

THE HEADSTONE

Vol. III

October 2025

Issue X

Hello and greetings to all!

Cool and dry is the theme for the first part of September as I begin to jot down a paragraph or two. I find that when I wait too late in the month to get started something always comes up that makes it tough to get it written. It has certainly been a strange weather year here in the Shenandoah Valley. And a strange wildlife year as well. We are infested with bears and deer, and I have not heard a coyote in two months. For the last ten years I have not been able to go for two nights without hearing at least one pack and sometimes as many as three different packs which around here usually consists of a female, some yearlings occasionally, and a bunch of hungry pups learning to hunt. I am not sure what is going on with the coyotes, but I am not complaining. But we do have another mammal wreaking havoc in our corn fields and trash cans: Bears. We have had increasing numbers for the last ten years or so and this year neighbors are seeing bears, bear sign, and bear damage about every day. The problem is certainly not new to this area and as evidence of that, I call your attention to the article from 1884¹. I don't think the same tactics will work in 2025.

The Tree Cutters

The tree cutters arrived on Wednesday, September 3rd. On the first day they were able to cut four large cherry trees inside the fence, one outside the fence, and they trimmed the walnut tree in the middle of the cemetery. We had to take several sections of fence out to get the job done, but there was just not any way around doing that. I have a couple of photos that I took when they were just getting started, and if you are wondering if the trees really did need to be cut, take a look at the photo on the right of the stump of one of the trees cut the first day. And you can see what lies right behind the stump. If you recall a photo in a newsletter last winter of a limb that broke off after a snow and knocked over a couple of those stones in the background, this tree was the culprit. And yes, right now you are probably trying to figure out what creature that stump reminds you of. I will state my guess: Elephant with his trunk buried. No pun intended.

BRUIN.—The vicinity of Middlebrook seems to be infested with bears. On last Saturday, that veteran old hunter, Berry Manley, and Mr. Newt. Basserman killed a very large bear about two miles from here, and on the same day David Hemp's son killed two young bears near the same place. Last Tuesday, Berry Manley was informed that another "bruin" was depredating on the cornfields of his neighbors, and seizing his rifle and calling his dogs he and his son started in pursuit. In a few hour they returned with a fine bear.



¹ Newspapers.com. *Staunton Vindicator*, Staunton, Virginia. 31 October 1884. Page 3.



The crew returned on Thursday September 4th and cut ten more trees, far more than they had priced when I first talked with the owner of the company, but they stuck to their quote. A light rain started to fall around 2 pm, which made the grass on the hillside just slick enough that the equipment used to pull the trees in the right direction as they were being felled would probably not have had enough grip to get the job done so they called it mission accomplished for this go-round. I did the math, and it came out to \$360.00 per tree! Needless to say, I am pleased with the work and very pleased with the price. There are only three trees left in the cemetery to be cut. Two more are just outside the fence on the lower end and I plan to cut those myself. I got a price from Mr. Atkins, the owner, and I told him once we had a little reserve built up in the account I would call him to come back. This is a really good spot to say thank you to everyone who contributed to this project over the last three years. Without your support we could never have done what we have. You have made a difference by choosing to do good yet again, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart. It will take a while to get things straightened back up and the cemetery will look a little different with the trees gone, but the headstones should have a little better chance at longevity from here on out. Below are a few photos after the all-but-three trees were cut. The first one as you can see is with some of the fence still down. That is where we took the limbs and logs out to the pile. The stumps were also cut lower before the fence went back up. My neighbor, Life member of the cemetery, and best of the best friend, Al, helped me on September 5th to put the fence back up. No gimme job I might add but with his help we got it done. While the turf is a little scuffed in places, I can't picture a prettier resting place for those buried in Dutch Hollow than right where they are. But maybe I am just a bit partial.





Field Trips

We had two field trips to the cemetery in September. The first was a group from my church, Old Providence. We call it Monday Mid-Day. We meet the first and third Mondays six times in the fall and five times in the spring at 11:00 am and have all sorts of speakers do presentations to the group and then have a light lunch. There are usually 20-30 in attendance and for our field trip we had 32, so it was a good turnout. The weather could not have been better, sunny and about 65 degrees. I think it went well and there were a lot of good questions asked. Several folks found out that they have ancestors buried in Dutch Hollow. I have attached a couple of photos of the Monday Mid-day outing.





The second field trip was for the Augusta County Historical Society, of which I am a life member. The Society had asked me to first give a presentation for the attendees at the Augusta County Library in Fishersville before going out to Dutch Hollow, which seemed to go well with some follow-up questions from the group as well as several from those that attended by Zoom. I was honored to have my 5th cousin, Richard Jones therein person and my 7th cousin in Michigan, Jo Ann Bunce, attend by Zoom. Thank you. I consider it an honor to have you both in attendance. We also had one person comment by Zoom, Mr. Gordon, that said his 5g grandfather was Johann Frederick Hanger. That would make him and I 6th cousins. So, in one meeting the four of us were in the presence of each other's respective 5th, 6th, and 7th cousins. I call that a Blessing, at least for my part. If I counted correctly we had 26 or thereabouts at the meeting and about 16 for the field trip. The weather was somewhat overcast and about 62 degrees at the cemetery, but I think everyone saw it as a comfortable outing. I think that several people were pretty sure that were the world flat, Dutch Hollow would be well beyond the edge.



