

WASHINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A group of enthusiastic citizens of Washington County met at the Court House in Abingdon on Monday evening, April 6th for the purpose of organizing the Washington County Historical Society.

Mrs. Charles H. Butt, Sr., Regent of Black's Fort Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, called the meeting to order and presided during the election of the temporary chairman, Mrs. S. F. Hurt.

Mr. F. B. Kegley of Wytheville, Mr. Pleasants of Richmond, Messrs. L. P. Summers, R. T. Stephenson, E. W. Potts, W. N. Neff, Judge Walter H. Robertson, and Chief Justice Preston W. Campbell made helpful suggestions for the organization.



**1936 is coming
back in style for
one night only on
May 21st!**

The following officers were elected: Judge Walter H. Robertson, President; Mrs. James Mongle, Vice-President; Miss Lillian Butt, Secretary; and Miss Ethel Baugh, Treasurer.

A committee on organization and by-laws was appointed by Judge Robertson. The members of this committee are: W. N. Neff, Mrs. R. T. Stephenson, Mrs. D. A. Preston, Mrs. E. R. Crouch, S. J. Latture, and S. F. Hurt.

The next meeting of the Historical Society will be held at the Court House on Monday, April 20, at 8:00 P. M. All citizens of Washington County who are interested in the county and its illustrious history are invited to join the organization.

It's the celebration of the Historical Society's 80th Anniversary, to be held at the Higher Education Center, in Abingdon, VA, on Saturday evening, May 21, 2016.

The theme for the celebration is '1936', so for fun, 30's-40's period attire is suggested, not required. Casual dress is appropriate. However, there will be a prize for the best outfit!

The party begins with a 6:00 pm social hour. After that, who knows what characters from 1936 will show up to tell us how it was the year the Society was founded?

Later, a buffet dinner will be catered by JJ's.

Along with celebrating the accomplishments of the past, this event kicks off a fundraising campaign to support the purchase of a permanent home for the Society.

Since 2002 the Town of Abingdon has generously provided the Society with a rent-free location in the old N&W Passenger Depot in downtown Abingdon. Now the time has come for the Society to have its own home.

Please come and wish the Society a Happy 80th Anniversary and learn how you can help with plans for our future.

Tickets are \$25/person and available at the Society office or online at www.hswcv.org. Call 276-623-8337 to ask a question or make a reservation.

April 2016 Vol. 38, No. 1

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

From the Media Center	2
Cemetery News	2
Business Meeting Items	3
Donations & Acquisitions	4

Historical Society of Washington County, Virginia

NEWSLETTER

From the Media Center

STUFF

We have not reported on our progress in the last three years so I hope you have not assumed that we have just disappeared. Quite to the contrary, after a few *bumps in the road*, we are alive, kicking and digitizing everything within sight. One of our goals has always been to digitize the eighty years of **stuff** we call our archives. **Stuff** has been an inside joke of ours for years. It seems a local motel employee, when asked by traveling tourists if there was a local historical society said, "I don't know what they call it but there is a place downtown run by some little old ladies and they have all kinds of stuff." Of course the tourists had to come by and tell us the story. At the risk of being sexist, and not ignoring our male volunteers, we have not so jokingly referred to ourselves as the "ladies with stuff" ever since.

And **stuff** we have...eighty years' worth! It is one thing to see a spread sheet of everything in an archive box neatly inventoried and it is quite another to empty a box and find a stack of 160 year old letters, a 90 year old scrap book, a detailed family history that we have no idea when it was written, a letter written by a woman commenting on seeing Gen. Bragg's men retreating from Kentucky, plus the odds and ends from the proverbial junk drawer in Grandma's kitchen. All this makes for hours upon hours of routine scanning spiced up by moments of excited discovery.

By April we will have been digitizing for eleven and one-third years. We have about 45 boxes of archives yet to scan, a "mountain" of papers and pictures that is reaching toward the ceiling in the media center and the whole Weisfeld Abingdon newspaper collection. Resting on our laurels will not be an option. We've been very fortunate to

have a restricted donation to finance our work. Leighann has been with us all year while she prepares for motherhood and we have added Dan Smith.

