

Monroe County Historical Society



Carriage House

Featured in Magazines

The Carriage House has been open for just one season now and here is what some local magazines say about it. “Wonderful West Virginia” titled their December 2015 article, “High Society in Monroe County” and wrote, “Union boasts a high-society past and now a museum to show it off”. The article continued, “The pride of the fleet is an 1880’s-vintage omnibus that once carried visitors to Chalybeate Springs and Sweet Springs resorts in Monroe”.

“Blue Ridge” magazine (Jan/Feb, 2016) in a section on “Offbeat Museums of the Blue Ridge Region” said, “the Carriage House Museum is a Gothic Revival timber-framed building that itself is part of the exhibit”. They talk about the omnibus, then say, “the rest of the collection—carriages, a John Deere Wagon, a sleigh, a fringed surrey—represent local transportation in the late 1800’s”. And “about 50 vehicle-related tools and images are also displayed, from spoke-making kits to wheel shrinkers, indicating life then was hardly simple.”

We appreciate the attention and point out that we are also now attracting bus tours from the Road Scholar program to our “Museum Campus” Our four buildings, all on one block in Union now include the original Caperton Museum, the Clark-Wiseman and Owen Neel Log Houses as well as the Carriage House. This past year we have enjoyed funding from the Preservation Alliance of West Virginia to support AmeriCorps volunteer, Anita Tracy. She has been very helpful in organizing the museum volunteers, upgrading the exhibits and cataloging the artifacts. One of the volunteers, Vernessa Pontius has prepared a computerized record of our extensive historical documents. So, we would like to thank the Preservation Alliance, Anita and Vernessa.



Civil War Programs Coming to Union

Clark Hansbarger and his troupe presented, “Dream of a Good Death: New Songs of the Old War” at Ames Clair Hall at 7:30, Saturday, April 2nd. Clark grew up in this county and has presented this program throughout Virginia to large audiences and good reviews. Clark traced the arc of the Civil War in an evening of music and history. This cycle of original songs follows the trials, hopes, fears and sacrifices of soldiers as they struggle through the major conflicts of the war.

Coming later as part of the Last Blast of Summer, and very much in the planning stage will be a reenactment of the 1864 occupation of Union by federal troops. This program will include skirmishes, canon batteries, a dance troupe from Virginia, period music, and an encampment of reenactors from near and far. There will be a concerted attempt to portray real events that occurred during this occupation, based on what we know from the original diaries and other records published by the Historical Society. This Living History program will be presented on the weekend of August 27th.