Everyone had great questions, and I did my best to answer them accurately. I hope folks always fact-check me and let me know if otherwise. Above are two photos from the ACGS field trip.

Cemetery Web Map

The mapping of the cemetery GPR & GPS results is completed! A PDF version of the map has been uploaded to the website for everyone's use, including non-members. Just go to the website and click on the CEMETERY MAPS tab, then click on DUTCH HOLLOW HANGER CEMETERY, then click on the first choice there, DUTCH HOLLOW HANGER CEMETERY - ALL BURIALS and you will bring up the map. The second choice is for the index explained below. You can then use the enlarge and reduce function on your computer to choose the viewing size you want and the scroll bars to navigate around the map to where you want. The map is for you, so enjoy.

If you ever want to print a large blueprint size map at Staples for yourself, let me know and I will email you the file and you will have your very own. I also uploaded the data index for the map which details just what was discovered. One thing you will notice in the index is that there is a far higher ratio of shroud vs coffin burials in the upper part of the cemetery vs the lower. I think this is the oldest section for two reasons, the shroud vs coffin ratio, and the absence of marked stones still present there vs in the lower section. Not scientific, just a hunch.

Another Life Membership

I am pleased to announce that we have gained another Life Member in September. Crim Lotts, who resides in Newport News, is our newest! Crim has a lot of ancestors at Dutch Hollow and he and his extended family members have Blessed us with their membership. Thank you Crim for your generous support of the cemetery. While we have spent a lot of money this year, spending in future years should be much less.

Our Board of Directors

Our board of directors meets four times per year at Old Providence Church. It is a central location for the three of us to travel to and at the September 8th meeting it really paid off because we were able to lead the church group to the cemetery for their field trip after our meeting. Below is a photo of the three of us at that meeting before field trip folks began arriving. For those that have not been formally introduced, in the photo below is me on the left, Randy Brevard in the middle and Nancy Sorrells on the right. Randy and Nancy have been as supportive and involved in the day-to-day operations of the non-profit as anyone could ever ask for. I asked at this meeting if they were willing to be nominated to serve yet another year beginning anew in December and they agreed to do so. If there is anyone that has any interest in serving on this board, please email me directly and I can explain just what is and is not involved. Sooner or later Randy and Nancy will need a break, and it would be great to have their successor in place. It is a one-year term with four meetings during that year. The meetings last about an hour. A love of history and preservation and sharing of the same is probably our biggest requirement. Picks, shovels, axes, and chainsaws are not involved! Give it some thought.



A Member Story

I shared a confession in last month's newsletter about Charlie Schooley and I tossing pennies in the fish tank during final exam review in our biology class and how all that turned not-so-good out. That story prompted Richard Jones, my 5th cousin, to email me and confess too. I will copy and paste with his permission exactly what he wrote. And I thought I was the only black sheep!

"I enjoyed the incident about flipping pennies. Brought to mind an incident that happened when I was in the second grade. I was pulling time in the closet (can't remember why). The "kick ball" we played during recess was stored on a shelf. I was tossing the ball up in the air and missed catching, causing the ball to bounce to the end of the closet and out the door. That's when I found out her ruler was not used just to make straight lines."

Thank you Richard for sharing. My penny offense was over fifty years ago, and Richard's flagrant foul was a little longer than that. Ain't it peculiar the things we remember with an odd kind of fondness.

The Website Photos

I have been remiss lately on getting photographs of various events and work at the cemetery uploaded to the website and I am pleased to announce that I have taken the time to correct that dereliction of duty. Photos of the Old Providence ARP Church field trip, Augusta County Genealogical Society field trip, tree removal, and the Omega Mapping work are now on the website under the tab "Cemetery Photos," some of which were included in various newsletters. Enjoy. I still have some visitor photos to add yet, but I plan to get that done too.

I can't think of a better place to sign off than with us all thinking of Richard in the coat closet tossing that ball and saying Uh-Oh to himself (and maybe out loud) as he watched it roll out the door. For what it's worth Richard, I would have been tossing it too.

Local Historian Talk with Glenn Hanger

Thursday, October 23rd 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Middlebrook

The Middlebrook Library will be hosting local historian Glenn Hanger. He will be discussing cemeteries in Augusta County, VA. This program is great for history buffs. All ages are welcome.



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AUGUSTA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Wednesday, October 15, 2025 Regular meeting ~ 1:00 PM
 - Speaker: Lynn Scott, Professional Genealogist
 - Topic: *"New FamilySearch Full-Text Search by Their AI"*
- Wednesday, November 19, 2025 11:30 am – 1:30 pm

Please RSVP for the ACHS Holiday Luncheon at Rowes Restaurant located at 74 Rowe Road, Staunton, Virginia. 24401

Great food and even better fellowship with other like-minded folks!



Website Updates: Members Section

LIFE MEMBERS

Al Wilkerson 2025 Glenn Hanger 2025 Crim Lotts 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 - 200 Total

Obituaries & Death Notices - 1114 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 - 146

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 and Happy Trails,

Glenn Hanger

President, Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery