipe organ and hear traditional carols on the 150 year old instrument.

Sat., Dec. 31: New Year's Eve

Celebrate the New Year with our traditional New Year's Eve open house and midnight bell ringing. Residents of Burkittsville have "rung" in the New Year with its historic church bells since the 1870s and we invite you to join us in carrying on this wonderful event. Doors open at 11:30 pm for light refreshments.

How You Can Help:

We will need items for our refreshment table on December 10th. Baked goods, savorys, and finger foods are welcomed. If you can help out with refreshments, please let us know by emailing Jody Brumage at jodybrumage@gmail.com or calling (240) 818-1610.

We also need volunteers to pump the organ on December 10th when we will be giving demonstrations of the instrument. If we get plenty of volunteers, we can delegate shifts for the five hours while the museum is open. If you can help out, please contact Jody Brumage with the information provided above.

Thanks!

