

# NEWSLETTER

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## President's Message

Looking back on 2016, it was a year of honoring our past, celebrating our accomplishments, and planning for our future. Looking at that future, our long-term goal is to have a permanent facility. We have negotiated one additional five-year lease renewal of our present location with the Town, and therefore have a maximum five-year window to achieve this goal, since our lease expires at the end of October 2021.

The Society has established a Building Fund and begun fundraising for purchase of a permanent home and to sustain operations at that site. In addition to the Building Fund, we now have designated funds established for the Media Center and the Newspaper collection; computer hardware and software; and general library support. If you wish to support any of these specific areas, please specify when you send your contribution.

We are currently working on a reduced schedule for our volunteers, but we are still working. This is the time we take inventory, sort the shelves, work on special projects, etc. If you are planning a visit, please email or call and we will have someone scheduled to assist you. If you want to come by and bring pictures or other items, buy something, or just visit, ring the doorbell and we'll let you in. Our email is <office@hswcv.org> and the phone is 276-623-8337. Our Web site is always open for business at [hswcv.org](http://hswcv.org).

We will reopen for regular volunteer-assisted business on April 4, 2017.

Thank you for your continuing support,

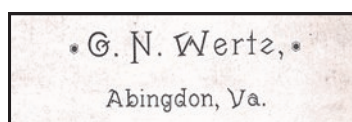
Martha Keys, President

## The Photographs of George Newton Wertz, 1852-1926

The Society is planning a photography exhibit, "Abingdon Through the Eyes Of George Wertz" for Summer 2017

George Newton Wertz was one of the earliest and most prolific photographers in Washington County. He took hundreds if not thousands of photographs in and around Abingdon during the period 1875-1924. The earliest surviving images are mostly adults, but his business seems to have rapidly expanded when he started capturing images of children. He also took pictures of scenery, businesses, churches, and the community.

Of these, over a hundred have been identified and preserved in digital format by the Historical Society of Washington County. Many more may be in private collections. They can be easily identified because he stamped each with his logo: **G. N. Wertz Photographic Studio Abingdon, VA.** Below are examples of his logo, which changed design, but not the wording, through the years. Wertz used different back stamps for his cabinet cards (about 4" x 6") and cartes de visite (small portraits mounted on a card about the size of a modern business card).



The Historical Society would appreciate people searching for additional photographs and bringing them to the Society so that they may be copied and preserved for future generations. The persons or places in the photographs need not be identified.

If you have a Wertz photograph and would allow the Historical Society to make a digital copy of it for inclusion in the collection and/or to use in the upcoming exhibit, please **call 276-623-8337** and make an appointment to bring it in to our office. It can be scanned and returned to you immediately. If there is no answer, please leave a message.

## FROM THE MEDIA CENTER

### LIZZIE

I want to introduce you to *Lizzie*. Well, actually there are two Lizzies. One is the result of a collaborative effort of a former (Matthew) and a current (Leighann) media center member but she is a little small to make an immediate impact.

The larger *Lizzie* is more than two feet by four feet, speaks with a Danish accent and according to its caretaker, Dan Smith, is one super flatbed scanner! Remember all those oversize pages, i.e. marriage licenses, tax records, etc., that we had to scan in multiple parts because they were too large to fit on any scanner we had or too fragile to put through a scanner with rollers? Now, with a few exceptions, we can scan in the original one page size.



But what really motivated us to look for a *Lizzie* were the newspapers. And we are scanning newspapers...every day! Not only do we have the Weisfeld Collection to scan but while digging through the archives, Nancy Leasure and Pat Carty, the keepers of 80 years of our *stuff*, have found multiple boxes of newspapers donated over the years. Quiz: Ever heard of *The Political Prospect*? Thanks to Nanci King, one of our former archivists, we have copies of these papers from 1812, 1813 and 1814...all published here in Abingdon. All of these have been scanned and hopefully by the time you read this they will be loaded and ready to read. *Lizzie* is going to make a lot of things possible but *Lizzie* itself would not have been possible without a generous donation from the estate of Chris Brown. Chris was a native of Abingdon, a supporter of HSWC that visited us often and most appropriately, a journalist who would certainly have approved of his legacy being used to preserve our local newspapers.

