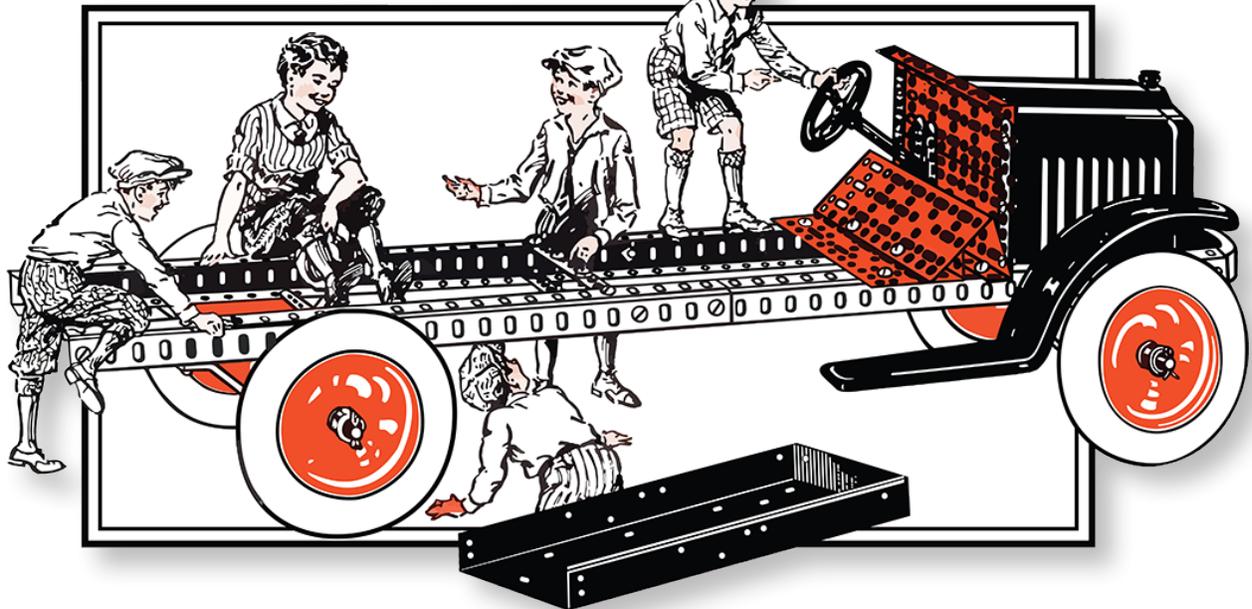


Join us for the
A.C. Gilbert Heritage Society

2026 NATIONAL CONVENTION

Thursday, Friday & Saturday, July 16, 17, and 18, 2026



Come join the fun at the 2026 ACGHS National Convention in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Our venue is the Rockingham County Fairgrounds, and our host hotel is the Best Western Plus Harrisonburg. Situated in the heart of the beautiful Shenandoah Valley, this year's convention will celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Erector White Truck model—which many consider Erector's most iconic Classic Period model.

We've planned several events, including visits on Friday to Luray Caverns—the largest cavern in the eastern United States—and to the nearby Civil War battlefield at Cross Keys—one of the culminating battles of "Stonewall" Jackson's 1862 Valley Campaign. The Thursday Welcome Picnic and

Saturday Convention Show and Banquet all take place at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds, just a mile south of our host hotel, the Best Western Plus Harrisonburg, on U.S. Route 11—the historic Valley Road.

We've secured a great room rate of \$139 per night, plus tax (King or double Queen rooms). Your hotel stay includes complimentary full breakfast every morning from 6:00a – 9:00a. Amenities include an indoor pool, open from 8:00a to 11:00p; 24-hour Fitness Center which includes an elliptical, a treadmill, a Boca ball, and dumbbells; and Laundromat available 24 hours per day (laundry supplies are available in the hotel's Sundry Shop).

You'll find the complete 2026 Convention Schedule, along with Hotel Booking information and a Registration Form, on the following pages. You can photocopy the Registration Form from this newsletter, or retrieve and print a

copy from our website. Just fill it out and mail it with your check to the address provided on the form.

Also, be sure to visit www.acghs.org for all the latest 2026 Convention news.



Best Western Plus Harrisonburg



Living history re-enactors at The Frontier Culture Museum.

Book Your Hotel Room

Our host hotel is the **Best Western Plus Harrisonburg**, 3325 S. Main Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22801. To book your room—either a King room or double Queen room, call the hotel at **540-433-9999** and ask for the “A. C. Gilbert Group” rate, which is \$139 a night plus tax.

Pre-Convention Activities

Thursday, July 16 — 1:00 - 4:00p — for early arrivals, join us for a visit to **The Frontier Culture Museum** (1290 Richmond Road, Staunton, VA 24401).

The museum tells the story of the people who migrated to colonial America, and of the life they created here for themselves and their descendants. These first pioneers came to America during the 1600s and 1700s from communities in the hinterlands of England, Germany, Ireland, and West Africa. On the way to the museum, you may want to stop for lunch at Virginia’s first—and only—Buc-Ees, just off I-81.

