



NEWSLETTER

COMMITTED TO COLLECTING, PRESERVING, AND SHARING THE UNIQUE HERITAGE OF OUR COUNTY

March 2014

Vol. 36, No. 1

NOTICE

At the Annual Meeting on May 30, 2014, the members present will be asked to vote on the following items.

1) The Board of Directors recommends that the Bylaws be amended to read: That part of Section 9.2 FISCAL YEAR AND AUDIT which now reads: *The fiscal year of the Society shall be May 1 through April 30 inclusive*, is amended to read: *The fiscal year of the Society shall be January 1 through December 31 inclusive*.

2) Two positions on the Board of Directors expire May 1. The 2014 Nominating Committee unanimously nominates Charlie Barnette and Brett Compton for election to fill these vacancies.

WISH LIST

The Historical Society's Mission is to ***provide the facility and means to collect, preserve, and share information regarding the heritage of the County and surrounding region.***

In order to continue collecting, preserving, and sharing, the Society must deal with a very common problem: limited funds and growing expenses. By underwriting an item on this wish list, you will be helping the Society continue our amazing digitalization project, begun 8 years ago, which enables public access to thousands of documents, records, and photographs.

We have approved vendors from which we purchase these items. You can help pay for an item by simply writing a check, indicating the item you wish to underwrite, and sending it to the address on the back of this Newsletter. We are a 501(c)(3) organization and all donations will be acknowledged.

ITEMS:

Annual subscription to Ancestry.com

Annual subscription to Fold 3

Color ink pack for a Canon Pixma Pro-10 printer

Box of 100 DVDs

IT hardware replacements and upgrades

Web site and e-commerce expenses

If you have suggestions or questions about any of the above items, please email or call the Society (276-623-8337) and ask to speak with Martha Keys.

Carrickfergus, Va.? - That Ain't Nowhere---

But It Was Conceived In WCVA---

submitted by Charlie Barnette

It was in the Spring of 1881 that one enterprising individual, named Hugh Neely, divided up some property he owned near Abingdon, laid out lots and streets with Patriotic names and christened the town, Carrickfergus, for an ancient town on Ireland's coast.

Located at the junction of the South Fork and Middle Fork of the Holston River (in a flood plain, no doubt), it isn't hard to imagine a site of intense beauty. Neely cleared the land of its thick stands of pine, oak, and poplar, graded roads, and marked each lot's corners with piles of stones. And, he quickly sold all but 3 lots at prices ranging from \$10 to \$25.00.

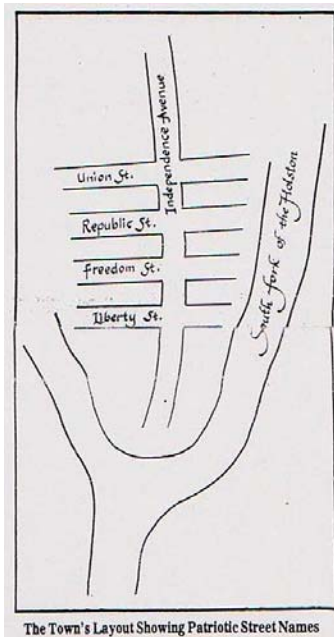


The Riverside Site Of The Envisioned Town

Deed book A in the Washington County courthouse notes: Hugh Neely laid out a town by the name of Carrickfergus at the confluence of the South & Middle Forks of the Holston River. For his better sale of his lots and in consideration of the sum of \$1.00, said Hugh Neely grants to the above James Keys, Michael Shugart, and Samuel Glenn, three lots in said town of Carrickfergus, and bounds them to erect a House of Worship lots 24 & 25, and a House of Education lot #41, for the youth.

The pages of the deed book reveal Neely painted his town's streets with patriotic names: Liberty, Freedom, Independence, Republic, & Union. A "public landing" was to be established at the end of Liberty St. and a "seminary" was promised for lot#41.

A plat map of the town, drawn by Gibson Vance, notes many lot owners as well as the designated locations for the school and church.



John Gold, merchant, purchased the town's most expensive lots, both lot #3 and lot #19 for \$42.50 each. Jonathan Spyker, hatter, bought the lot cor Independence & Republic Sts. for \$40.00. Bartholomew Neely bought lot #16 for \$37.50, and Thomas Berry, Jr. purchased lots 13 & 33 for \$10.00 each. Other buyers noted were Jonathan Eppler, tanner, lot #39 at \$34.25, William Berry lot #27 at \$20.25, and Welcome Martin with lots 6 & 7 for \$37.75 for the pair.

Other buyers were:

Cary Ashley lot #5 at \$9.00; Adam Little lots #28 & 29 for \$48.00; James Edmondson lot #26 at \$17.00; John Jones lot #35 at \$18.00; Robert Ferril Jr lot #30 at \$21.75; James Keys lot #4 at \$8.00; Claiborn Watkins lot #10 at \$15.50; Robert Neely lot #11 at \$13.50; William Steel lot #12 at \$12.25; John Keys lot #31 at \$18.25; James Gilliland lot #32 at \$19.25 & lot #20 at \$7.25; James Caldwell lot #15 at \$16.50; Daniel Neal lot #22 at \$10.00; Archibald McGinnis lot #14 at \$14.25; Charles Neely lot #17 at \$10.00; John Toneray, blacksmith lot #37 at \$12.50; Wm Blackwell, blacksmith lot #21 at \$10.50; Michael Hoover, tinner lot #23 at \$11.00. Undoubtedly Hugh Neely reserved a lot or two for himself.

But Carrickfergus was not meant to be. For reasons known only to dead men, the buyers never erected any shops, houses, or other structures. It wasn't long before the oaks and poplars reclaimed the land. All that

remains are some scattered piles of stones marking the lots' corners, the ruins of a lone log home, and 38 transactions recorded in deed books.

Hugh Neely died in 1850 and his estate inventory consisted of the following: assets - one yellow horse \$50 and one red cow with a white head \$9.00. Evidently any profits he made from his town were not invested wisely.

ED: One wonders if any of these men were refunded their monies or if the lots they bought remain in their names to this day?

**per Robert Alexander - Bristol Herald Courier of Mar 28, 1978*

21 May 1793 -- James Gilliland and Hannah his wife to Hugh Neely, 10 pounds. 30 acres. (Washington County Deed Book 1:296) James Gilliland's 200 acre Land Grant was surveyed and recorded in 1782, with settlement proven to 1770. It was sold in three tracts in 1792 -1793. (L74) Carrickfergus -- Hugh Neely purchased 30 acres on the southeast end of the tract. This land extended across the Middle Fork of the Holston River to a 234 acre survey Neely had entered in 1791. On the east side of the river, Neely laid out streets and lots in 1801 for a town he called Carrickfergus, perhaps named for the port city in Northern Ireland from which many Scots-Irish embarked for America. An act establishing the town was passed by the Virginia Assembly in 1802. The town was well planned. Located where the Middle and South Forks of the Holston River joined, space along the banks of both rivers was reserved for public landings for boats and barges that might be used to ship products down river. Streets were named Liberty, Republic, Independence and Freedom, and lots were set aside for a church and school. There was strong interest in the town, and 35 of the first 42 lots were quickly sold to individuals throughout the county. However, the town failed to materialize. Purchasers had been required by the Virginia legislature to build a dwelling house on their lots within 10 years of the date of sale. Other than Neely's own home, there is no record of any other buildings having been built here, and the purchasers therefore forfeited their investments.

**(Places In Time, Volume III, South from Abingdon to Holston, by Nanci C. King, pages 33 - 34) 1802 -- At different times in 1802 Hugh Neely & Mary, his wife sold various tracts in the town of Carrickfergus to: Archibald McGuninis, Wm. Blackwell, Claiborne Watkins, Cary Ashley, Adam Little, John Keys, Wm. Steel, Daniel Neal, James Keys, James Gilliland, Bartholomew Neely, Welcome Martin, James Caldwell, Robert Neely, Wm. Berry, Charles Neely, James Gilliland (2nd deed), Jonathan Spyker, Thomas Berry Junior, Jonathan Eppler, Michael Hoover, John Toneray, Robert Ferril Junior, James Edmondson, Robert Ferril Senior, John Gold, Thomas Berry Junior, (2nd deed), John Jones, James Keys, Michael Sugart [Shugart], and Samuel Glenn Gent. The last deed was witnessed by: David Dryden Junior, Joseph Campbell and Benjamin Spyker.*

