

The



Muse

Amherst County Museum & Historical Society
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VOLUME 43, NUMBER 1

Preserving Amherst County History

Winter 2018

It is with sadness I report to you the death of our volunteer and master model maker Calvin Nelson Ashwell on December 13. As you will recall from earlier newsletters, Calvin created two dioramas for the Museum, the first on the History of Transportation in Amherst County showcasing Rev. Robert Rose's double-canal, the Rucker brothers' batteau, and packet boats on the James River (2015), and the second diorama of Sandidges Mill and Village (2017). These two major projects totaled over 800 volunteer hours. Calvin was also a Colonial Day living history interpreter (2015, 2016) and he and his wife Carolyn organized the two day Civil War Encampment at the Museum during the observance of the Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War in 2015.



I first met Calvin and Carolyn at Historic Sandusky in Lynchburg where they were Civil War interpreters and were part of the Civil War movie shoot "Hunter's Raid — Defending Hearth and Home." Soon after, I visited his workshop and was amazed at all the models he had created. A wonderful friendship sprang up which led to the planning of interpretative models and programs for the public. Calvin was a gifted and talented model maker (he began making models around the age of 8) and an incredibly knowledgeable individual. Carolyn reminisced that his love of the Civil War came from his mother, and that their honeymoon was spent touring Civil War sites!

Calvin was a delight to spend time with. He'd call me out to the workshop to see the progress on the models and I'd find him painting, cutting, gluing or mounting and Carolyn planting tobacco and corn or trees and bushes.

(continued on page 12)

**"ILLUMINATING THE PAST"
What's Been Happening at ACMHS
October—December 2017**



Left: Co-President Cynthia Hicks greets visitors at the Frank Leslie Cash Opening Exhibit on October 8.



Seven Ghost Walks on October 21 (right and below)



Below: Doll Raffle Winner — Little Miss Sommers holding the Doll. Several days following the call to the winner, the Director hears the Museum's front door bell jingle, and then little footsteps running and a little voice calling, "Where's my doll, where's my doll?"

Below: Evening on the Hill, November 11, with the Little Mountain Boys



TROUBLE
by
Wilson E. McIvor

“That game with the fifteen numbered balls is the devil's tool”
Music Man, 1962

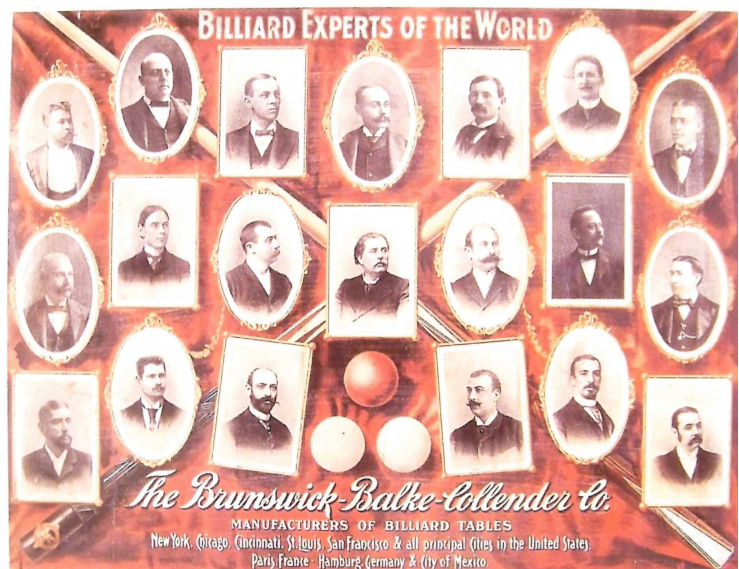
Royal Pittman McIvor, born 1876, was the son of Hugh Eugene McIvor and Elizabeth McCaul. He inherited his somewhat unusual name from grandfather Royal McCaul and on the other side he was the grandson of Christopher McIver, sometimes called “Old Kit”. Kit had moved into Lynchburg from Bedford County about 1830 when he was young Kit, married into the Halsey family and managed to do well for himself in business and property. He lived for a time on his property in Amherst County where he sold a right of way to the Orange and Alexandria Railroad and had a station on the property with “McIvor” on it. In 1905, three stops were combined and created Monroe, of which half the land had once belonged to Kit. Kit died December 19, 1882 when Roy was six years old. While owning considerable land in Amherst County, Kit was more a citizen of Lynchburg than Amherst and his obituary lists him as “the oldest inhabitant of the city, save one”.