And you can't have a *Lizzie* without an ABBYY (pronounced abby). ABBYY is an OCR software program...optical

character recognition. Simply put, this allows the computer to recognize and read the text on a page. Imagine looking at six pages of a 150 year old paper, that is dark yellow and falling apart, for any mention of your great-great-grandfather. I'm guessing your search would not cover more than several issues of a newspaper. ABBYY helps you search. After the newspaper is scanned we have to process the pages through ABBYY. This captures the text and allows you to ask it if the words "John Jones" or "Civil War" appear in an issue. It is not perfect! Discoloration, folds in the paper, holes, the font that was used, fading, etc. all affect the ability of ABBYY to read the text and the version we are using is very basic at best. ABBYY is a step in the right direction and can be a big help. To all the folks that made a contribution to the media center or to the newspaper project in 2016, your generosity made ABBYY possible. That money paid for the program!

Update on the new server: It's purchased, delivered and installed. As of December we are running tests and loading all the data that was on the old server. The next step is making some basic changes to the system and loading all the data that would not fit on the old server. The conversion from the old server to the new server should be done by year end. Next on the horizon is possibly a series of system changes that will make searching the database easier to use and more flexible. We hope we can afford this and have this finished by the time we reopen in 2017. As a part of this refining process Carol Taylor, our business office coordinator and the guru for entering all the data from our books, has started a project to "clean up" her part of the database. With multiple people entering information over nearly 20 years, there are misspellings, items in the wrong categories, multiple categories that mean the same thing, etc.. It's going to take years but Carol has gotten started. The media center is making changes to their database, too. In the last newsletter I explained that we would be tracking "images" vs. pictures, documents, etc. We had three indices and we have combined these into one. We are being overwhelmed by the numbers. We have added more search parameters and hopefully one index will be easier to manage and a redesigned

search page will allow a customer to narrow their search.

All of our successes would not have been possible without our donors, past and present. Our two newest members of the media center team have been dealing with the donors of the past. Ann Kite Lee has been reviewing the 3000+ pictures in the archives and separating the ones that were not identified when we originally went through them. She is trying to identify each one and if she can't, we have started a category labeled "unidentified" and they will be in the system to be reviewed by our visitors. Who knows, a long lost picture of your great grandfather is waiting to be discovered...or his house. Betty Taylor Duncan has been scanning thousands of obits plus newspaper articles about local war brides during World War II and news items on what was happening to local service men and women. Most of these were carefully cut out and pasted into scrapbooks by past members of the historical society.

It's time to tally the numbers again. Twelve years! We have been digitizing and indexing for twelve long years. Some days it feels like yesterday and some days it feels like 120 years ago. **154,700** images and **163,400** lines of index. All made possible by 80 years of donations and the volunteers who preserved them. And we are not planning on slowing down. After twelve years I am convinced we will never catch up. Every week brings a new batch of pictures, a new box of documents, a new project or the potential for finding another "mother lode" of local history. Thank goodness it never ends. For potential donors...we are open for business. We know we have just scratched the surface in preserving the history of Washington County and beyond. Preservation is only a part of the job. The fun part is having people come down to see and enjoy these thousands of images. The past can be as much fun as the future...without the anxiety. Everyone is invited!

Jane Oakes  
January 2017



# INTERNAL MIGRATION

In searching for that elusive ancestor don't forget about the possible clues to be found in migration **within** the US. A useful tool for looking at internal migration can be found in Migration Maps. A recent article in *Family Tree Maker* magazine made me aware of a collection of these based on the 1880 US Census and housed in the David Rumsey Historical Map Collection at Stanford University. <<http://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/detail/RUMSEY~8~1~32694~1152064:35--Inter-state-migration>>

These maps show the proportion of states' populations that is made up by natives of another state. The three maps here show the migration trends of the states most closely associated with Southwest Virginia. It is interesting to see that the 1880 Texas population contained 5.2 percent of native-born Tennesseans, but only 1.8 and 1.5 percent of Virginians and North Carolinians.

