

NEWSLETTER



Vol. 45 No.2- June 2023
Walter Jenny, Editor

Annual Meeting Updates

A lot has happened with the Historical Society since our last Newsletter. Because our Bylaws require us to inform you of the proposed slate of officers in a Newsletter sent to all members not less than two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting, this is an abbreviated Newsletter to update you on plans for our 2023 Annual Meeting.

The Society's 2023 Annual Meeting will convene on Saturday, June 24, 2023 at the Higher Ed Center in Abingdon.



Members will socialize with a wine bar beginning at 6:00 pm. After a brief financial report and the president's report, we will elect our officers for the next two years, as well as three of our six directors. Dinner is

planned to be served at 7:00, followed by music by our good friend Jack Hinshelwood. Our caterer this year is Abingdon's Catering by Catherine.

Tickets for the dinner are \$35 per person and can be purchased in advance at the Historical Society office (276-623-8337) or through our website store (hswcv.org). You can also pay at the door, but ONLY if you have contacted our office to reserve your ticket before 4:00 pm on **Tuesday, June 20**. This is the only way to keep costs down and ensure enough plates for all. You can also attend without buying dinner, or via Zoom at no cost.

The Zoom link is as follows:

Meeting ID: **880 4470 4162**
Passcode: **458636**

Contact our office if you have any questions.

We hope you'll join us for this year's annual meeting. It will be good seeing and visiting with everyone again. Thank you for supporting your Historical Society!

NEW BOARD NOMINEES

Because of the death of Secretary/Treasurer Charles Seaver (see page 2), the Board has amended its slate of nominees.

Director John Neal is serving as interim Treasurer, and will be nominated for that position at the Annual Meeting. Patricia Musick Hatfield is our interim Secretary, and will be nominated for a full term as Secretary.

Cheri Heath Fullen will be nominated to serve as our Corresponding Secretary, succeeding Karen McClanahan who is retiring from the Board. Long-time volunteer Bob Maiden will be nominated to fill the last year of John Neal's three-year term as director; that seat will be on the ballot again in 2024 for a full three year term.

As a result, the slate recommended by the Board now is as follows:

President: Walter Jenny 2023-2025 (incumbent)

Vice President: Mark Hagy 2023-2025 (incumbent)

Secretary: Patricia Musick Hatfield 2023-2025

Treasurer: John Neal 2023-2025

Corresponding Secretary: Cheri Heath Fullen 2023-2025

Board seats: Charlie Barnette 2023-2026 (incumbent);
Brett Compton 2023-2026 (incumbent);
Bob Maiden 2021-2024 (new)

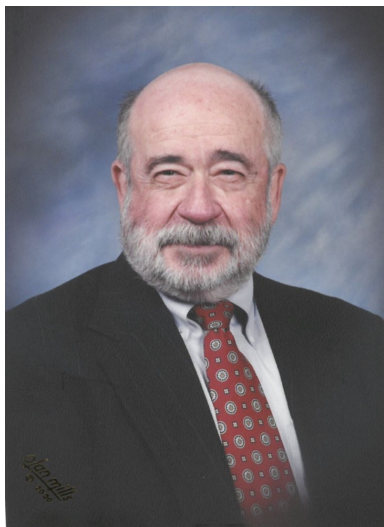
Be sure to thank all of our officers and Board members, especially Karen, for sharing many hours of their time and talent with us. Everyone has family and work obligations, and we understand the sacrifices they make to support the Society with their talents and time.

DID YOU KNOW...

The story of Abingdon's native son, Lt. Billy Webb, is told in a display at the Virginia welcome center near mile marker 1 on I-81. Lt. Webb died on Hill 23 in Viet Nam on June 5, 1966. The entrance to Abingdon's Veterans Memorial Park is named "Lt. Billy Webb Avenue" in his memory.



Charles William Seaver



The Historical Society has lost one of its most dedicated servants, Charles Seaver. He died on May 3 at the age of 87.

Charles was our secretary/treasurer at the time of his death, and previously served as president of the Board of Directors. More importantly, he was the institutional memory of the Society, an invaluable resource of how the Society functioned in the past and how and why we do what we do today. A natural storyteller, he invariably regaled us with stories about people and incidents - the history of the organization - as well as his own colorful experiences in life. His counsel was sound and readily available. To say he will be missed is an understatement.

