

Bridges Newsletter

a publication of the
Fauquier Heritage & Preservation Foundation
February 2025

The Gott Library's Collection Continues to Grow

The Gott Library just received a book of records from the Grove Baptist Church located in southern Fauquier County. The book is comprised of two volumes of the minutes kept by the church clerk, the first covering 1811-1853 and the second 1853-1899. The first volume also includes the names of both white and black members, the latter including names of the enslavers. The donation was made by Shelby Monroe Hadelor who also provided interesting historical information about the building.

- The land, three acres, one rod, 12 perches, was originally given by deed and will of Thomas Skinker in September 1795.
- The building is unique in that it is the only stone church building in lower southern Fauquier. All others are either wood, frame or brick. Local lore indicates the stone for the building's façade came from the Rappahannock River (3 miles away).
- It was originally a wooden structure and covered over with stone around 1833, retaining the wood within the stone walls.
- The name Hannibal was carved into the lintel stone in 1833. Hannibal, a slave owned by Mr. Skinker, was the lead stone mason on the construction.



*GROVE BAPTIST Church
Clerk Records - 1811*

| Members Names from the First | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1811 | |
| Robert Stringfellow | -Sept. 1815 |
| Catharine Stringfellow | |
| Nathaniel Hickerson | - 1811 1814 |
| Sary Hickerson | |
| Minifred Hickerson | (rest'd to fellowship Apr.14, 1839 |
| Alexander Loga | |
| Mary Loga | -Dec. 1815 |
| Thomas Kelly | |
| James Stigler | -Oct 1815 |
| John Timmons | |
| Benjamin Hall | |
| George Eastham | - Nov 1817 |
| Benjamin West | |
| Elizabeth West | |
| Elizabeth Timmons | |
| Jamima Edwards | - June 1813 |
| Benjamin Edwards | |
| Jamima Williams | - Apr. 1815 |
| Caty Emmine | |
| Mary Moore | |
| Fanny Warren | |
| Margaret Jones | |
| Sary Jones | |
| Mary Hord | |
| George C. Sedwick | - 1813 |
| Sary Sedwick | |
| Hanna Timmons | |
| Caty Handless | |
| | July 1814 |
| | Sphia Wilson |
| | Jane Chapman |
| | Peggy Horton |
| | Anofute Stigler |
| | Edward Seal |
| | William George |
| | Samuel Dawson |
| | Jesse Hufman |
| | Sally Bowling |
| | Frances Oliver |
| | Joseph George |
| | Elizabeth Eustace |
| | Elizabeth Petres |
| | Elizabeth Standly |
| | Elizabeth James |
| | William E. Jones |
| | John Lomax |
| | Elizabeth Hickerson |
| | Caty Pettett |
| | Sally Jones |

- The precise placement of stone
- allowed the windows to be set plumb into the openings.
- The engineering necessary to build scaffolding to support the weight of the rock to be placed 15 feet high is amazing even today.

The entire 225 page book will be placed on the FHPF website. ♦

History Up in Pipe Smoke

Article by Trip Russell & John Gott
Published in the Fauquier
Democrat, 5 October 1978



Much of the history of Fauquier County can be written with confidence because of the excellent preservation of her records. Will and Deed books are intact from the 24th of May, 1759, when the County began functioning as such, to the present. Court Minute Books exist except for the period between March 1804 and February 1818. Before 1759, when Fauquier was part, first of Stafford (created 1664) and Prince William (created 1731) the situation is bleak. Almost all of the records of Stafford County fell prey to hostile armies and the chaos that followed the war. Two battles were fought at the county seat of Prince William County and we are lucky that anything at all remains.



A serious loss is the vestry book of Hamilton Parish. That cannot be blamed on the action of hostile armies but rather on the indifference of an early County Clerk. Placed in his office for safe-keeping, he allowed the Hamilton vestry book to be consumed by pipe-smokers, according to Fairfax Harrison, "leaf by leaf, as one eats an artichoke." As Hamilton Parish was created in 1731, its

vestry book might have cast a great amount of light on the history of Fauquier County between 1731 and 1759. For some this might be fortunate. Who knows what scandal went up in the smoke of these 19th century pipe-lighters? It is not even quite certain that Leeds Parish ever had a vestry book or parish register, though Parson James Thompson, who was a conscientious clergyman, probably saw to it that they were kept. No trace of them remains. The first Leeds Parish existed only 17 years, from 1769 to 1786. ♦

Cemetery Cleanup Slated for Spring

The FHPF volunteers are planning a spring cleanup at the Nalley-Strother Families Cemetery. This very special, historic cemetery contains the ruins of "grave houses." These are most unusual graves (a low stone house with roof built above the coffin) and rarely found in Virginia. There is much work to be done on these and a number of regular tombstones. The first spring cleanup will focus on weed control and establishing gravel paths so that work can be completed on a more regular basis.

If you are interested in helping with this worthwhile project, contact us to learn about dates and times most likely starting in late March (weather permitting, of course). The cemetery is located on a beautiful hill top setting with spectacular vistas. ♦



February is Black History Month

The Gott Library has recently added to its collection a new group of reference books entitled *Some Slaves of Fauquier County, Virginia*. The series was compiled by Sandra Bardau from Fauquier County Will Books 1—31. There are three volumes covering the years 1759-1869. There is also a Master Index. This index makes it easier to research slave owners and makes it possible to follow some slaves from one owner to another. The series provides researchers with easy access to information that could otherwise require several months of reading through microfilm, making it a must for researchers of slaves and/or owners of Fauquier County, Virginia. If you are researching enslaved people and/or their enslavers, this is a valuable resource. ♦



Where is the Salem Academy Bell?

Have you have been wondering what happened to the Salem Academy school bell? It was displayed **inside** the Gott Library for many years.



The next time you drive by, look up, and you will see it installed on the roof of the academy building where it resided for many decades.

Rare, Out-of-Print Books for Sale

Both *Black Horse Cavalry: Defend Our Beloved Country* by Lewis Marshall Helm and *Gray Ghosts and Rebel Raiders* (1906) by Virgil Carrington Jones are out-of-print and now difficult to find, even used.

The Gott Library has several NEW copies of each. The latter is signed by the author and offered at \$75. The *Black Horse Cavalry* is offered at \$125. These are bargain prices and can occasionally be found on eBay or Amazon but for much higher prices. Take the opportunity to add these rare volumes to your library.

Have Some Extra Time?

The Gott Library is actively looking for volunteers for a myriad of tasks:



- transcribing
- scanning loose papers
- IT management
- writing news articles
- organizing files
- responding to genealogical inquiries (training provided)
 - cataloguing
 - general organizing
 - archive management
 - event planning
 - cemetery maintenance
 - membership management
 - building maintenance

