



## *Farmville - Prince Edward Historical Society*

*P.O. Box 546*

*Farmville, Virginia 23901*

*August 2013*

### **“Historic Prospect:**

**Take a Step Back in Time in the  
Village”**

**Edwina Covington**

**Tuesday, August 20, 2013**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Farmville Train Station**

**Guests Always Welcomed**

**Board Meets at 6:00 p.m.**

Edwina Covington is a woman who wears many hats. She is a retired teacher, author, research historian, and a webmaster – to name a few. She is currently a correspondent for *The Farmville Herald*, writing the “*Elam-Area News*” every Friday. Her love of local history is often reflected in her columns. She was born on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, but came to Farmville to attend Longwood College. After graduation from Longwood she taught English, French, and journalism for 42 years. Edwina and her husband, Julian, live on the four-generation Covington family farm near Prospect. Edwina and Julian wrote *Tobacco Rows in Prince Edward County* on tobacco farming in Southside Virginia. She was on the committee that organized the information for the *Prince Edward County Heritage Book*. Edwina has served the Farmville-Prince Edward Historical Society for many years as a director, secretary, and webmaster, as well as the Prospect Historical Society.



Prospect is a small village on the western side of Prince Edward County. Once it had several general stores, a farmers’ supply store, a high school and elementary school, a cannery, a doctor, an attorney, a hotel, and a railroad depot that served the surrounding agricultural area. This community is rich in the history of agriculture, religious organizations, education, and mercantilism.

As early as 1789, a Prince Edward County tavern license was issued for the Prospect Ordinary. In 1802, there is mention of a store operated by Robert Venable near the community of Prospect. Mail routes traveled through Prospect as early as 1826 with a route running from Prince Edward Courthouse (Worsham) via Prospect to Concord once a week. In 1838 bids were accepted for a four-and-one-half year mail route from 1839 to 1843 to run from Farmville via Prospect, Walkers Church, Spout Spring, Concord, to Lynchburg for three times a week. In 1840, Prospect was among the ten post offices listed in the county.



In the 1854, South Side Rail Road had a water tank and depot at Prospect. Also since the fuel tenders were small, the railroad had contracts with local people to furnish wood, cut to the correct lengths. In 1897, Norfolk & Western maintained telegraph office at Prospect and other communities to stop trains when there were others on the same tracks.

In the mid-1800's, there are records referring to the extensive orchards with new varieties of apples, pears, peaches, and grapes being developed in the Prospect area. Among the farms mentioned were the following: George Gillespie on Falling Creek, Nancy Woodson at Brooklyn, Stephen Harvey, James Venable at Forest Green, Mercer Blackwell, Henry J. Venable, and Spring Hill Nursery of Venable and Garden.

Physicians who worked out of Prospect were Dr. Kearney and Dr. J. F. Alsop in the early 1900's.

In the post-Civil War era, Charles E. Glenn of Prospect operated a singing school for both instruction and social affairs.

In 1883, records show that Prospect had a graded school with two teachers and 42 students with M. R. Crawley as principal. In 1887-1888, J. P. Glenn is listed as principal of a school near the community. In 1906-1907 Buffalo district planned to add a third room to the two-room school building in Prospect and open a high school there. Beginning with 1922 and for the next five years, all white one-two-three room schools were consolidated into

six district high schools—Farmville, Prospect, Darlington Heights, Worsham, Green Bay and Rice. In 1923, the Virginia General Assembly authorized the Prince Edward School Board to borrow \$15,000 to build a school at Prospect and in 1924 that building was erected. In fall of 1941, the county further consolidated its high schools. Rice and Prospect went together with Farmville High School and Darlington Heights consolidated with Worsham. The Prospect school building burned in 1946 and was rebuilt serving as an elementary school until the closing of the county schools in 1959.

Electricity came to Farmville in the 1890's with the Farmville Electric Light, Heat, and Power Company. In 1921 the Farmville Town Council approved furnishing electricity to Prospect provided a line would be built. B. T. Taylor organized the Prospect Light and Power Company to construct the lines. On May 19, 1923, at 4:15 p.m. power was turned on to the Prospect line.

The people of the Prospect area have had a strong religious community. Revival preachers, such as Rev. Samuel Harris and Rev. John Early, provided the earliest inspirations in the late 1700's and early 1800's. In 1820, Prospect Church acquired land from Robert Venable. The trustees were Charles Venable, William Johnson, David Anderson, Jesse Bradley, and Samuel Venable. The Methodist Episcopal Church used this meetinghouse until it burned in 1860. The site of the church is in the present Prospect Cemetery. The present Methodist church was built in 1859.