On December 15, 1894, when Roy was 18 years old, his father Eugene was killed in a hunting incident. James Monroe Watts was with Hugh Eugene, reported the incident, and a few months later would become Roy's stepfather. When he was 23, Roy was living with his extended family and listed as a “call boy” on the railroad, essentially a messenger boy rounding up train crews for runs.

Royal's uncle, William Daniel, had served in the Amherst Battery with George Frederick Steen. Whether it was through that association or another, Royal met and became enamored with George Steen's daughter, Carrie Elizabeth, and while Carrie evidently shared the feelings, her family objected. Could it be possible that the objection was over Roy being a call boy, or perhaps he had recently acquired a billiard room? The oldest of Carrie's siblings was Walter Clarence who had a strong role in the family and was known to be straight laced. Though his sister Carrie said he used to chew, Clarence did not smoke, did not drink, and did not cuss; chances are he didn't play pool either. Later, he would be the registrar in Monroe for many years. He and Royal were the same age.

Whatever the source of contention, Roy and Carrie went to North Carolina to be married. Jim Ford, Roy's brother-in-law, was one of the witnesses on December 22, 1903. Almost exactly a year later, they would have a girl, Annie Elizabeth. A month more than a year after that, January 1906, the baby died; another month and a son was born followed two years later by a daughter.

Right: Billard Experts of the World poster similar to the one seen in the Frank Cash photograph on page 4



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TROUBLE

(continued from page 3)

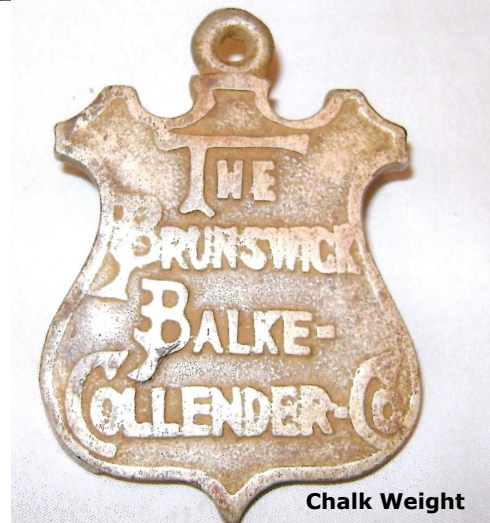
The year on the calendar in the pool hall photo is difficult to read but the picture of Taft and February ending on Sunday is fair proof that it is 1909. The man in the picture would be about thirty three years old, the father of two, and apparently successfully running a two table billiard room decorated with Gibson Girl pin ups, a photo of president elect Taft, a couple of ads, a tableau of world famous billiard players produced by Brunswick-Balke-Collender Company, and, to his upper left, a badge shaped chalk weight also by BBC hangs from a cord over the



table (close up on the right). A hand lettered sign is just above his head in front of the billiard wizards.

Roy and Carrie had recently finished building a traditional two over two farm house and would have a second son in 1910. A 1915 picture shows the three children carefully dressed and healthy, another son would be born in 1917.

In the third draft registration for World War I held on September 12, 1918, all men between the ages of 18 and 45 were required to register. On his form, Royal indicated his occupation as "billiard room." In 1920, he had a



Chalk Weight

(continued on page 5)

Trouble

(continued from page 4)

pass from Southern Railway indicating he is a “Storehouse Laborer”. For Roy, a man in his mid forties, this was not an upward career move.

The following is the story Royal's son, R. C. McIvor, told me, his son:

Three men including Papa had all purchased the same model .38 revolver.

