

# Fort Harrison

335 Main Street, Dayton, Virginia ■ [www.fortharrisonva.org](http://www.fortharrisonva.org)

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## National Wreaths Across America *Fort Harrison will place wreaths at Dayton Cemetery*

At 12 noon on Saturday, December 15, Fort Harrison volunteers will lay wreaths on the graves of all veterans buried in the Dayton Cemetery. They will join thousands reaching out to more than 1400 cemeteries on the same day.

We invite you to participate by donating one or more wreaths at \$15 each using the form on the back of this newsletter. You are also invited to participate in the ceremonies on the special day.

### ***Dayton Cemetery has long-standing connection with Harrison family***

The Dayton Cemetery is one of our area's earliest burial grounds still in use today.

The history of the earliest Harrisons establishing their home plantation along Cook's Creek in the 1740s is intertwined with the establishment of the cemetery in what would later become the Town of Dayton in Rockingham County.

Captain Daniel Harrison donated land for a "Chapel of Ease" to the Augusta Parish in 1747. This building, originally a log structure, is thought to have been located near the oldest graves on the northern end of the cemetery. The small chapel was replaced by a larger frame building twenty years later and was closed during or shortly after the American Revolution.

In March 1838, Daniel Yount deeded the site of the "Old Chapel" to a group of local citizens for use as a burial ground. Dr. Peachy Harrison, William Rice, Peter Paulus [Paul], and other local community leaders paid Yount one dollar to purchase his land, on condition that it would be used as a burying ground and never used to establish any church or meeting house.

In the early 1890s the Dayton Cemetery Company was chartered and in the following years three more parcels of land were purchased to enlarge the grounds. In the 1980s the cemetery was re-incorporated as The Dayton Cemetery of Virginia, Inc.



***Participate by donating a wreath; complete the form on the back page.***

The oldest stone is that of Mary Harrison, who died 30 March, 1793 at the age of twenty-six.

Daniel Harrison, serving as a Militia Captain during the French and Indian War (1755-1763) is likely one of the very earliest burials, although the location of his grave is unknown.

Captain Benjamin Harrison, Peter Paul and Nicholas Paul, three soldiers of the Revolution, are buried in the oldest section. More than 30 Confederate soldiers as well as a few Spanish-American War soldiers are also buried in that section. A number of World War I veterans are interred, including George W. Webster, the only Dayton resident killed in combat in the Argonne Forest.

A large number of World War II veterans include Robert L. "Bob" Gangwer who was accidentally killed in Burma. Richard D. "Don" Callison who was severely injured at the Battle of the Bulge and was awarded

the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star. Lt. Colonel William E. Bryan fought at Normandy and was awarded the Silver Star. Herbert F. Early served in World War II, Korea and Vietnam and was awarded the Purple Heart. There are also a number of veterans who served in the Korean War and Vietnam.

The Board of Directors of Fort Harrison, Inc. extends an invitation to the community to attend our Wreaths Across America wreath-laying ceremony on December 15, 2018. Wreaths will be placed on all veterans graves in the cemetery for the Christmas season. Wreaths Across America, a nationwide effort to honor all veterans, provides wreaths for Arlington National Cemetery as well as cemeteries across the country.

***Join us as we honor our hometown heroes here in the Town of Dayton!***



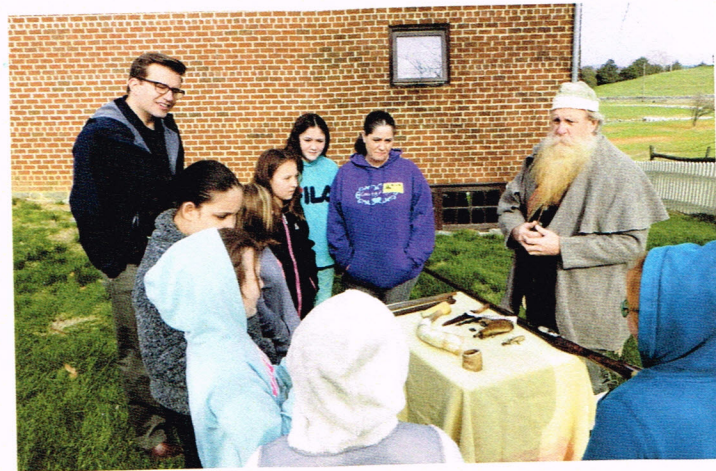
Greg Adamson speaks about the Valley's early Indian culture



The youngsters enjoyed Sallie Meffert's stories about life in the home



Dan Michael, posing as Dr. Peachy Harrison, made some cringe with his tales of colonial medicine



Mark Thomas thrilled the students with flintlock demonstrations

## Elkton 4th-graders learn about 18th-century life

In April we were happy to host a day with fourth graders from Elkton Elementary School. Several of our volunteers were on hand to teach the students about life on the frontier during the 18th Century.