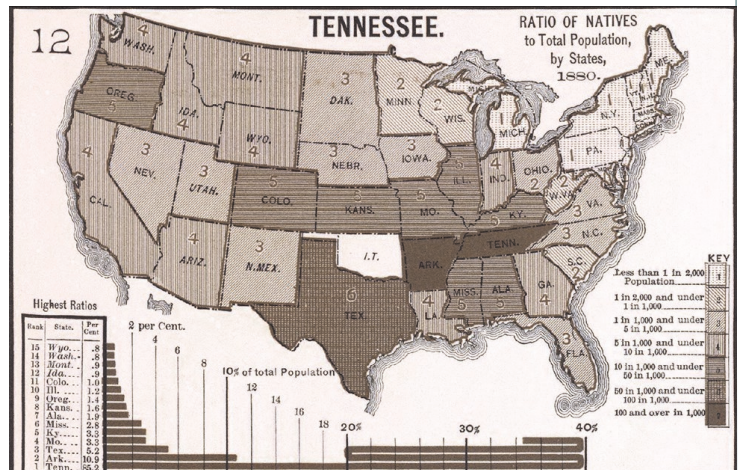
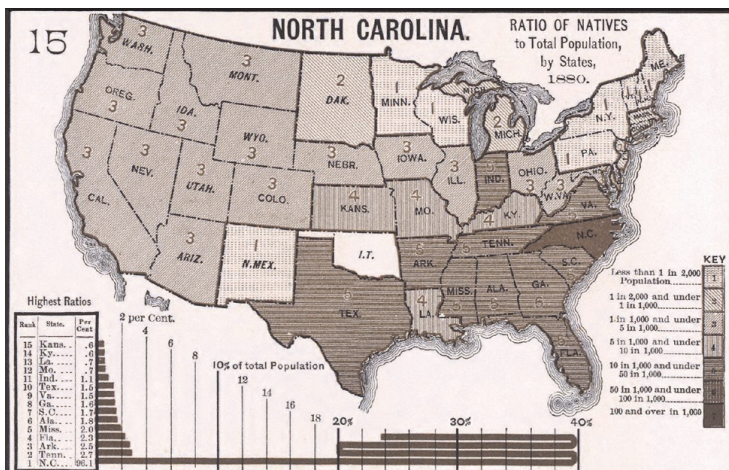
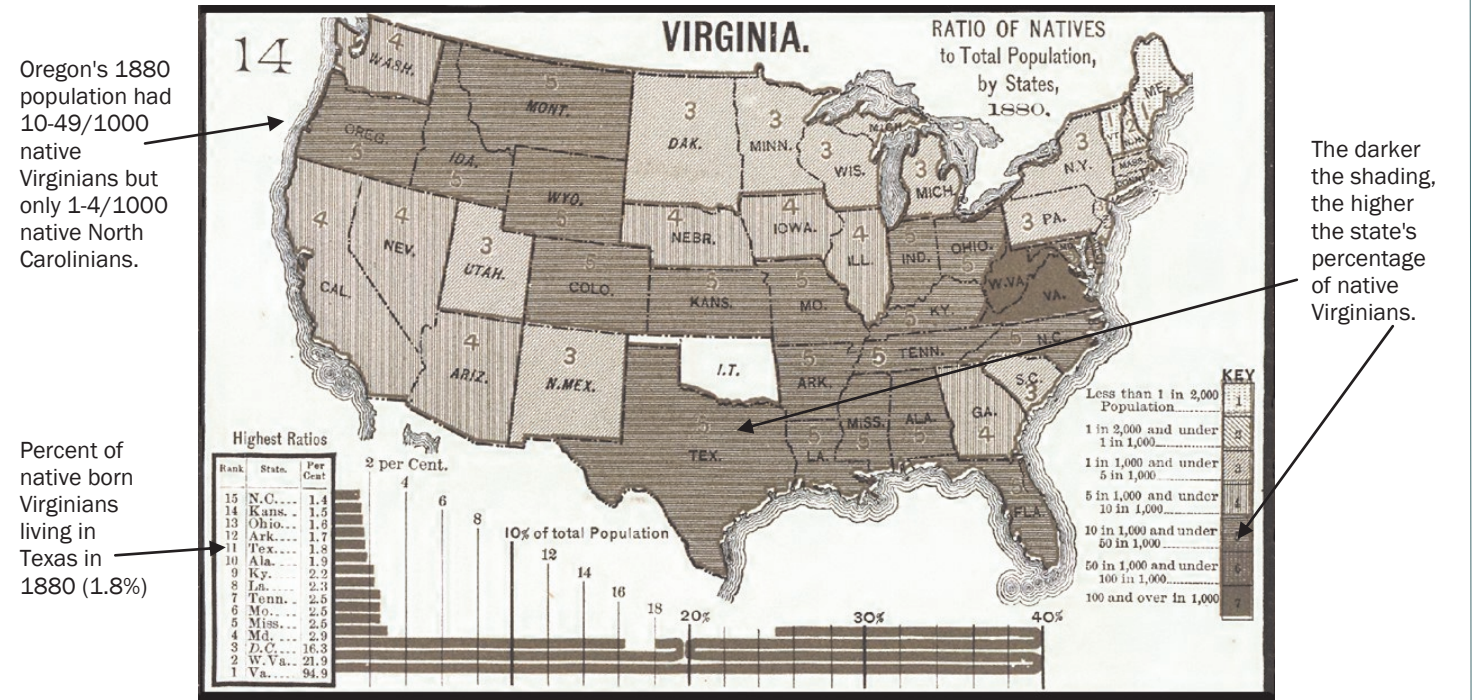
Virginians seemed to go to more states in smaller numbers than North Carolinians, with only – not surprisingly – the District of Columbia having a significant population of Virginia natives (16.3). Tennesseans migrated in slightly larger numbers to more states, but Virginians wandered and settled in states all the way across America.