Cost is \$12 for adults and \$9 for seniors. Mark your Registration Form if you’re coming so we can get a headcount, but you’ll pay your own way at the museum.

Thursday, July 16 — 5:30 - 8:00p — Welcome Picnic at the Kennel Club Pavilion on the grounds of the Rockingham County Fairgrounds (4808 S. Valley Pike, Harrisonburg, VA 22801).

Enjoy a variety of Artisan pizzas and Mediterranean salad from Vocelli Pizza of Harrisonburg. Bottled water, soda, iced tea, and beer will be available. A special treat will be assorted flavors of home-made ice cream, made right here in Harrisonburg. The evening concludes with a fun game of “Name the Tool.”

Cost is \$20 per person. Mark your Registration Form and pay in advance.



Dream Lake—the largest body of water in Luray Caverns.

Friday, July 17 — 10:00a - 2:00p — We’ll visit **Luray Caverns** (101 Cave Hill Rd, Luray, VA 22835). The caverns are a one-hour drive from our hotel. We’ll travel via car-pool, and everyone should be on the road by 9:00a.

Luray Caverns is the largest cavern in the eastern United States. We’ll take a self-guided walking tour along light-ed paved walkways that lead you through cathedral-sized rooms with ceilings 10 stories high, towering stone formations, and natural wonders at every turn. We’ll also visit the adjacent Car & Carriage Caravan and Shenandoah Heritage Village, which are included in the admission price.

Lunch is on your own at the Stalactite Café on the grounds of Luray Caverns, which serves assorted sandwiches and drinks, and provides both indoor and outdoor seating.

Cost for the Caverns is \$26 per person (\$13 ages 12 and under). Mark your Registration Form and pay in advance.

Friday, July 17 — 3:00 - 4:00p — Travel by carpool from Luray Caverns to the **Artillery Ridge Trail at Cross Keys Battlefield** (4232 Bowtie Drive, Port Republic, VA).

The Battle of Cross Keys was one of the culminating battles of Stonewall Jackson’s 1862 Valley Campaign. This Confederate victory, along with the nearby Battle of Port Republic, held off two Union armies in the Shenandoah Valley and allowed Jackson to join Robert E. Lee in the fight around Richmond, Virginia just a few days later.

Mark your Registration Form if you’re coming so we can get a headcount, but the tour of the Artillery Ridge Trail is FREE.

Friday, July 17 — 4:00 - 6:00p — Free time. Return to the Best Western Plus to relax before dinner. The **Exhibit Hall at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds** will be open for early set-up (4808 S. Valley Pike, Harrisonburg, VA 22801).



View of the Shenandoah Valley near New Market.



The Artillery Ridge Trail at Cross Keys Battlefield.

Friday, July 17 — 6:00 - 8:00p — Dinner Buffet at Western Sizzlin's Wood Grill Buffet (1711 Reservoir St, Harrisonburg, VA 22801).

The buffet offers a wide variety of meats, hot vegetables, baked goods, and cold salads, plus sweet or unsweetened tea and Pepsi products.

Cost for the buffet is \$27 per person (including sweet tea, unsweetened tea, or Pepsi soda products, plus tax and tip). Mark your Registration Form and pay in advance.

Friday, July 17 — 7:00 - 10:00p — The Exhibit Hall at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds will be open for early set-up (4808 S. Valley Pike, Harrisonburg, VA 22801).

Convention Show & Banquet

Saturday, July 18 — 8:00 - 9:00a — The Exhibit Hall at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds will be open for set-up (4808 S. Valley Pike, Harrisonburg, VA 22801).

Saturday, July 18 — 9:00a - 3:00p — The Convention Show takes place in the Exhibit Hall at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds. You will be able to place orders for box lunches during the show.

Saturday, July 18 — 10:00 - 11:00a — The Ladies Tea convenes at the Horticulture Building on the Rockingham County Fairgrounds.

The theme of this year's tea, hosted by Melodie Good, Kathy Gilbert, and Gayleen Birmingham, is "Christmas in July."

Tea is FREE to all the ladies.

Saturday, July 18 — 3:30 - 4:00p — Erector and Toy Auction hosted by auctioneer extraordinaire Joe Grobmyer in the Exhibit Hall.

Saturday, July 18 — 5:30 - 6:00p — Social Meet & Greet at the Horticulture Building on the Rockingham County Fairgrounds.

Saturday, July 18 — 6:00 - 9:00p — Convention Banquet by Hank's Grille & Catering, featuring authentic Southern comfort food including hardwood smoked meats and delicious vegetarian fare. At the Horticulture Building on the Rockingham County Fairgrounds.

Our guest speaker is long-time A. C. Gilbert Heritage Society member Joe Grobmyer, who will share with us everything he knows—which is quite a lot—about Gilbert's White Truck model. This iconic Erector model, first introduced in 1926, is celebrating its 100th Anniversary in 2026.

Cost for the banquet buffet, including drinks, is \$35 per person. Mark your Registration Form and pay in advance.

Sunday, July 19 — It's a wrap. We wish everyone *bon voyage* and safe travels!



Inside the Exhibit Hall at the Fairgrounds.