Mark Thomas demonstrated the use of the flintlock rifle, a weapon of necessity for hunting and protection. Fort Harrison board member Sallie Meffert talked about hearth cooking in the summer kitchen cellar and showed how Mrs. Harrison would have prepared meals for her large and hardworking family. JMU archaeology students were on hand to let the students try sifting soil for artifacts and assembling potsherds back into a recognizable bowl.

Greg Adamson talked about the Native American tribes that hunted in the Valley long before the settlement of the early English, Scots-Irish and German groups. Our newest board member, Dan Michael, taught a lesson on medicine of the early 19th Century when Dr. Peachy Harrison, the last Harrison to own the house, was practicing in Harrisonburg. Our fiber ladies, Sue Ober, Vicki Mongold and Penny Hollabaugh were on hand to explain spinning and weaving to the students, another skill that women in the family would have learned as children.

**Thanks to all our great volunteers!** Thanks to Beau Dickenson, Coordinator of Social Studies for Rockingham County Schools, for arranging their visit.



Vicki Mongold (left) and Penny Hollabaugh explained the workings of Fort Harrison's loom



School buses arrived early in the day, full of active fourth-graders



Sue Ober focused on explaining spinning



Assisted by JMU students, the Elkton youngsters got to work on an archeology dig

## From the President's Desk

Fort Harrison has been the scene of a great deal of activity this Spring and Summer. A number of special events have taken place, please look for reports on these and other happenings in this newsletter. Those of you who are supporters of Fort Harrison should have received your membership renewal, and we hope you will renew for the coming year.

If you are not a current member, please consider doing so this coming year. Your support will help to fund events offered to the public at no charge such as the Colonial Trades Fair and school group tours. Visitors touring the house are asked to pay a donation for their visit.

In closing I want to welcome Dan Michael and Frank Miller to our Board of Directors. I also thank each of you on behalf of the Fort Harrison Board for your continued support towards the upkeep and preservation of this National Historic Landmark. Without you and many other individuals, there would be no Fort Harrison.

Thank you and best wishes,

*Jody Meyerhaeffen*

President, Fort Harrison, Inc.

1749

*Society of Fort Harrison*

### MEMBERS

Alex & Pat Banks	Catherine Hildreth
Chester & Nancy Bradfield	Helen Craig Lynch
Dan & Nancy Brubaker	Tom & Lesley Mack
John & Jackie Buchanan	Joseph G. Myers*
Betty Campbell	Betty B. Rice
Eleanor Canter*	Jane W. Ritchie
Earl & Janet Downs	Joan Harvey Sipe*
Jeff & Beverley Evans	Ilene Smith
Diane Guzzi	Diane Stilwell
Clive Hallman, Jr.	William* & Bonnie Lou Wampler
Phyllis Weaver Hearn*	Charles & Judy Warren

*\*deceased*

#### "1749" Pledged Members

Terri Denton  
Bill & Andrea Miracle

The Board of Directors established the Society to honor those who have contributed \$1,749 to Fort Harrison. "1749" is the year Daniel Harrison built his home on Cook's Creek. You may become a member by making a lump sum payment or in smaller amounts over a 5-year period. Donations go into an endowment fund that secures the future of the house.





# Colonial Trades Fair!

*Version 3 adds new voices*

In June, Fort Harrison volunteers were excited to host our third annual Colonial Trades Fair. Once again the grounds around the house were filled with colonial tradesmen educating our visitors as they demonstrated their skills. In addition to trades from other years, this year Susan Smith and her family from Montezuma hosted a corn husk doll activity for younger kids. Dr. Peachy Harrison, interpreted by Dan Michael of Bridgewater, was also on hand to teach the crowd about his profession - colonial medicine.