A native of Marion, Charles graduated from Virginia Tech in 1958 and served in the Army at posts around the world, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel in 1979 with the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, and three meritorious service medals. He then was

Deputy Director of Member Services for The Retired Officers Association in Alexandria for eighteen years.

Retirement brought him to Abingdon, where he volunteered with the Virginia Creeper Trail Club on trail land trestle maintenance and coordinated the restoration of the #433 locomotive and the Norfolk & Western caboose now on display in Abingdon. He was also active with the Abingdon Kiwanis Club. His survivors include his wife of 64 years, Elizabeth Rose (Wayland) Seaver, two sons, a daughter, ten grandchildren, a step-granddaughter, and four great-grandchildren.

George Bernard Shaw wrote, *"This is the true joy in life, being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one. Being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances, complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy. I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it what I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations."*

That was certainly true of Charles. Thank you for your friendship and dedicated service. Rest in peace.



A Summer of History In Washington County

Besides our Annual Meeting on June 21, the Historical Society has a full schedule for the next several months, and you are cordially invited to attend and participate. See what we're doing to preserve the history of Washington County!

SATURDAY, JUNE 14: Our third annual "Reclaiming Our History" virtual conference on African American history and genealogy in Washington County is slated to begin at 1:30 p.m. Speakers include genealogist Renate Yarborough Sanders, Archivist Cara E. Griggs with the Library of Virginia, and others. Cost is \$6; register on Eventbrite (eventbrite.com, search for "Reclaiming Our History"), and you'll be sent the Zoom link to attend.

SATURDAY, JULY 22: As the Virginia Highlands Festival begins, Charlie Barnette will give his popular workshop at Abingdon's Sinking Spring cemetery on the best ways to clean cemetery headstones without causing damage. No cost.

SATURDAY, JULY 22: Our annual Living History guided tour of Sinking Spring cemetery will tell the stories of some of the interesting characters who helped build Abingdon and Washington County. The cemetery is the original site of Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church, and began with the burial of Henry Creswell in 1776. Tours will begin at 5:15 p.m. with the last tour scheduled to start at 7:30 p.m.. Each tour will last about 45 minutes to an hour, so wear your comfortable walking shoes. Tickets are \$5 per person, and go on sale at 5:00 p.m. at the gate (cash only).

SUNDAY, JULY 23/MONDAY, JULY 24: Thomas Jefferson, portrayed by Monticello's Bill Barker, returns to Abingdon to have a conversation with the citizens on the frontier. This year he brings President John Adams (Colonial Williamsburg's Steven Holloway), his friend and coauthor of the Declaration of Independence. They became estranged after the raucous 1800 presidential election, but resumed their relationship after retiring from politics; their correspondence has become a rich source for understanding the reasons for the American revolution and the Founders' dreams for their new country.

Our two programs will take place in the ballroom of the Martha Washington Inn on Abingdon's Main Street. Doors open at 6 pm (cash bar) and the program begins at 7. Tickets for this Society fundraiser are \$25 per person, with one child under 12 free with each paid adult. Tickets can be purchased through the Historical Society office and website, through Eventbrite, and at the door until sold out.



**RECLAIMING
OUR HISTORY**
VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

AFRICAN AMERICAN
HISTORY AND GENEALOGY IN
WASHINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

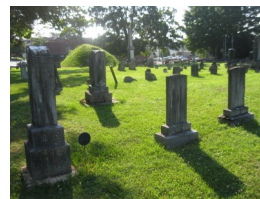
SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 2023
1:30 - 4:00 P.M.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
RENATE YARBOROUGH SANDERS
AND WITH
CARA E. GRIGGS, ARCHIVIST WITH THE LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

\$6

[Register On Eventbrite](#)

PRESENTED BY THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA



*These headstones
were cleaned by
Charlie during his
2022 workshop;
see how they look
today!*





The Historical Society
of Washington County, Virginia, Inc.
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Historical Society of Washington County, Virginia

276-623-8337
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Tues. - Fri. 10 am - 4 pm
Sat. 11 am - 4 pm



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