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NEWSLETTER FOR RESIDENTS AND FRIENDS OF THE LODGE AT OLD TRAIL

Historic Site Nears Opening

Excitement is growing over the prospect of walking or biking the 150 year-old, nearly mile-long Blue Ridge Tunnel from Nelson to Augusta County. The third and final phase to rehabilitate the former railroad tunnel began in October and is slated for completion by the middle of 2020.

The historical landmark engineered by Colonel Claudius Crozet and built in the 1850s has been undergoing modifications for five years and is on its way to become a top attraction for recreationists and historians alike. The village of Crozet was named after the former French military officer who was also the founder and first president of the Virginia Military Academy.

Nine miles from The Lodge, the civil engineering marvel was used for 86 years by steam trains hauling passengers and freight through Crozet and across the Blue Ridge Mountains at Rockfish Gap.



The 4,273 foot-long, hand-drilled tunnel was closed and replaced in 1944 by a parallel tunnel built for larger rail cars that still remains in use for Amtrak and freight train traffic.

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The tunnel east portal in 2014 before rehab began and the new tunnel commemorative painting by artist P. Buckey Moss depicting the west portal.



RESIDENT FOCUS

Frances McDaniel was very young when she began playing the piano. With the encouragement of her parents, Frances spent her youthful years taking piano lessons and adding to her dexterity as a pianist. Her high school graduation gift from her father was a Steinway grand piano that he had shipped from a music store in Richmond to their home on Virginia's southern border. A gifted soprano singer as well, she studied voice at undergraduate and graduate levels and with many of the noted composers and singers of yesteryear. She made her professional debut at Carnegie Recital Hall and has sung the leading soprano role at numerous operas and concerts. Frances maintained ties with her Steinway through the years though. She and her piano moved into The Lodge in 2016.

Frances's hometown is Martinsville, Virginia, near the state border with North Carolina and named after Albemarle County born, Revolutionary War General Joseph Martin. Her father practiced medicine as a family physician and her mother performed homemaker duties including raising Frances and her brother. Frances says her grandmother never tired of listening to Frances play hymns on her piano. Frances sang in the local Baptist Church choir and played the piano for the choir at Martinsville High School from which she graduated.

She graduated from Converse College in Spartanburg, South Carolina with a Bachelor of Music Degree, having started as a piano major and then switching to voice.

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Resident Focus (cont'd)

She and two of her college friends traveled to Boston to attend graduate school at Boston University. "We never felt unsafe in our Gainsborough Street apartment," says Frances, "though that was the street where the Boston Strangler committed the first of 13 murders!" She graduated from the university with a Master of Music degree.

By winning a scholarship, Frances studied for a year at the Musikhochschule in Berlin, Germany, one of Europe's leading conservatories, followed by additional study at Lago Como in Naples, Italy. "I had an adventurous spirit," says Frances, "but I became homesick and spent 11 days on a steamship plus a long bus trip to return to Martinsville."

New York, however, was the place to be for an upcoming music virtuoso. It is there where she made her professional debut at Carnegie Hall with stunning reviews by music critics at the New York Times and New York Herald Tribune. "The poise of one who knew what she was doing and why," said a critic, and "a superior recitalist," said another. ". . . there's a good deal of charm to her work and to her person," wrote another. She went on to present programs with chamber music groups and of sacred concerts throughout the New York area.

Performing the role of Susannah in the comic opera *The Marriage of Figaro*, Frances met and later married William Weiler who played the opposite role of Figaro at the Opera House in Bayville, Long Island, New York. The couple were blessed with two daughters, "as pretty as Frances," said a friend.

Frances began teaching music at The Green Vale School, a private day school on Long Island. Her stellar teaching attracted Averett College (now Averett University) to lure her to Danville, Virginia.

The family later moved to nearby Chatham, Virginia where Frances was enlisted to teach a Spanish class at the local high school. "I can teach French," Frances responded, "but I don't know Spanish." She was told she would have to teach it anyway. She pulled it off, despite having studied only French and German languages in college. She is enrolled in a Spanish class while at The Lodge.

After moving back to Martinsville, Frances taught music at Martinsville High School for 22 years, was director of music at the local Episcopal Church, and taught private piano lessons. She continued to privately teach piano in Williamsburg where she relocated to work as greeter at the Colonial Williamsburg visitor center for seven years before moving into an apartment in Crozet to be near to her older daughter, May Louise. Sale of her apartment building required her departure and prompted her move to The Lodge.

Frances's daughter May Louise is an Environmental Scientist for the Virginia Department of Transportation and lives with her husband in Crozet. Her younger daughter, Virginia is Director of Development for the Texas Children's Hospital and lives with her husband in Houston, Texas.

Frances has two granddaughters, Charlotte and Lucy, and one grandson, Matthew.