The bottom line is that if your Texas, Wyoming, or Oregon ancestors seem to have been dropped there by aliens, remember that up to five percent of those states' populations were Virginians who settled there by 1880. So look eastward for your roots.

Inspired by Research Roadmap, Andrew Koch, published in *Family Tree Magazine*, Dec 2016.

Scribner's statistical atlas of the United States showing by graphic methods their present condition and their political, social and industrial development. By Fletcher W. Hewes and Henry Gannett. Copyright 1883 by Charles Scribner's Sons.

Martha Keys



## *Donations April 13—December 31, 2016*

Daguerreotype of Capt. Wm. Felix Duff, CSA Letter written by Capt. Duff Hand-written document of Wm. Duff Small pocket diary carried by Robert Goodson Duff, CSA	Robert Duff Alexander, Santa Fe, NM
Treacy, Montgomery County Virginia Court Orders 1777-1788 Washington Co., VA Circuit Court Will Book 24, 1890-1894 Washington Co., VA Circuit Court Will Book 25, 1894-1897 Washington Co., VA Will Book 1, 1777-1792, (Annotated) Washington Co., VA Will Book 26, 1897-1901 Descendants of Thomas Henderson & Helen Ley-New Revisions 2016 Washington Co., VA Will Book 27, 1901-1905	Jack Hockett, Newark, DE
Russell County, Virginia Marriages, 1848-1852, 1872-1900	Donald W. Helton
McDaniels and McDonalds of SW Virginia, notebook and thumb drive with PDF files	Jim and Mary Peterson, Orlando, FL
Heroes and Hero Worship by Thomas Carlyle	Robert Weisfeld, Abingdon, VA
Child's Parasol from ca 1915 South Carolina	Kathleen Sheftall, Charleston, SC
1930s era Dress worn by Georgia Shepherd	Nancy Leasure, Abingdon, VA
The Life of Frank McDonald North Carolina Research Gen. & Local History The NC Genealogical Society Journal-4 copies The Formation of the NC Counties 1663-1943 Orange County Records-Vol. 5 Deeds & Surveys 1752-1760 Historic Sites of Sullivan Co., TN Historic Sullivan Kings Mountain and its Heroes-Draper Kings Mountain Men 48 <sup>th</sup> Virginia Infantry Colonial Dames Review	From the estate of Nina Isley, Bristol, TN
Images 2004-2005 Publications of HSWCV Historical Sketches of Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church 1773-1958 Wolfe Creek Trailer Lodge & Campground brochure If You Like Us, Talk About Us by Robert Porterfield Historic Abingdon Coloring Book History of Abingdon United Methodist Church Framed High on Windy Hill Book with picture of Catherine McConnell 1927, 1932 Cameo and other miscellaneous historical items The River Hills and Beyond by Lou Crabtree Personalities of the South Henninger Family by Israel Henninger Kegley's Virginia Frontier by F. B. Kegley Black's Fort Plate painted by Margie Kelly	Kitty and Gerald Henninger, Abingdon, Virginia
Miscellaneous Files and Books	Nanci King, Knoxville, TN
The Life & Adventures of Wilburn Waters	Evelyn Booker, McDonough, GA
A History of Troutdale Virginia by Ed Clayton	Ed Clayton, Cary, NC
Cemetery Records of Amelia County, Virginia	Amelia County Historical Society
Descendants of Thomas Worley Worleys in England, 1066-1682, In America, 1682-1983 by Alvy J. Worley	Everett M. Worley, Chesapeake Beach, MD
Booklet-Old Homes & Gardens by Ethel Baugh, 1939 Ticket - Beauty Contest, Damascus High School	Janet & Herb McClelland, Lake City, FL
1900 Diary of Grace Cole/Neville	Dennis Gilbert, Lebanon, VA
Pocahontas' Descendants - Third Corrections and Additions Pocahontas' Descendants - Fourth and Fifth Corrections and Additions	Ed Hooker, Union City, GA
Early Adventures on the Western Waters, Vol. III, Part 1 & 2 by Mary Kegley Photo of Lena Looper Steele Settlement of Account of Cora G. Dye	Tarn Rosenbaum, Abingdon, VA
Genealogy from Mrs. Mauk's Estate	Catherine Rock, Abingdon, VA
Ken Mathews' Scrapbook	Garret Mathews and Family, Carmel, IN
Sullivan County by Joe Tennis 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983 The East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications Knoxville by Betsey Beeler Creekmore 1984 Bristol City Directory 1990 Bristol City Directory	Penny Hudson, Bristol, TN