And thanks to the unselfish donors of yesterday and today, we are making real progress ensuring that the history of the people and places in Washington County is not lost. In the months ahead look for changes to the digital image index on the website that will make it easier to search. Plus thumbnails! In-house, we will be designing a new program, to go with a new server, that should be faster and more user friendly.

We don't count pictures and documents separately anymore. The difference between them has long since blurred. We count images. For the technically inquisitive, our digital library is now a robust 1.81 terabytes. And once again we apologize for measuring our progress in total image numbers instead of the quality and variety of images we have scanned. To date we have scanned 121,625 images. Add to that total, 152,000 lines of index. Not bad for an over-the-hill volunteer, two college kids and a flower child. We don't take ourselves seriously....just the work we do. Our donors are the key to our success. They are our inspiration. Hundreds of people have contributed the pictures and documents that we have digitized and indexed. We hope they will continue to support us. Please come in and see, read, and enjoy the images of the past. Our new motto: "**Stuff** rules supreme!"

Jane Oakes
April 2016

CEMETERY NEWS

It all started with a woman on our Facebook page looking for the grave of her Great-grandfather who died in Abingdon in 1913. Charlie Barnette helped her figure out where it should be: in the abandoned old Gray Cemetery, near the new Johnston Memorial Hospital. Then another post was placed asking, "Has anyone noticed how the old Gray cemetery near the new hospital has been desecrated? The fence and old tree have been dozed down and three graves with stones left huddled around in a small patch of grass." Seems the land had been purchased by the hospital and the area was being graded off for something.

Well, then more family got involved and took action by contacting the owner of the hospital, Mountain States (MS). Meanwhile, it was determined that there were at least five known graves and probably several unmarked ones in the cemetery. But with the fence gone, it was harder to determine the original boundaries.

And then...Mountain States came through for the family! The hospital placed a simple, very nice fence around the little cemetery, as accurately as possible with respect to the original boundaries, and put the Gray name on the gate. At a later date, the hospital came through, again, and painted the name on the cemetery gate white so that it shows up. The family says, "Thanks for all that MS has done to bring a quick resolution to the problem regarding this little cemetery."

This was a very satisfactory ending to what could have been a sad story. Thanks to family members who cared enough and were able to get involved, Facebookers, and Historical Society workers such as Charlie, this is one old cemetery that will not be surrendered to neglect and the cows!

NOTICE

During the May 21, 2016 business meeting, the following items will be presented to the membership for approval. This publication serves as notice of such proposed action.

- Candidates for consideration for election as Directors for the terms shown:

Leighann Lloyd	2016-2018
Donnamarie Emmert	2016-2018

- Amendments to the *Bylaws of the Historical Society of Washington County, VA*, dated May 6, 2008:

AMENDMENT 1

Section 3.3 ATTENDANCE: If a Director or Officer fails to attend three consecutive scheduled meetings for reasons other than health or personal emergencies, per year, that Director or Officer will be deemed to have resigned and his or her position shall be deemed to have become vacant for the remainder of his or her term or until the vacancy is filled pursuant to Section 3.5 of these bylaws. A majority of members of the board may reinstate such person if such is appealed.

Purpose of amendment: To clarify the original intent of this provision which was without reference to a fiscal year or any other 12 month period.

AMENDMENT 2

Section 4.3.1 PRESIDENT: . . . The President shall, with the approval of the Board of Directors, appoint the chair ~~and the members~~ of all committees except the Nominating Committee . . . {re: Section 5.6 Nominating Committee}

Purpose of amendment: To clarify responsibilities of the President regarding appointment of committee members who are selected by the committee chair in accordance with Section 5.3 Committee Chairs.

AMENDMENT 3

Section 5.5 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Eliminate this section entirely, including these sub-sections referenced here: **Sec 5.5.1 Composition of the Committee; Section 5.5.2 Powers and Functions: and, Sec. 5.5.3 Reports to Board.**

Purpose of Amendment: The Executive Committee's primary purpose is to act on matters requiring immediate attention during the intervals between meetings of the Board of Directors. Electronic communications have eliminated the need for this committee.