At the end of the interview, the notes of a polonaise by Chopin lilted through the apartment from her cherished Steinway.



Clockwise from upper left; Frances at age four; William, Frances, May Louise (left) and Virginia (rt) in 1970; Frances at her piano; and Frances at the peak of her singing career.

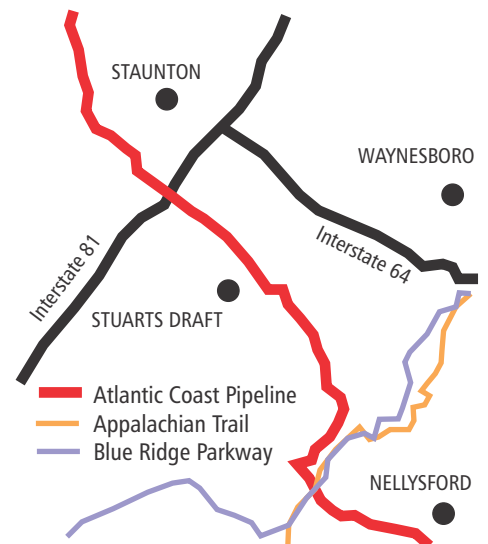
Local Issue Draws Attention of SCOTUS

You might want to watch an upcoming case to be considered by the U.S. Supreme Court. It involves a jurisdiction issue not far from The Lodge and near the Wintergreen Resort in Nelson County. The court will hold a hearing on the matter in early 2020 and rule by July of next year.

The question to be decided is whether the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline can be allowed to cross under the Appalachian Trail (AT) in the George Washington National Forest. The Fourth Circuit Appeals Court in Richmond says the permit approving the crossing issued by the U.S. Forest Service is illegal. Pipeline construction has been halted.

Environmental groups opposed to the gas pipeline were delighted by the lower court decision, but pipeline sponsor Dominion Energy and its partners said the decision was wrong and petitioned the Supreme Court to rehear the case.

Supreme Court cases typically come **Cont'd on last page**



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Watching Weather

Because long-term weather observations are collected throughout the world, a phenomenal record of trends in temperature and other weather phenomena provide climatologists and others with a treasure trove of data.

Weather records indicate a rise in average temperature of 2 degrees Fahrenheit in Albemarle County over the past century, while temperature in some U.S. counties has stabilized, according to an analysis by The Washington Post. Temperature increases are uneven over the earth's surface, but scientists report that on average global-wide temperature has increased by 1.8 degrees in the past century, putting Albemarle close to par with the world average.

Although scientists have measured and kept track of past temperatures and can predict the environmental effects of temperature increases, knowing what measures the planet's occupants will take to alter future temperatures one way or the other is, at best, uncertain.

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on climate change warns of catastrophic iceberg melts and sea-level changes if the earth's average temperature warms by 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit. The Washington Post analysis reveals 71 U.S. counties and the state of Rhode Island have already exceeded that temperature increase in the past 100 years.

Observing and recording weather conditions in America is believed to have begun by Swedish minister John Companius, considered the first weatherman in America who made weather observations in 1645 and 1646 at a Swedish colony near what became Wilmington, Delaware. Thomas Jefferson is known to have kept an unbroken record of observations from 1776 to 1816 and George Washington made his last observation days before he died.

The Weather Bureau of the United States was established within the Department of War in 1870, transferred to the Department of Agriculture in 1890, moved to the



McCormick Observatory on the edge of the UVA campus in Charlottesville serves as a weather station where continuous temperature and rainfall records have been maintained since 1893.

Department of Commerce in 1940, and then made a part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in 1970 as the National Weather Service.

Since 1890, the Weather Service Cooperative Observer Program has amassed temperature and rainfall records from every corner of the United States through the volunteer efforts of private citizens who now number more than 8,700.

UVA at its McCormick Observatory was one of the first coop observers beginning in 1893. The observatory was established for astronomical research and education, but it serves as an ideal weather station atop Observatory Hill on the edge of the Charlottesville campus.

State climatologist Jerry Stenger is thankful for the last 20 years of yeoman service by the observatory historian and caretaker who currently checks the thermometers and rain gauge every day for high and low temperatures and rainfall. He measures snow depth during winter storms, sometimes requiring all night vigils of rapidly accumulating snow.

McCormick Observatory Extremes

Max temp	107°F (1930)
Min temp	-10°F (1994)
Max rain storm	9.2 inches (1987)
Max snow storm	24.0 inches (1922)

A veteran climatologist with 37 years service at UVA, Stenger provides climatic information to governments, the media, industry, and the legal community. He has conducted many research projects on climate and its interaction with human and other natural systems. Though he is a leading expert on Virginia climate, forecasting future climate changes, he says, is highly specialized work of which he is not a part.