One night they'd all been drinking, there was a row in the billiard room loud enough to be heard up and down the street. A man named Hub Shelton vowed he was going to go in and straighten it out. When he went in the hall, the lights went out and three guns were fired. When the lights were put back on, a man had been shot. It wasn't clear whose gun did it. Uncle Chris and Dr. Scott got together and hushed it up.

“Uncle Chris” was Christopher Earl McIvor, Royal P. McIvor's uncle, the operator of a grocery store close to the pool hall, pretty much the head of the family at that time. Uncle Chris was able to “hush it up” because everyone involved was either family or step family. The man who was shot is said to have been Royal's step brother and probably shot by one of Roy’s cousins. Apparently the wounded man was successfully treated and eventually recovered, and Uncle Chris told everyone to keep it in the family.

It wasn't that simple for Royal. He checked himself into the mental hospital at Staunton and stayed there for a little while, probably wanting to avoid a whole lot of pesky questions, like “who shot who”?

R. C. McIvor said, *Papa was gone for a long time. Then one night I was in bed and I heard someone whistling “whip poor will” coming down the hill. I was happy because I knew papa had come home.*

Roy had walked home from Staunton.

Likely the shooting was not an isolated incident; Carrie insisted that the Billiard Room be shut down. At an advanced age, Royal got a job on Southern Railway. He worked regularly and faithfully at low end jobs, most with the word “helper” in them and retired in 1947 on \$65 a month, dying in 1953. Sadly, I only knew him as an old man with cataracts, not the man with the sassy cocked bowler hat and tie with the Prince Albert knot. I did not recognize until much later that I had played in the barn with the parts of disassembled pool tables around me. My dad, R. C. McIvor, used the slate tops for a patio.

Later my brother acquired the old home place and renovated it. He found six .38 shells thrown in the attic space over the kitchen. One of them had been fired.

**Trouble,
With a Capital “T”
And that Rhymes with “P”
And that Stands for POOL
*Music Man, 1962***

2018 ACMHS PROGRAMS: "Illuminating the Past"



Sunday, February 4, 2:30 p.m.

The Photography of Jimmie Ray – James Richard "Jimmie" Ray (1910-1983) opened "Jimmie's Studio" in a little building in the backyard of his home on Main Street in Madison Heights around 1945, becoming known as the "official photographer" of his home town. He took photographs and did photo finishing for the public as well as for other commercial photographers until his death. His photographs included special events – weddings, anniversaries and birthday parties; portraits; family activities; church and school happenings; local scenes; and landscapes. Join us as Nancy Blackwell Marion shares examples of Jimmie Ray's work. Light refreshments.

**WILLIAM CABELL AND HUBERT WOOD
MAY 12, 1962**

Sunday, March 18, 2:30 p.m. *Black Herman: Famed Magician From Amherst County* – Lynn Kable,

President of Amherst Glebe Arts Response, Inc., will share with us the story of Benjamin Rucker, an Amherst County youth who became the apprentice to magician and "tonic" salesman Prince Herman. Upon Prince Herman's death in 1909, 17-year-old Benjamin continued the touring stage show under the name of "Black Herman" honoring his mentor. His magic show became famous and he often performed to racially mixed audiences, which was unusual for that time. Join the afternoon talk as you learn of his most famous feat and perhaps witness some magic by Mrs. Kable. Light Refreshments.



Saturday, April 28, 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. *Rockmill Farm – From Tobacco and Milling to Hops and Lavender.* We will gather at Rockmill Farm in Lowesville (2704 Lowesville Road) for a tour, including a visit to the Mill ruins, a history lesson, and a conversation on Hops. Carpooling available from Museum. Bag lunches welcome. Call Museum to register. More details to come.

