

THE HEADSTONE

Vol. IV

March 2026

Issue III

Hello and Greetings!

Perhaps the best way to describe the weather here at least from January 23rd until these photos were taken on February 5th is with the photos. The sun was shining bright and it was up to 28 degrees and some melting was occurring but like most parts of the country for the last three weeks, it has been a pretty tough go of it. Normally Otis is running around all over the cemetery and points well beyond but on this day I think he just wanted to bounce back to the

house. I called for him after I finished taking a few photos and rather than having to track him down in the snow, I just went back to where the four-wheeler was parked and there he was, waiting. He wanted to get back to the wood stove I suspect. So did I.



New Website

I am really excited about the launch of the new website for the cemetery. I am not nearly as excited at how slow things like these move sometimes. I have done about all I can do up to this point and I am now on standby, waiting for the programmers to complete what they say is the most important module – the one that allows the data to be searched. I will try to keep everyone posted on progress.

Accomplishments at the Cemetery

It is tax time and getting the stuff together and getting it to the accountant caused gave me occasion to take a close look at the numbers one last time. We spent a lot of money last year! And we were Blessed to take in a lot of money last year and every year since we started down this road of saving the graveyard. As for accomplishments since beginning this undertaking, i.e. where the money went, we have reset all of the stones that were both present and found. We have deployed ground penetrating radar and located 183 previously unrecorded graves. We have a map of all that and have marked every grave with numbered stainless steel marker plates affixed in the ground. We have removed all but three of the trees within the cemetery and those will hopefully be removed when the weather breaks although all signs here the last three weeks indicate we are entering another ice age! We have fenced the cemetery, and gotten it placed on the Virginia Historic Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. We have constructed and erected a sign and we have a website. That's a lot of accomplishments!

I get a lot of credit, too much credit, for all of this when the fact is it has been most all of us that has helped, physically, financially, and most importantly, emotionally. Each of you should be proud of the part you played in all of this. I am sure proud of you. Some might now say, well, it doesn't sound like there is much left to do. I disagree. The campaign of telling all who have an interest in Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery about its existence is on my front burner, as is imploring others to start similar projects on cemeteries that they have an interest in preserving. Each of you can be part of this effort as well. I have been amazed at the number of folks who have come to realize that they have ancestors or relatives buried at Dutch Hollow only after they learn about the cemetery and do a little genealogy. And when they have that "Eureka, I have found it" moment, all of our work can be counted as a success. Remembering the forgotten is a big deal to me. I think it might be for most of you too. Tell others what you are a part of and encourage and support them in similar undertakings. Not preaching on it, just saying. And yes, the taxes have been signed, sealed, and delivered to Uncle Sam for the 2025 tax year.

Middlebrook Cemetery

I have shared information about Middlebrook Cemetery in several previous issues of The Headstone. One thing I don't think I have ever shared is who owns it. The Augusta County School Board! That is a long story that I won't bore you with, but I can tell you where things are now.

It was my goal once I learned that the school board owned the cemetery to work with them to get the cemetery transferred over to Augusta County proper. In November of 2025 I called Dr. Eric Bond, Superintendent of Public Schools and talked to him about my goal. I have known Dr. Bond for thirty years and we always had a good working relationship, and that day was no exception. He was retiring December 31st but promised to have things in order for the new Superintendent to be able to continue helping me on the project. I waited until the middle of

January and called the new Superintendent, Dr. Kelly Troxell. The cemetery paperwork from Dr. Bond was on her desk. It is a comforting thought to know that we still have public officials we can count on. Dr. Troxell and I have talked several times since January about how best to proceed. She had talked to her elected School Board District members, and they are bringing the matter up at the March School Board public meeting. They are in favor voting to surplus the property, which means the Augusta County Board of Supervisors can “purchase” the property for one dollar.

I have talked with my Riverheads District Supervisor, Michael Shull and the County Administrator, Tim Fitzgerald, and they are willing for the county to assume title to the property. We have seven elected supervisors in Augusta County so three more supervisor votes are needed to make this a reality assuming there are no issues at the March school board meeting. Having a good relationship with the folks that run our jail, I am hoping that we can use inmate workforce labor to do



some of the cleaning up and routine maintenance once it gets into county hands. I have a lot of “hopes” involved in this process for sure, but I also have some faith in our local government officials. I will keep you posted.

Oakland Cemetery

Oakland Cemetery was, to the extent that I can determine, part of the Oakland Methodist Chapel which was built in 1880. The Staunton newspaper, *Valley Virginian*, noted in the 13 May 1880 edition when reporting on the churches of Middlebrook, “*The other, a protestant Methodist, not quite finished but already under the pastoral care of Rev. Mr. Stover from Baltimore, and the people seem to think he is the right man in the right place.*” The evidence supports (but doesn’t confirm) this finding as the earliest known burial took place there in 1883 and the cemetery is less than a stone’s throw from where the chapel stood. It is located on Cherry Grove Road about two miles east of Middlebrook and about three miles northeast of Dutch Hollow. The cemetery has been semi-cared for over the years so its condition is such that one can visit and read most of the stones that are still standing. Not a walk in the park mind you, but certainly doable. And that “doable” condition is about to improve by leaps and bounds.

There is strong interest from the preacher at Bethel Presbyterian Church, about two miles further northeast of Oakland, to take over the care of the cemetery. It is intended to be a church effort, but the preacher, Derek Almarode, also has a vested interest in its care and is taking the lead on the work. He has a lot of kin folk buried there. Something he did not know until just a few years ago.



