

The Blue Ridge Heritage Project

Update – July, 2019

County Updates

This summer the Blue Ridge Heritage Project is busy in three counties:

- **Greene:** After many delays due to the winter weather, spring rains, and wet conditions the Greene County committee has finally been able to install the interpretive panels at the monument site in Stanardsville. These panels will provide visitors with the story of the displacement, a map of the Greene County land tracts taken for Shenandoah National Park, and a bit of insight into the lives of the people who once lived in the Blue Ridge Mountains before the park. The panels are currently covered up, but they will be unveiled in a dedication ceremony at 10 am. on Saturday, July 6. The Greene County BRHP committee has worked very hard to bring their monument to completion. Come see the results of their efforts.
- Saturday, July 6 also marks the opening of the adjacent Greene Commons pavilion, the new home of the Greene County Farmers' Market. If you come to the dedication you can pick up some delicious food from the market vendors. The Greene BRHP monument and the Farmers' Market are located at the intersection of Main St. and Celt Rd., by the county administration building, in downtown Stanardsville.
- **Warren:** At the Warren County BRHP monument, located on the Happy Creek Trail, just off of Criser Rd. in Front Royal, phase II of the project is nearing completion. Concrete has been poured in front of the chimney for a terrace that represents the size of a typical mountain home. A flag pole was installed in time to fly the American flag for July 4th.
- **Augusta:** A committee to guide the planning and construction of the Augusta County BRHP monument is now being formed. The local committee will make decisions regarding the design and location of the Augusta monument, and will take the lead in promoting the project and raising the necessary money for its completion. We are looking for descendants of the displaced families who are living in the Augusta County/Waynesboro area. Send me your contact information if you are interested in participating in or supporting the work of this committee.



Mountain Heritage Book Discussion

The Mountain Heritage Book Discussion group, sponsored by BRHP's sister organization, Children of Shenandoah, recently held its second book discussion in Elkton. Katrina Powell's *Answer At Once*, a book that contains letters written in the 1930s to park and government officials by the people who were about to be removed from their homes, was the topic of the discussion. Future discussions will feature other books related to the people of the Blue Ridge. The hope is to establish discussion programs in communities surrounding Shenandoah National Park. Volunteers and organizations, such as libraries, community groups, and historical

societies, are needed to sponsor book discussions in other areas. Contact me if you are interested in learning more about the Mountain Heritage Book Discussions or if you would like to help with starting a program in your area.

National History Day Project

This past spring sisters Mia and Ava Lazar, high school students from Blacksburg, VA, entered their ten minute documentary film, *A Richer Land - The Tragedy and Triumph of the Creation of Shenandoah National Park*, in Virginia's National History Day competition, where they won second place at the state level. This well-researched film is a brief telling of the story of the removal of the residents for the creation of Shenandoah National Park. Take ten minutes to watch the video on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3SNyZAROWII&t=94s>.

***Go Down the Mountain* – a novel by Meredith Battle**

In April, 2019 author Meredith Battle released her debut novel, *Go Down the Mountain*, a story set in the Blue Ridge Mountains during the 1930s when families were being removed from their homes to make way for Shenandoah National Park. Learn more about the book and order your copy at <https://meredithbattle.com/>.

Children of Shenandoah Homecoming

Mark your calendar! The annual **Children of Shenandoah Homecoming** will be held on Saturday, October 26 beginning at 1:00 at the pavilion in the Ed Good Memorial Park in Stanley, home of the Page County BRHP monument. This pot luck dinner event is open to everyone. Bring a dish to share, family photographs and artifacts, and a chair.

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).

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)

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