AMENDMENT 4

Section 5.7 ~~FINANCIAL REVIEW~~ AUDIT COMMITTEE: The President shall, with the approval of the Board of Directors, designate, within 60 days after the end of the fiscal year ~~an a Financial Review Audit~~ Committee composed of not less than three (3) Society members who are not members of the Finance and Management Committee and which committee shall:

Section 5.7.1 Perform the ~~review audit~~ or recommend an independent auditor. If an independent auditor is selected, with the approval of the Board of Directors, the Financial Review ~~Audit~~ Committee will determine the auditor's independence, review and approve compensation, terms of engagement by the Society and monitor the independent auditor's work.

Section 5.7.2 Review annual financial statements. Review the Society's annual financial statement and any report or opinion rendered by the Independent Auditor in connection with those financial statements.

Purpose of Amendment: Use of the word 'audit' implies a 'CPA level' examination. Changing the designation from Audit Committee to Financial Review Committee more accurately describes the level of examination performed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Society is planning a retrospective of the Stonewall Jackson Female Academy for the summer of 2017. If any readers have memorabilia, pictures, souvenirs, stories, or anything else to share, please contact us to make arrangements. If you have a relative that attended Stonewall at any time, please let us know her name.

Please feel free to share your ideas on how to best remember this almost forgotten women's school, which was founded in Abingdon in 1867 and continued until 1930.

80th Anniversary Celebration	May 21	Living History Tour of Sinking Spring Cemetery	July 31
Plumb Alley Day Sale	May 28	VA Highlands Festival	July 29 - Aug 7



The Historical Society
of Washington County, Virginia, Inc.
P.O. Box 484
Abingdon, VA 24212-0484

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ABINGDON, VA
PERMIT NO. 106

DONATIONS AND ACQUISITIONS November 15—April 13, 2016

Framed newspapers, 1882 <i>Abingdon Virginian</i> and 1886 <i>Abingdon Standard</i>	Matthew Cody, Bristol, Virginia
<i>Washington Co., VA Circuit Court Will Book 19</i>	Jack Hockett, Newark, DE
<i>Washington Co., VA Circuit Court Will Book 20</i>	
<i>Washington Co., VA Circuit Court Will Book 21</i>	
<i>Washington Co., VA Circuit Court Will Book 22</i>	
<i>Washington Co., VA Circuit Court Will Book 23</i>	
Vance Supply Price/Product Book	Tarn Rosenbaum, Abingdon, VA
Civilian Pass Book to move around Germany	
Pless Family Research	
Pictures of Rosenbaum family	
1958 VMI Newspaper	
1958 <i>The Journal Virginian</i>	From the Estate of Dean Fletcher
<i>Labor in America</i> , by The Dickenson Star	
<i>Times of Used to Be</i> , by Denvil Mullins	
<i>Historical Memories in a Mountain Kingdom</i> , by Leroy N. Hilton Jr.	
<i>Illustrated History of the Railroads</i> , by John Westwood	
<i>Portrait of the Rails</i> , by Don Ball Jr.	
<i>Last Train to Elkmont</i> , by Vic Weals	
<i>The Cades Cove Story</i> , by A. Randolph Shields	
Letter containing information on James Dysart	Mary M. Gibbs, Staunton, VA
8X10 photo of McCabe Lodge Baseball Team	Betty Ann Phillips Rice, Roanoke, VA
<i>The War in Southwest Virginia</i> , by Gary C. Walken	Nancy Leasure, Abingdon, VA
Leonard Family Genealogy	Gerald Wayne Leonard, Farmersville, OH
Cemetery Records of Carroll Co., VA	HSWCV

Monetary Contributions

In Memory of
June Thomas Ryburn, by
Carolyn Ryburn,
Glade Spring, VA

Peggy Johnson,
Abingdon, Virginia

Kathy Shearer,
Emory, Virginia

Patricia Craig Johnson,
Dallas, TX

John and Joan Enright,
Virginia Beach, VA

A. Gordon Kreiner,
Lebanon, VA



office@hswcv.org
www.hswcv.org
276-623-8337