

The Blue Ridge Heritage Project

Update – October, 2018

Greetings!

On the beautiful sunny afternoon of May 20 the Rockingham County BRHP committee dedicated the sixth of eight monument to the families displaced by the coming of Shenandoah National Park. The dedication featured speakers, displays, and authentic old time mountain-style music as well as a delicious array of desserts and finger foods. Located beside the Elkton Area Community Center at 20593 Blue & Gold Drive, Elkton, VA 22827, the site includes interpretive panels that highlight the history and lives of the people who lost their homes and land. Stop by to see this beautiful memorial!



The Rockingham memorial after a refreshing shower.

The Warren County BRHP committee has been busily working on their monument. The groundbreaking was held on August 11. Despite rainy late summer weather construction moved forward steadily, and the dedication will be held on Saturday, October 13 (details below). This is the seventh of the eight planned Blue Ridge Heritage monuments.

The first goal set by the Blue Ridge Heritage Project was to develop a monument site in each of the eight counties where land was acquired for Shenandoah National Park. With six county monuments now completed (Albemarle, Greene, Madison, Page, Rappahannock, and Rockingham) and the seventh dedication (Warren) coming up on October 13 we are now focusing our attention on the eighth and final monument. We are trying to form a committee in the Waynesboro/Eastern Augusta County area to create a monument to the Augusta residents who lost their homes and land (more information below).

The next phase of the Blue Ridge Heritage Project is to create a driving trail that will take visitors on a tour of all eight BRHP monuments as well as highlighting historic sites along the way that relate to the lives of those who once lived in the Blue Ridge. We will be developing an app that can be downloaded to provide not only driving directions but also information about the history of the people.

Warren County Dedication - Saturday, October 13, 1:00

The dedication for the **Warren Blue Ridge Heritage Project** Chimney Memorial will be held October 13th, 2018 at 1:00 pm. The site is located at 460 East Criser Road, Front Royal, VA, 22630, just east of the Burrell Brooks Park and Samuels Public Library and adjacent to the Happy Creek Trail.

From 10 am until 3 pm. at the monument site there will be displays by Shenandoah National Park, the Blue Ridge Heritage Project and of local history.

This will be a rain or shine event. In case of rain, the ceremony will be held in the shelter at Burrell Brooks Park. Light refreshments will be available after the 1:00 pm. ceremony. Please bring your own seating.

The dedication ceremony is being held in conjunction with the Warren Heritage Society's Fall Festival of Leaves event located on East Main and Chester Street at the Town Gazebo. We encourage our guests to visit the Festival of Leaves event on Main Street for food vendors and multiple craft booths. For more information visit <https://festivalnet.com/27916/Front-Royal-Virginia/Festivals/Festival-of-Leaves>.

For maps and additional details on the dedication see the Front Royal Warren County Blue Ridge Heritage Project Facebook page.

Parking is available at the adjacent Burrell Brooks Park as well as at Samuels Public Library.

Please note: If you are coming into Front Royal from Rt. 522 South Criser Road is closed due to construction of a replacement bridge over Happy Creek. You will need to enter East Criser Road from Route 340 (South Royal Avenue). This intersection is just north of the north entrance for Skyline Drive. Signs will be posted.



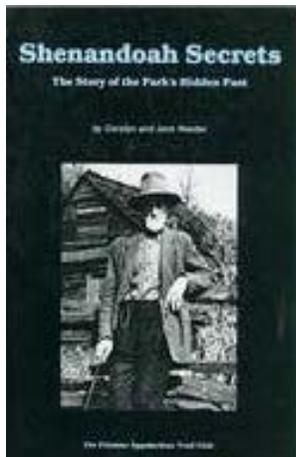
The Warren Co. Monument is almost done.

Children of Shenandoah

Children of Shenandoah (COS), a sister organization to the Blue Ridge Heritage Project, is working on plans for events that highlight the cultural history of the mountain families. Originally the group was formed in the late 1980s to object to the way the visitor center displays and the visitor orientation film depicted the people of the mountains and how their land became the park. Because of the tireless efforts of many descendants and other people interested in SNP history the displays and the orientation film at Byrd Visitor Center now accurately tell the story of the people who once lived in the mountains and the how their land was acquired for the park. For two decades the Children of Shenandoah group was idle, but through the efforts of Lisa Custalow, Teresa Lam, and others, COS has been revived to keep alive the history and the culture of the people of the Blue Ridge.