The telephone numbers for trustees that are engraved in the sign are no longer working numbers, so I have offered my assistance to find out just who owns the property so the church can get the landowner's blessing before moving forward. As a sidenote, Derek is married to my 1st cousin 2 X removed, Cindy Whitesell Almarode. Cindy's great grandmother was my daddy's sister. So thinking back to earlier in this newsletter when I wrote *'Tell others what you are a part of and encourage and support them in similar undertakings,'* let's all try to remember that it might just work. In doing a little research on Oakland, I discovered that one of Derek's ancestor relatives, H. T. Almarode, was appointed as a trustee of Oakland Chapel in November 1900.

As for connections to Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery, there could not help but be some, given the close proximity of the two graveyards. And there are. One is Mary Margaret Hanger Fox who died in 1918. She is buried at Oakland and was married to George Henry Fox who died thirty years earlier in 1880 at age thirty-three, and only eleven years after they were married. Mary was the daughter of David Ott Hanger and Elizabeth Cale Hanger. I have included her obituary which gives a little information about Mary. I will continue to share any progress on Oakland Cemetery as it develops.

Until next month, keep looking for signs of Spring!

DEATH OF MRS. MARY FOX

Mrs. Mary Fox died at the King's Daughters' Hospital of heart failure on May the 1st. Mrs. Fox's death came as a very great shock to her friends, as she was expecting to come home in a few days.

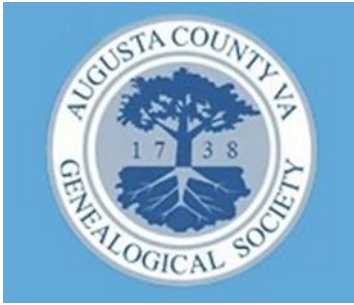
Her husband died many years ago. She is survived by one daughter, Mrs. John Gilmer, of Greenville, and one son, Chas. Fox, of Verona Va. A son and daughter died several years ago. She is also survived by the following brothers and sister Messrs Chas. Ewell, William, John and Geo. Hanger, and Mrs. Samuel Serrett.

The funeral services were held at Oakland M. E. Church of which she was a member, and were conducted by Rev. Mr. Ranor, pastor of the Church, assisted by Rev. Mr. Oney of the Lutheran Church, Middlebrook. Interment took place in the adjoining cemetery.

The floral tributes were many and beautiful, showing the high esteem and respect, in which she was held by all who knew her. The flowers were borne by several of her grand daughters.

Mrs. Fox was 70 years of age the day she died. She was loved by all who knew her and was always ready to minister to the wants of those in distress and lend a comforting, and helping hand to the sick and suffering.

ACGS Planned Programs



Date: March 07, 2026 Time: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Location: Staunton Public Library, 1 Churchville Ave,
Staunton, VA 24401, USA

ACGS Annual Genealogy Workshop I

Call the library at 540.332.3902 to register for the workshops
by Thursday, March 5.



Date: March 14, 2026 Time: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Location: Staunton Public Library, 1 Churchville Ave,
Staunton, VA 24401, USA

ACGS Annual Genealogy Workshop II

Call the library at 540.332.3902 to register for the workshops
by Thursday, March 5.



Date: March 18, 2026 Time: 01:00 PM to 03:00 PM

Location: Augusta County Library - Lower Level Room,
1759 Jefferson Highway, Fishersville, Virginia 22939

**About the event "FAMILY & LAND TITLE RESEARCH
FROM THE ROCKFISH GAP TO WAYNESBORO"
presented by Sam Towler**



Date: April 15, 2026 Time: 01:00 PM to 03:00 PM

Location: Augusta County Library-Lower Level Room,
1759 Jefferson Hwy, Fishersville, VA 22939, USA

April Membership Meeting

**About the event "ANCESTRY BASICS - LEARN TIPS IN
USING ANCESTRY.COM"**



Date: May 20, 2026 Time: 01:00 PM to 03:00 PM

Location: Augusta County Library-Lower Level Room,
1759 Jefferson Hwy, Fishersville, VA 22939, USA

May Membership Meeting

**About the event "ANCESTRY DNA-UNDERSTANDING
YOUR MATCHES"**

Website Updates: Members Section

LIFE MEMBERS

Al Wilkerson 2025 Glenn Hanger 2025 Crim Lotts 2025

Michael Clinebell 2025

In The Library / Archives Section

Ship Passenger Lists 1732-1754 - 15 Total

Unpublished Documents - 9 Total

Published Documents - 11 Total

Life in Dutch Hollow - 209 Total

Obituaries & Death Notices - 1163 Total (Still several hundred, thousand to go)

Lucas-Fix Private Collection 109 Total

Department of Historical Resources Augusta County Archaeological Site Surveys - 16

Deed Histories - Dutch Hollow - 5

DHH Cemetery Forensics, Etc. - Preliminary Findings of Ground Penetrating Radar for lower 35 feet of Cemetery and GPS of entire cemetery - 2

Frederich Hanger Descendants Over 200 pages of his descendants' names with city, county, and state of residence when known. Roughly 8,000 names.

Cook-Teaford Cemetery - 2 Files

Schoolhouses-Augusta Co. - 1800s - 39

Marriages - 150

Coming Soon:

Elijah Jacob Hanger Private Collection (Approximately 450 files to be uploaded as time permits)

In The Focused Research Section

18 Files (40+ more to be researched, formatted, and uploaded as time permits)

The **Miscellaneous Research Files** module now contains 52 folders. There are over 350 files contained within those 52 folders. Please use them. All of that work is for your benefit and was done with you in mind. Take advantage of it! By the same token, let me know what you would like to see changed or added and I will do my best to accommodate.

Until next month, Blessings, Happy Spring, and Happy Trails,

Glenn Hanger

President, Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery