

THE AUGUSTA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS

# Conversations from the Grave:

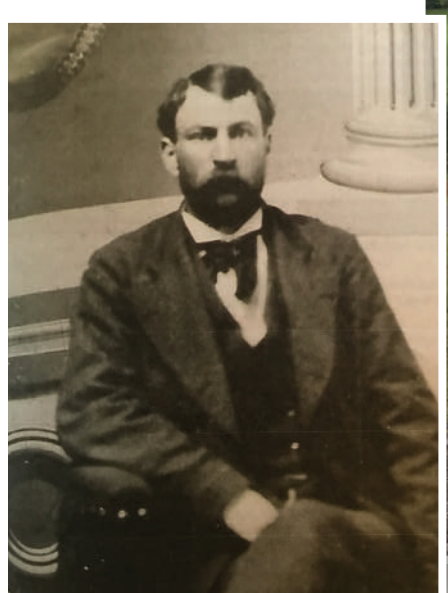
## Meet the Residents of Thornrose Cemetery September 18-19, 2021

Staunton's historic Thornrose Cemetery will be the site for the Augusta County Historical Society's popular program, "Conversations from the Grave." The Society invites you to suspend disbelief and join us as we visit a very special and intriguing group of Thornrose residents who are just "dying" to meet you. Within the walls of this beautiful final resting place, guided tours will take participants to meet some of the individuals whose fascinating and unforgettable stories resonate with our region's diverse and colorful history.

- Come meet Dr. Samuel Hite, a successful late 19th century entrepreneur who patented a variety of medicines, including his famous "Hite's Pain Cure – A Great Discovery." Hite claimed he could cure almost any malady.
- Bessie Weller, Staunton's first school nurse, will share her "Five Point" program promoting the good health of the city's schoolchildren. A few years after her death, this beloved health care professional was posthumously honored with a new elementary school that bears her name.
- Listen to C.G. Sell, a poor elderly man who lived in a shack on what used to be the fairgrounds near Gypsy Hill Park. He will tell you about his beautiful black stallion, the only possession of worth when he died.
- Staunton business and civic leader, Hugh Bell Sproul will be on hand to talk about his life in the early decades of the 20th century and the world-renowned pilot, Charles Lindbergh, who visited his family camp in 1927.
- You won't want to miss a visit with the lovely Eva Clark, a young trapeze performer with the Cole Brothers Circus, who died tragically in 1906. Find out how an anonymous admirer remembers her at Christmas each year.
- Listen to the amazing story of Lorenzo Sibert, who near the outbreak of the Civil War, invented "The Virginia Pacificator," a weapon with the capability of firing 48 rounds without reloading. Some suggest that had it been successfully manufactured, the firearm may have changed the course of the war.
- We also welcome Denis Shanahan, an Irish immigrant who became an engineer on the Blue Ridge Tunnel back in the 1850s.
- Finally, Shelley Isabel Mann, will share an incredible story about her rise from a crippled victim of polio, to a gold medal swimmer in the 1956 Olympics.

Tours are limited to 20 people per tour, so make your reservations now! Please select a first and second choice as these tours fill quickly. For reservations, call the ACHS office at 540-248-4151, or fill out the ticket form below. No tickets will be mailed out until payment is received.

Tours take place rain or shine. Wear comfortable walking shoes.



**PHOTOS FROM TOP TO BOTTOM**

- A sculpture in Thornrose Cemetery.*
- When the Spanish-American War broke out in 1898, Hugh Bell Sproul joined as a private in the West Augusta Guard.*
- Eva Clark, trapeze artist for the Cole Brothers Circus in 1906, shares her tragic story.*
- Dr. Samuel Hite owned and operated a successful patent medicine operation in Staunton during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.*
- C.G. Sell, a poor man who lived at the old fairgrounds near Gypsy Hill Park, died with only one valuable possession – his black stallion.*
- Shortly before the Civil War broke out, Lorenzo Sibert invented an amazing weapon called "The Virginia Pacificator."*
- Designed by T.J. Collins, this rear view of the gatehouse is an iconic structure that characterizes Thornrose Cemetery.*

Ad sponsored by:



### TICKET FORM

I would like \_\_\_\_\_ ticket(s) at \$25 per person      Ticket amount \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle **BOTH** in case your first choice is filled.

**My first choice is:**    Saturday, Sept. 18: 10:00, 10:30, 11:00, 1:00, and 1:30  
    Sunday, Sept. 19: 1:00, 1:30, 2:00, and 2:30

**My second choice is:** Saturday, Sept. 18: 10:00, 10:30, 11:00, 1:00, and 1:30  
    Sunday, Sept. 19: 1:00, 1:30, 2:00, and 2:30

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

If you have questions, call ACHS at 540-248-4151 or e-mail: augustachs@ntelos.net

Make checks payable to: Augusta County Historical Society  
 Please mail checks to: Augusta County Historical Society, P.O. Box 686, Staunton, VA 24402