**(Washington County Deed Book A:384 - 414) (Washington County, Virginia District Court Deed Book A, 1789 - 1801, by Thomas & Jane Colley, pages 110 - 120*

** above info taken from Rootsweb.*



Remains Of An 1801 Model Home

Historical Society of Washington County, VA looking for new home

STUDY SUGGESTS TRAIN DEPOT POSSIBLE SITE FOR ABINGDON VISITOR'S CENTER

ALLIE ROBINSON GIBSON | BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

Mon Jan 6, 2014

ABINGDON, Va. — The group dedicated to preserving history in Washington County is looking for a new home after a town study suggested a different use would be better for the building it currently calls home.

The Historical Society of Washington County, Va., is located in Abingdon's historic train depot, at the corner of Wall Street and Depot Square, where it has been since 2002. Prior to that, the society was in the county courthouse for nearly 40 years.

A recent study of the town's tourism and marketing departments suggested that the Convention and Visitor's Bureau on Cummings Street, in the historic Hassinger House, was not the most ideal for visitors to find or use, said Garrett Jackson, assistant town manager, in an email.

"The study suggested the town look at existing town-owned structures in the downtown area that would allow visitors ample parking and a convenient location to get their bearings when arriving in town," Jackson said, adding that two facilities meet the bill, the train depot and the Fields-Penn 1860 House Museum at the corner of Cummings and Main streets.

Both offer parking, Jackson said, but the Fields-Penn house isn't suitable for the visitor's center because there is a large collection of artifacts there.

The train station is attractive because of its downtown location, ample parking, size, ability to act as a staging area for buses and other vehicles coming into town for tours and the potential that Amtrak might someday bring passenger rail back through Abingdon, he said.

"It [the train depot] once was the front door to Abingdon, and certainly could be again, as a visitor's center and Amtrak station," Jackson said.

Town officials met with historical society members in the spring about their needs and the possibility for the Visitors Center and the Historical Society to trade places.

Currently, the Historical Society rents the train station from the town for \$1 a year. Historical Society President Martha Keys said the arrangement has been a good one, but members understand that they are there at the pleasure of the town. However, she said the society board decided that the Hassinger House is a nice facility, but it doesn't suit their needs for space and layout. Since then, the society has retained an architect to study the house again and help the board determine if it would work.

Keys said that even though the lease with the town expires in two years, now's the time to start the search for a new home.

"My dream is that someone would donate a building," she said.

She said members would like a facility near the downtown area and courthouse that would attract foot traffic and provide open space for research. "We want to be more visible as a community agency as well," she said.

The society's funding comes from memberships, donations, the sale of books and prints, special projects and small annual grants (\$2,700 and \$3,000, respectively) from the town and county. "The bottom line is we can't afford to go out and buy a building," Keys said. "We're really wide open to all suggestions and help."

She said the society and town are working together to find a place.

"I think it could be a positive thing for the society," said board member Leighann Lloyd, of Glade Spring. "This has been our home for a long time and it seems to suit the society as it is a historical building, but the society is a flexible organization that can work in whatever capacity."

For now, Keys said, members are awaiting the findings of the informal study of the Hassinger House and keeping their options open. She said a capital campaign hasn't been established because a location hasn't been chosen, but ideas and donations are welcome to help the society move forward.

The society has about 1,500 to 2,000 visitors annually and its online records need to be updated and more accessible to those outside the state, who make up about 70 percent of the group's membership and visitors.

"We are an undiscovered treasure," Keys said.



Washington County Historical Society President Martha Keys shows a scrapbook of a Stonewall Jackson College student in the 1920s and a dance card from her Junior-Senior Promenade. This is one of numerous items that they are trying to preserve.