Another great addition was the food booth, hosted by New Beginnings Church Middle School Youth Group. Having food available meant that our visitors stayed longer and participated more in the activities. Thanks to all our volunteers for a wonderful day at Fort Harrison!

*Colonial Trades Fair 2019 is scheduled for June 22, 2019. Mark your calendars!*



Photos by Allen Litten and friends



**Friday, October 5**

Brunswick Stew Pre-Sale Pick-Up  
3 pm - 6 pm

**Saturday, October 6**

Dayton Days Autumn Celebration and  
Fort Harrison's Famous Brunswick Stew

**Friday, December 7 & Saturday, December 8**  
Holiday Teas

**Saturday, December 15**

Wreaths Across America  
12 Noon at the Dayton Cemetery  
Open House following the Wreath Laying  
for all participants and all Friends  
of Fort Harrison

**June 22, 2019**

Colonial Trades Fair

*In Remembrance*

*These former board members of Fort Harrison, Inc.  
were dedicated to its care and preservation*

Mrs. Isabelle M. Belle  
May 7, 1928 – November 25, 2017

Mr. Roger L. Davis  
August 3, 1931 – March 14, 2018

Mrs. Anna S. Snyder  
June 3, 1932 – April 22, 2018

Mrs. Patricia (Pat) Messick  
June 28, 1927 – July 19, 2018

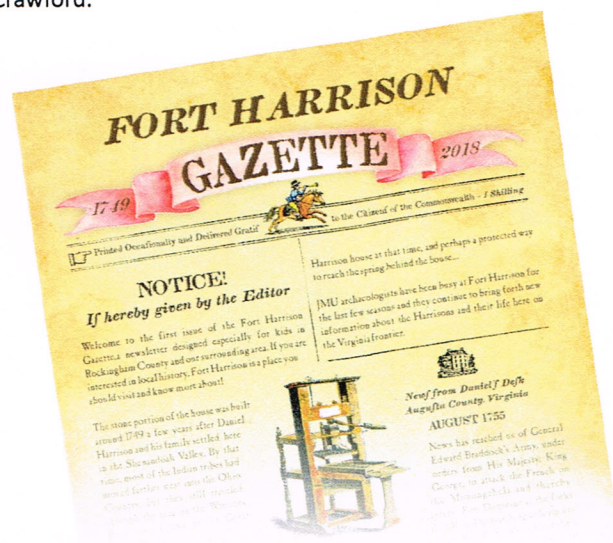
Mrs. Eleanor F. Canter  
March 31, 1923 – July 24, 2018

*With Appreciation*

The Board of Directors extends its appreciation for the following additions to our collection:

**Blanche Whitesell:** flat iron, cast iron tea kettle and stoneware jug.

**Ellen Kaylor:** a length of linen thought to have been woven on our loom, which was originally owned by the Sandy sisters of Mount Crawford.



*Fort Harrison launches the*  
**Fort Harrison GAZETTE**

Inserted in this copy of our latest Fort Harrison newsletter, you will find another one designed for kids ages 7- 10. The new Fort Harrison Gazette, as the banner says, will be "printed occasionally and delivered gratis to citizens of the Commonwealth".

Our first issue deals with British General Braddock's 1755 expedition to capture Fort Duquesne in southwest Pennsylvania. The massacre of Braddock's troops would lead to Indian raids across the Allegheny Mountains and into the Shenandoah Valley. The French and Indian War would rage on the frontier for the next seven years. The Harrison family and their neighbors were forced to deal with this threat.

We ask that you share this issue with your children, grandchildren or even kids in your neighborhood. If they want to receive future issues, sign them up using the form on its back page. The newsletter will be free, and we promise not to use their information for any other reason.

Here at Fort Harrison we are dedicated to teaching young people about life in the 18th and early 19th Centuries. Local history in Rockingham County is a great place to start!



*Save the Dates!*

**The 2018 Holiday Teas have been set for Friday, December 7 and Saturday, December 8. The Harrisons are still planning the menu, but they want you to set aside a date!**



Alex Banks (left) and Bill Meyerhoeffer



# 2017 Holiday Open House

*Lovely weather, lovely food, and lovely friends!*



Kathy Boase



Vicki Mongold



Jean Litten



Betty Jo Meyerhoeffer