In 1869, a group of African Methodist Episcopalians acquired land from William M. Jenkins a mile west of Prospect Depot for the construction of a house of worship. In 1881, the church acquired land in the village of Prospect from James D. and Amanda Crawley. In 1889, trustees of the church purchased land from John R. Wilson and W. M. Gilliam for a parsonage and a church next to the railroad track. In 1909, E. S. Taylor, W. R. Taylor and Alma A. Taylor deeded to Emanuel Walker, L. Watkins, Benjamin J. Brown, Henry Lee, H. Fleshman, John Ellis, and Landon Woodson (trustees) land adjacent to the A. M. E. Church parsonage on which to build the structure for St. James A. M. E. Church.

In 1911, Davis Memorial Presbyterian Church was organized. Land for the church was deeded from R. A. and Sudie H. Davis to trustees A. C. Allen, W. S. Garden, and J. S. Moore.

Glenn Memorial Baptist Church was first built on land donated by Lucy W. Glenn. The church was an outgrowth of the efforts of its first pastor Rev. C. Edward Burrell of Farmville. Some of its first members came from Mathews Church in Hixsburg. Original trustees were Hunter Wilkerson, Thomas H. Coleman, and Robert A. Brisentine.

### Upcoming Programs:

September 17, 2013 – program by Dr. William E. Thompson – *the Hampden-Sydney Boys*.

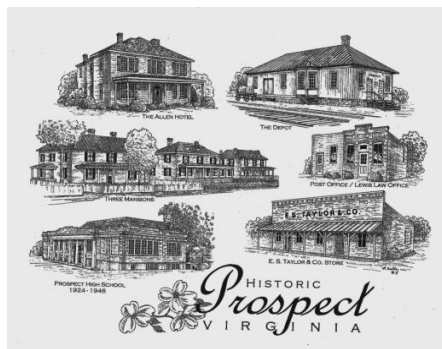
October 15, 2013 – program by Jimmy Hurt – *the Old Farmville Airport*.

### This Day in August in Prince Edward County History

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|---|---|--|
| <b>8-1-1922</b> Death of prominent Prince Edward tobacco merchant Walter Grey Dunnington, owner of Poplar Hill                                    | <b>8-14-1902</b> Work commences to build Norfolk & Western station  | the Fuqua School that replaced Prince Edward Academy |
| <b>8-2-1897</b> Civil rights activist W. E. B. DuBois studies Prince Edward County's black population for U.S. Labor Commission report            | <b>8-14-1945</b> County-wide nighttime celebrations for end of World War II   |  |
| <b>8-4-1851</b> Francis Carr and Christian Ehrman contracted with the Southside Railroad to build the High Bridge original wooden superstructure. | <b>8-17-1947</b> WFLO went on the air   |  |
| <b>8-4-1899</b> Edward Wiltse, jeweler and silversmith, died  | <b>8-18-1913</b> Henry Lindsey elected Fire Chief   |  |
| <b>8-4-1922</b> J. C. Brickert seeks location at Third and Randolph streets to locate Farmville's first service station                           | <b>8-19-1962</b> Saylor's Creek Battlefield Park dedicated  |  |
| <b>8-5-1942</b> First daylight air raid test  | <b>8-20-1969</b> Hurricane Camille brings flooding to Farmville   |  |
| <b>8-8-1907</b> Prince Edward Hotel opened  | <b>8-24-1884</b> Farmville Lithia Springs incorporate   |  |
| <b>8-8-1952</b> Farmville Drive-in opened on Route 15 just south of Farmville   | <b>8-26-1867</b> Prince Edward resident and nationally-recognized educator Robert Rousa Moton born in Amelia County |  |
| <b>8-10-1993</b> By-laws adopted for Rural Education Foundation, creating   | <b>8-27-1894</b> Gov. O'Ferrall arrives for visit to Farmville  |  |
|   | <b>8-27-1909</b> Farmville Silver Band's first open air concert   |  |
|   | <b>8-30-1895</b> The Confederate Monument Association organized   |  |
|   | <b>8-30-1905</b> Partial eclipse of the sun witnessed   |  |



Prospect Depot Model by Dr. McClintock



Prospect Historical Society will have for sale after the program the *Historic Prospect* items: boxed note cards, matted prints, tote bags, tee-shirts, and sweatshirts, and the Prospect Depot model.