Individual weather events alone are not necessarily indicative of changes in climate. Extreme weather can occur whenever the harshest atmospheric conditions intersect with one another. McCormick extremes have been recorded since 1893, but Stenger says Charlottesville's heaviest



Climatologist Jerry Stenger holds the inner tube into which the rain gauge in front funnels the rain water for measuring.

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Watching Weather (cont'd)

recorded snowfall of 36 inches was measured by Thomas Jefferson at Monticello in 1772.

World-Wide Extremes

Max temp	134.1°F (California, 1913)
Min temp	-128.6°F (Antarctica, 1983)
One hr max rain	12 inches (Missouri, 1947)
24 hr max snow	100.8 inches (Italy, 2015)
Fastest wind	253 mph (Australia.,1996)

Unusual world-wide weather phenomena are officially recognized by the World Meteorological Organization if observed with instruments by official bodies. Undoubtedly there were other extremes that occurred before instrumentation was invented or in remote places without weather stations.

After considering Washington College (now Washington and Lee University), Leander J. McCormick chose UVA and in 1877 he offered to contribute a \$50,000 refracting telescope and \$18,000 for observatory construction if the university matched his donation. With a \$75,000 match, the university completed construction in 1884. The telescope was the second largest in the world with a 26-inch lens crafted by the world's finest telescope maker in Massachusetts. Sent by first class rail to Charlottesville, the telescope was hauled to the hilltop by horse-drawn wagons and mounted within the observatory's 45-foot dome, the first of its kind designed to rotate on a circular track system.



UVA Magazine

The telescope was used to map the distances of thousands of stars. As astronomical technology improved, the telescope was retired for use in teaching and public outreach. It is open to the public on the first and third Friday nights of each month.

Leander McCormick was born in Rockbridge County, the son of Robert McCormick, inventor of the mechanical reaper. He and his brothers Cyrus and William founded what became the International Harvester Company in Chicago. Leander was in charge of the company's manufacturing for 30 years until 1889 when he retired and became a real estate investor. He died in 1900 at the age of 81 in the "absolutely fire-proof" 400-room hotel he built in Chicago where he was living. The McCormicks were one of the wealthiest families in the U.S.



For those who remember former Lodge resident Ruby, we are sad to report she had to be put to sleep in October. Ruby was 15 years old.

Painting by Sue Clark

Pipeline (cont'd)

about as a result of disagreements by lower courts, but this one was apparently chosen due to high level interest by 16 state attorneys general, the Trump administration, and the gas industry looking to overturn the permit revocation.

The Forest Service issued the crossing permit in accord with a 1920 statute allowing energy development on federal land. The same statute excludes lands that are part of the National Park system. Park Service administration of the AT has existed since 1968 when it became a National Scenic Trail. According to the Fourth Circuit, administration of the traversed federal land does not matter.

If the Supreme Court says the Park Service does not have the power to determine what happens under the trail on land it does not administer, the pipeline construction could proceed. Agreement with the Fourth Circuit, on the other hand, would require a reroute of the pipeline away from federal land.

The 42-inch natural-gas pipeline would be horizontally drilled at a depth of over 600 feet below the AT. The 600 mile long, \$7.5 billion dollar pipeline would transmit fracked natural gas originating in West Virginia to Virginia and North Carolina. The AT is a 2,175-mile-long footpath connecting Maine with Georgia, the longest hiking trail in the world.

"Public utilities are depending on this infrastructure to meet the basic energy needs of millions of people and businesses in our region," says Dominion Energy. The Southern Environmental Law Center, representing environmental organizations, says the pipeline is dangerous and is yet to be shown as needed.

The Supreme Court decision is key in determining what happens to the pipeline next.

Blue Ridge Tunnel (cont'd)

Talk of a trail through the abandoned tunnel began in earnest when the tunnel was donated to Nelson County in 2006 by CSX Corporation, the last of four railroads that owned the track and tunnel. In the forefront to make the tunnel a tourism and recreation bonanza, Nelson County succeeded in obtaining the grant funds needed for the conversion.

Trailhead parking spaces and a three-quarter mile trail to the tunnel portal on the old track bed have been completed at the east end of the tunnel at Afton. The completed tunnel interior rehabilitation included the removal of two 14-foot-thick concrete plugs installed for propane storage, a plan in the 1950s that was abandoned before it was implemented.

A parking lot on Route 250 and a connecting trail to the tunnel are currently under construction at the project's Waynesboro end.

Waynesboro is continuing to pursue public and private funds to eventually hook up the tunnel with a trail to the city.

Artist P. Buckley Moss commemorated the tunnel trail with a new painting that is available at her gallery in downtown Waynesboro or online at pbuckleymoss.com. Prints of the 9.5 x 15-inch Claudius Crozet Blue Ridge Tunnel cost \$120.

The entire project is closed to public access until all construction is completed next year.