Sullivan County, TN Deeds Vol. 1-8	Susan Austin, Joplin, MO
<i>The Blairs of Washington County, VA</i> <i>The Reeds of Warren County, KY</i>	Michael Blair, Madrid, IA
<i>A Demand of Blood-The Cherokee War of 1776</i> by Nadia Dean	James Hagy, Abingdon, VA
<i>Roster of the Virginia DAR</i> <i>Annals of Southwest Virginia 1769-1800</i> Early Adventures on Western Waters Vol I by Mary B. Kegley & F. B. Kegley	Kitty Henninger in Memory of Catherine Sanders McConnell
<i>Abstract Henderson Co., NC Estate Records</i> by Kathleen Summers	Kathleen Summers, Fairview, NC
<i>Precious Memories of an old Country Boy and WWII Veteran</i> by Lloyd C. Kestner	Kenneth R. Kestner, Abingdon, VA

## *Monetary Contributions April 13—December 31, 2016*

Doris Wells - In Memory of Jack Ferratt	Meadowview, VA
Jennifer Wagner - In Memory of Chris Brown	Meadowview, VA
Don and Jean Preston - In Memory of Gene Mathis	Abingdon, VA
Don and Jean Preston - In Memory of Jack Ferratt	Abingdon, VA
Charlie Barnette - In Memory of Bill Graybeal	Bristol, TN
C. Phillip Kestner, in memory of Michael D. Kestner	Kingsport, TN
Pat Hott - In Honor of Charlie Barnette	Nokesville, VA
Estate of Roy Christian Brown, Jr.	New York, NY
George Bird Metcalf, Jr.	Abingdon, VA
Susan Osborne	Whitesboro, TX
Barbara Farris and Family	Abingdon, VA
Mary Kegley	Wytheville, VA
Sam Shumate	Hickory, NC
Arthur E. Wills	Raleigh, NC
James R. Fleenor	Richmond, KY
James Ballard	Houston, TX
Tony and Janiece Hughes	Abingdon, VA
John and Annette Legard	Abingdon, VA
Ronald Cassel	Los Gatos, CA
Billie Woodward Cummings	Woodstock, VA
Robert DeYoung	Joliet, IL
Caroline K. Spires	Abingdon, VA
Florence A. Powell	Meadowview, VA
J. H. Combs, Jr.	Abingdon, VA
Cheryl LeSueur	Bristol, VA
Dr. and Mrs. J. H. Bowden, Jr.	Abingdon, VA
Mary Jane Cox	Richmond, VA
Dixie Avey	Heber Springs, AR
Robert & Linda Bailey	Berkley, MI
Hazel and Richard Blackwell	Edison, NJ
Katherine Burland	Southfield, MI
Augusta Waters	Gadsden, AL
Cindy Cole	Brandon, FL
Wallace and Norma Davenport	Houston, TX
Nancy Jett	Beaverdam, VA
Victoria Baker	New Castle, DE
Shelley Hart	Moses Lake, WA
Diane Johnson	Glade Spring, VA
Karen McClanahan	Abingdon, VA
C. Robert Weisfeld	Abingdon, VA
Carol Hawthorne-Taylor	Bristol, TN
Hazel Ewing Daro	Fairbanks, AL
Carolyn Ryburn	Glade Spring, VA
Jeni Neely	Abingdon, VA
Carl Bergstrom	Ashland, MA
Audrey Honegger	Des Moines, WA
Laura L. Livingston	Edgewood, WA
Patricia Craig Johnson	Dallas, TX