For three years the group has organized a Blue Ridge Homecoming day. This celebration of mountain life brings together descendants with others interested in SNP history and the culture of the former mountain residents for an afternoon of fun, food, and music (unfortunately the 2018 Homecoming was scheduled for September 15, the day that the entire region was bracing for Hurricane Florence, and it was canceled).

The Children of Shenandoah meets at noon on the first Tuesday of each month at the Elkton Area Community Center. On Tuesday, December 4th COS will begin a book discussion group to talk about books related to the mountain people. The first book will be *Shenandoah Secrets – the Story of the Park's Hidden Past* by Carolyn and Jack Reeder. Participants will read the book on their own and discuss it when the group gets together again. All are invited to attend. Please join us! For more information contact Lisa Custalow (lisacustalow@gmail.com)



Shenandoah Secrets was written, in part, because of the Reeder's curiosity about the artifacts and other marks left behind by the former mountain residents, discovered on their many hikes in the park. As time passes these marks grow fainter, but the Reeder's help

us keep the people alive through this book. The authors have included many photographs, showing with candid realism of what life was like for some of the residents. At one time these photos were the reason this book could not be sold in the park. Times change, and this book is now available through bookstores at both SNP visitor centers and from the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club bookstore. (adapted from the PATC bookstore listing for this book)

Honoring the Augusta County Families

The Blue Ridge Heritage Project is a grassroots organization. Each county monument has been planned and built by the hard work of many dedicated people from the communities who came together to promote the project, do historical research for names to go on the plaque, examine potential locations, design the chimney, raise the money, and guide the process by taking care of the details, and making many decisions, big and small. It is time to find and organize that group of people in the Augusta County/Waynesboro area. The BRHP is seeking interested people – descendants, and anyone who is interested in local or Shenandoah National Park history – to work together to bring the Augusta monument to life. If you would like to be a part of this process please call or email Bill Henry (contact info below).

Donate!

Support the Blue Ridge Heritage Project by making a tax-deductible contribution! We are raising money for improving our website and for creating the driving tour that will connect our monument sites. Even the counties with completed monuments continue to need funds for landscaping, putting finishing touches on their sites, and for on-going maintenance and upkeep. The second phase of the memorial construction for most county committees is the creation and placement of historical information displays. These interpretive kiosks or panels will provide a look at the lives of the people who once lived in the mountains in that county, and each county's displays will be unique.

You can make a tax deductible donation by sending a check to BRHP, P.O. Box 1172, Stanardsville, VA 22973, or you can donate on line through our website (BlueRidgeHeritageProject.com).

Designate which county you are supporting, or you may make a donation to provide support to the overall Blue Ridge Heritage Project.

Thank you for your interest in the Blue Ridge Heritage Project. To join us, to support the Blue Ridge Heritage Project, or to get more information, please contact me (BlueRidgeHeritageProject@gmail.com or 434-985-7905)

Bill Henry

Blue Ridge Heritage Project P.O. Box 1172 Stanardsville, VA 22973
BlueRidgeHeritageProject.com
BlueRidgeHeritageProject@gmail.com

The Blue Ridge Heritage Project is a 501(c)3 non-profit,
and your contributions are tax deductible.

And some there be, which have no memorial,
who are perished as though they had never been*.

Front Royal - Warren County Blue Ridge Heritage Project

Chimney Memorial Dedication Ceremony

FALLING WITHIN
THE PROPOSED SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK

Scale: 4 inches = 1 mile

**Saturday, October 13th, 2018
at 1:00pm**

**Located at 460 East Criser Road
Front Royal, Virginia 22630**

**All are invited, come join us as we
dedicate this monument in memory
of those Warren County families &
landowners displaced to form
Shenandoah National Park.**



We will have displays at the site from 10:00am til 3:00pm, with the Dedication Ceremony at 1:00pm. Displays will include the Blue Ridge Heritage Project, Shenandoah National Park and information on the names of Warren County Individuals with maps.

The site is located at 460 E Criser Road,
just east of Samuels Library &
Burrell Brooks Park and
adjacent to the Happy Creek Trail.

Parking available at the Park.
This is a rain or shine event.
Bring a chair. Light refreshments
will be served after the ceremony.

For more information call Darryl Merchant 540-683-6878

Please note: If you are coming into Front Royal from Rt. 522 south Criser Road is closed due to construction of a replacement bridge over Happy Creek. You will need to enter East Criser Road from Route 340 (South Royal Avenue). This intersection is just north of the north entrance for Skyline Drive. Signs will be posted.