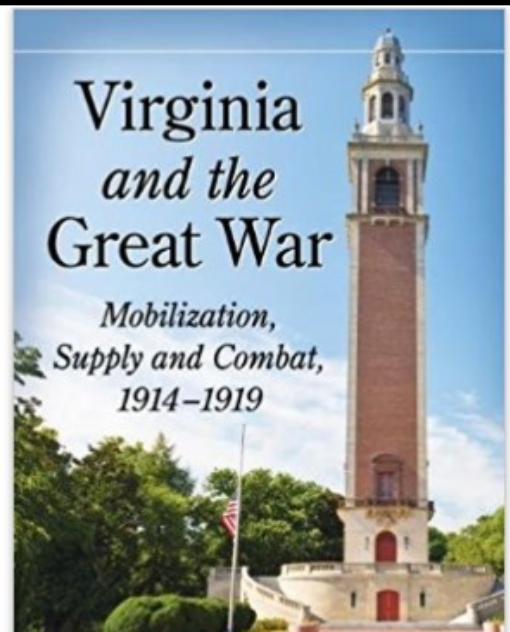
Sunday, May 20, 2:30 p.m. *Virginians in the Great War: at Home and Abroad* – Travel back a century ago with Dr. Lynn Rainville as she explores the contributions of hundreds of thousands of Virginians during World War I. This effort included drafted soldiers, politicians (including Staunton native, Woodrow Wilson), and locally born horses and their ferriers. But it also in-

(continued on page 7)

cluded female stenographers, African American doctors, domestic gardeners, National Guard troops, and army chaplains. Dr. Rainville is the author of the book *Virginia and the Great War: Mobilization, Supply and Combat, 1914-1919*. On January 4, Dr. Rainville was named Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at Sweet Briar College. She will continue her role as Director of The Tusculum Institute (2008) at SBC. Following the program she will be available for book signing.

Light Refreshments.

(program was originally scheduled for January)



Saturday, June 9, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Amherst County Batteau Day: Honoring Benjamin and Anthony Rucker, inventors of the James River Batteau.

Join the celebration honoring the Rucker brothers on the James River at Rucker Landing, Riveredge Park. Amherst County is the birth place of the batteau. Living history interpreters including the Rucker brothers, a blacksmith, period musicians, activities for families, and food vendors will be in the park. For more information contact the Amherst County Museum and Historical Society, 434-946-9068 or Amherst County Parks and Recreation, 434-946-9371. Event is free and open to the public.

Sunday, July 15, 2:30 p.m. — Amherst Churches. Join Architectural Historian and Researcher Sandi Esposito as she shares her research on Amherst County Churches. Light Refreshments.

Saturday, August 11, 10 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Colonial Day. Step back in time to learn about colonial education, trades, entertainment and agricultural pursuits. Colonial games, music, Revolution War encampment, military drilling, fife and drum, quill pen writing, flax breaking, blacksmithing, silver-smithing, spinning, magic show and more.

Amherst County Fair Days in August. More details to come.



Sunday, September 9, 2:30 p.m. — Around the Camp Fire. Join Confederate Colonels "Extra Billy" Smith and Jubel Early strategizing around the Camp Fire on saving Lynchburg from "Black Dave" Hunter's mission to lay siege and destroy the town's railroads, supply depots, and hospitals. Light refreshments.

Colonel William "Extra Billy" Smith of the 49th Virginia in the battle of Chantilly protecting his top hat, drawn by Major Robert J. Faught, author of *Amherst Men in Gray—The History of Amherst County, Virginia Companies in the Civil War*.

IN MEMORIA

***In Loving Memory of
Calvin Ashwell***

***Master Model Builder
And Museum Volunteer***

Octavia and Greg Starbuck

***In Loving Memory of
Mildred Faulconer Bryant***

Roselle Scales

***In Loving Memory of
Marilyn and Bob Crump***

Cat and Jack Brandell

***In Loving Memory of
Nancy Massie Dickinson***

Eugenia Farrar

***In Loving Memory of
Hugh S. Garbee***

William Garbee

***In Loving Memory of
Jean Green***

Arnett Green

***In Loving Memory of
Anne Grimm***

Mary Riely Pettyjohn

***In Loving Memory of
Lorraine and Warren Howard***

Becky and David Howard

***In Loving Memory of
Ruth McBride***

K. H. Woodford

***In Loving Memory of
David S. Mudry***

Mrs. David S. Mudry

***In Loving Memory of
Kathryn Spencer Pixley***

Dr. Lynn Rainville

***In Loving Memory of
Helen B. Scarboro***

Jane and Ira Hurt

Exceptional Service Memorial

Plaque Displayed at Entrance



ACMHS Exceptional Service Memorial plaque honors six Volunteers who went above and beyond the call of duty in their service to the Museum