Mary Ann Hinshelwood	Abingdon, VA
Frank and Michele Stanley	Meadowview, VA
Sandra D. Kruse	Friendswood, TX
E. Paul Moorehouse	Akron, OH
Dan Smith	Bristol, VA
Patricia Cummings	Johnson City, TN

Brett and Jessica Compton	Abingdon, VA
Jane Bryan	Abingdon, VA
Alma Sue Ray	Abingdon, VA
Stephen and Lisa Jett	Abingdon, VA
Greg Thomas	Cleveland, TN
Ina Stephenson Marbury	Bristol, TN
Carol Graybeal	Meadowview, VA
Rose Ellen Hudson	Abingdon, VA
Eileen Karp	Tampa, FL
Gina Thayer-Coleman	Jonesborough, TN
Jackson C. Boswell	Arlington, VA
Fred & Sue Schriever	North Royalton, OH
John White Stuart, III	Westbrook, ME
Diana Powell	Morgan Hill, CA
John Greever	Seattle, WA
Peggy Johnson	Abingdon, VA
Jerry and Debbie Belisle	Abingdon, VA
Joella Johnson Barbour	Abingdon, VA
Fred W. Keller	Abingdon, VA
Angela L. Leonard	Knoxville, TN
Myron K. Peck	Ballwin, MO
J. David and Pauline Deck	Charlottesville, VA
Pam Schweitzer	Glade Spring, VA
Peggy J. Johnson	Abingdon, VA
Juanita T. and James E. Cox, Jr.	Bristol, VA
Ann H. Beardshall	Hattiesburg, MS
Anna Stonewall Jackson/Ann Carter Lee Chapter, United Daughters of the Confederacy	Abingdon, VA
David W. Snodgrass	Greenwood Village, CO
Jennifer Wagner	Meadowview, VA
Mary M. Lominack	Abingdon, VA
Nick Schommer	Hager City, WI

### *Membership*

Membership renewals for 2017 are due May 1, 2017. Dues remain at \$35 per person or family for an annual membership and \$350 for a lifetime membership. We also have three different levels of business memberships, student rates for any age, and a Library/Museum rate.

Dues and donations may be made on our Web page ([hswcv.org](http://hswcv.org)) with credit cards, or by check mailed to the Society at PO Box 484, Abingdon, VA 24212.





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

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We're on the Web!  
[HSWCV.org](http://HSWCV.org)

## *PLANNING A CLASS REUNION?*

Don't forget that we may have just the picture you need, such as the one shown below of the William King Class of 1957 trip to Washington, DC. We also have yearbooks from almost all schools in the County, newspaper clippings of sports teams and other school events, and individual pictures of people and school buildings. We can provide digital images for use in your programs, slide shows or displays.

Please help us identify the persons in this picture. Call 276-623-8337 or email [office@hswcv.org](mailto:office@hswcv.org). Thank you.

