

Park

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book on the park's creation, the families had to pay for their new homes.

Berry, Shifflett and Perdue agree: Most of the 2 million or so people who drive along Skyline Drive or hike the trails in the park today probably know little, if anything, of the plight of the people forced to abandon the land.

The Children of Shenandoah, Berry said, can possibly change that.

"I think that very few people know what was done or how it was done," Berry said. "There's a lot of ignorance about that. The cruel nature of it needs to be made known. Perhaps we can learn from history."

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Randolph Shifflett

to and participants in an event that still leaves residents in Greene, Madison and other counties bitter. "I think this is a real good idea," said Betty Brubach, Greene's representative on the Blue Ridge Committee for Shenandoah National Park Relations. "Some might say this inflames the hard feelings that exist. But I think those hard feelings won't change. It won't be worse, and maybe they can get a dialogue started with the park. Maybe a museum."

The group's purpose is not to air old grievances against park officials and the federal government, Berry said, but simply to pay homage to the folk who once lived in the park by remembering them and the way they lived. It's too late to do anything about

the way families were pushed off their land, Shifflett said, "but it's not too late to educate the public about this."

"The park wasn't built with money," he said. "It was built with heartaches, sadness and tears." Berry said she is a history buff who had thought about creating the organization a long time before actually convening a meeting. After listening to gripping stories told by elderly residents who were children when they saw their homes burned, Berry said, she placed fliers at various country stores to generate interest in the group.

The Children of Shenandoah held its first meeting in May, and only eight people showed up, Berry said. The group is holding its second meeting at 7:30 p.m. on June 6 at William Monroe High School in Stanardsville.

Hoping to see more people at this meeting, Berry has arranged for authors Carolyn and Jack Reeder to speak. The Readers have written several books on the culture and folkways of the people removed from the park land.

"I think we need to educate the descendants," Berry said. "I know my mother and I should have talked to my grandmother more about it."