Ann Whitley (1925-2008), Charles Hamble (1940-2008), Ruth McBride (1922-2014), Dolly Payne (1917-2014), Mary Frances Olinger (1927-2016), and Kathryn Spencer Pixley (1937-2017)

Photo by Midge Elliott

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS
(September 1, 2017 — December 15, 2017)

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(September 1, 2017 — December 15, 2017)

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***In Honor of
Florence and Holcomb Nixon***

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Welcome to all our New Members!

Dave Brady
Steve Coley
Mike Crabill
Stephen Eubank
T. E. Gregory
Gwendolph F. Gordon
Carl H. Leonard
Nancy F. Oleska
Jeannine Sabotka
Marilyn and Ralph Shore
Donna St.Clair
Eileen Ware
Paul Whitten

DEAR MEMBERS,

**ACMHS BOARD AND THE DIRECTOR
THANK YOU FOR RENEWING YOUR
MEMBERSHIP FOR ANOTHER
EXCITING YEAR**

(9/1/1017 THROUGH 9/30/2018)



The Cook, image drawn by Porte Crayon (David Hunter Strother) in Amherst, and appearing in Harper's New Monthly Magazine, Vol. XII, No. 68, page 177, January 1856.

Left:
The Museum's December 3rd program with Dr. Kelly Deetz featured this 1856 Amherst County drawing.

DAR members of the John Lynch Chapter, NSDAR, during their Service Day Project (October 27, 2017) on the steps at Saint Luke's Episcopal Church, Pedlar Mills, in Amherst County. The Church received National Register of Historic Places status on November 24, 2017. Left to Right: Holly Hodges (Junior Warden at St. Luke's), Phyllis Coleman, Dreamer Fogle (Regent), Eleanor Casler, Phyllis Bruce and Sandra Redd. Photo by Eleanor Casler.



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 Online just click on the **Donate** button on our homepage
www.amherstcountymuseum.org



With your donation, we can Save our History!

Create New Exhibits

Preserve our Collection of Amherst County History

Add resource books to our Genealogy Library

Provide information and family histories

Give guidance for researching genealogy

Host Exciting Programs and Events

Design and implement programs and activities for school students

Digitize old scrapbooks, glass plate negatives and archival materials



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If you would like your donation to be used for a certain purpose, please check one of the funds below.

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_____ Operating Fund	_____ Programming Fund
_____ Education Fund	_____ Collections Fund
_____ Endowment	_____ Where Needed Most
_____ Library-Technology Fund	
_____ Museum Exterior Repairs	

Director's Notes

I am going to miss hearing his voice say, "Hey, dar-ling, what do you think about the scale size?" or "Hey, dar-ling, when are we going to have another Civil War encampment?" Calvin made lasting contributions to the Museum and understanding of Amherst County's history. Rest in peace, Calvin, we miss you!



Wilson and his Dad,
Royal C. McIvor

Our Guest Writer is Wilson McIvor, a man with lots of memories, photographs and stories growing up in Amherst County. He has donated to the Museum artifacts and photographs that tell the stories of the

railroad McIvors and their families. Wilson has been a great source of information, bringing that to bear in particular, as we've examined the Frank Cash glass negatives of Monroe. He recalls being in Frank Cash's photography workshop with his young son. His article elaborates on the Cash print of the Pool Hall. Thank you, Wilson.



Calvin at the Museum's Civil War Encampment

(continued from page 1)

Octavia N. Starbuck, Director

**MUSEUM HOURS: TUESDAY — FRIDAY: 10 A.M. TO 4 P.M.
SATURDAY — By APPOINTMENT ONLY (call by Thursday before)**

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