Dear Members,

This article appeared in the January 6 edition of the Bristol Herald Courier. Since some of you have heard this news already, I am reprinting it here so that the entire membership can be aware of the challenge facing us within the next two years. I want to stress that while there is no immediate need to move, we will have to find a home of our own by 2016.

I am so fortunate to be President of an organization with members in almost every state who are dedicated to discovering, preserving, and sharing our Washington County history, research, and genealogy. With your ongoing help and support, I feel sure that we will find a home of our own in which to celebrate our 80th birthday.

Please contact me at office@hswcv.org if you have any comments or suggestions.

Thank you,
Martha Keys, President



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

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

Annual Meeting and Dinner

Friday, May 30th

At The Higher Education Center

(Further information will be posted on our website, www.hswcv.org)

Mary Fisher Landrum

May 9, 1926 - February 12, 2014



Mary Washburn Fisher Landrum was born in Indiana, Pennsylvania to Robert Miller Fisher and Gladys Fern Washburn Fisher. She attended the Baldwin School for Girls in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, and earned her A.B. degree at Vassar College, where she was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate, before achieving a Master's degree from the Eastman School of Music.

Mrs. Landrum was a distinguished faculty member and the talented college organist of Austin College in Sherman, Texas, before her esteemed tenure on the faculty at Sullins College in Bristol, Virginia from 1965-1976. From

1976 to 1999, she brought her polished talents to King College, where she has taught music theory, church music history, music appreciation, organ, piano, and harpsichord, in addition to honorably serving as the college organist.

Mary Landrum displayed as well her gifted musical ability as the organist of the Reynolds Memorial United Methodist Church in Bristol, Virginia from 1964-1968 before becoming the organist at the Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Bristol. Active throughout her laudable career as a recitalist and clinician, Mary Landrum served with acumen and alacrity on the faculty, in addition to serving as the astute director for two years, of the annual Sewanee Province Church Music Conference held on the campus of the University of the South.

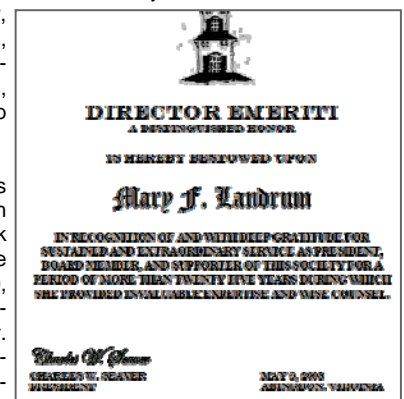
Mary was an active and vital part of the community and her profession, participating in numerous civic organizations, such as the Daughters of the American Revolution, of which she has served with great distinction as an officer on the local and state level, and the National Federation of Music Clubs. She was also President of Historical Society of Washington County, Virginia, and a member of Delta Kappa Gamma.

Mrs. Landrum also took time from a very busy schedule to pursue her beloved hobbies. She has an extensive, museum-quality collection of hymnals, some dating back over 200 years old, and has taken two separate tours of Holland and Germany to study and perform on various pipe organs of the region.

Mary Landrum was especially proud of her collection of slides and was well known for two slide presentations that she has given to many organizations: "Good Night, Sweet Effie," which features her extensive slide collection of various tombstones, and "Beautiful Bristol," which examines the unique architectural details found in Bristol, Tennessee and Virginia.

Mary Landrum was preceded in death by her husband of almost 40 years, Dr. Graham Gordon Landrum, who taught English for more than twenty years at King College and later became a noted author of mysteries in his retirement. She is survived by her daughter, Harriet Landrum Koscho; her son, Robert Graham Landrum; her son-in-law, Steve Koscho; and grandsons, Isaiah Graham Koscho and Job Thomas Koscho.

The family will receive friends Wednesday, February 19, 2014 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at Oakley-Cook Funeral Home. The funeral service will be held Thursday, February 20, 2014 at 1:00 PM at First Presbyterian Church, Bristol, TN with Rev. Dr. David Welch officiating. The committal and interment will follow at Glenwood Cemetery.



Your membership in the Historical Society is appreciated.
Please help us stay in touch with you!

- send a change-of-address card when you move,
- or call our offices at 276-623-8337,
- or e-mail us at office@hswcv.org