

Annual Meeting June 29

The Historical Society's 2024 annual meeting will begin at 6 pm on Saturday, June 29 at the Higher Education Center in Abingdon.



Save
the
Date!

Our Local History committee has put a lot of time and effort into planning this year's event, and it will be great to see everyone together again.

We will, of course, have business to take care of. The Board seats now held by Sandra Darden and Daniel Smith are up for consideration. The Society's Nominating Committee, consisting of Pat Hatfield, Walter Jenny and Martha Keys, will recommend that Sandra and Dan be elected to new three-year terms.

The Local History committee has managed to keep the cost of the optional catered dinner at \$35 per person, as in past years. **If you have not yet renewed your dues for 2024, you can do so at the event.** We need a head count by Wednesday, June 26, so reservations for dinner are **required** by then. You can make reservations by calling Nathan at the office - 276-623-8337, or by email - office@hswcv.org. You can pay at the door or at the Historical Society office, but we will need your dinner reservation in advance.



At Abingdon's Muster Grounds, Thomas Jefferson points out to the Marquis de Lafayette the route taken by the Overmountain men to fight at King's Mountain in 1780, turning the tide of the American Revolution. More on this year's Conversation inside.

Muck Dam Victims to be Honored

One of the greatest tragedies in Washington County history took place one hundred years ago this year.

On Christmas Eve 1924, the muck dam rising 100 feet above the North Holston River near Saltville failed. Built by Mathieson Alkali Works and holding twenty seven years of accumulated industrial waste, the collapse sent a wall of heavy toxic sludge racing across thirty acres of land. Nineteen lives were tragically lost - wives, husbands, brothers and sisters, children. Most were residents of Washington County.



Although the survivors of that fateful event are now all gone, their stories has been passed down to today's descendants in pictures and by word of mouth.

A campaign is now underway to erect a monument at the Saltville town commons this year to honor the victims of this tragedy. Donations can be sent to:

Muck Dam Disaster Memorial Fund
P.O. Box 730
Saltville, VA 24370

For more information or to donate stories or photos, contact Cheri Heath Fullen through the Historical Society or visit the group's Facebook page. Your support of any kind is appreciated.



Highlights from our 2023 meeting: Davis McConnell awards presented to Pat Carty, Nancy Leasure and the late Charles Seaver; financial report from John Neal, and program by Jack Hinschelwood.



Photos by Jackie Weaver Dennison

Activities Update

2024 is off to a busy start for the Historical Society.

We finished 2023 with 847 visitors to our library, up from 539 in 2022 and 426 in 2021. In January and February 2024 we had 88 visitors, far more than the 37 we had in the same two months of 2023 and zero in 2022. All indications are that we're going to have a record number of patrons in our library this year.

Plans are underway for July's annual Living History tour at Abingdon's Sinking Spring Cemetery. This fundraiser is a highlight of the Virginia Highlands Festival, and it introduces

visitors to the fascinating stories behind individuals buried in the old Presbyterian churchyard over the past 248 years. If you're interested in being involved, we can always use more volunteers, either as interpreters, guides or "whatevers." Contact Mark Hagy or one of the Local History committee members (or the office) if you'd like to participate.



Speaking of Sinking Spring, we're working with Noah William Hall, a student at ETSU, who is building his master's thesis around the African American cemetery on the east side of Russell Road. His goal is to identify as many of the burial sites as possible using ground penetrating radar and other modern technology. We may not learn the names of everyone buried there, but the project may lead to some permanent recognition of their existence and the roles they played in the development of our community.

An offshoot of our Reclaiming our History programs, we're also developing a "Family Reunion" service for distant folks who want to plan their get-togethers in Washington County. Our website will include a list of participating hotels, restaurants, caterers and venues that reunion planners can contact to make their arrangements. It's a good way to introduce the Society to people from around the country with Washington County roots, and to encourage their families to pay us a visit.

We're also actively involved in the VA250 program. 2026 will mark the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, so plans are being made across the country to celebrate. VA250 is Virginia's effort.

The Historical Society is participating with the Washing-

ton County VA250 committee for local events before, during and after July 4, 2026. The committee includes the Town of Abingdon, the DAR and SAR, and other organizations; let us know if you'd like to be involved.

The Society's "Conversation with Jefferson and Lafayette" program was the first local event tied to the celebration. Plans are also underway to honor the local men who fought in Lord Dunmore's War in the fall of 1774 and who adopted the Fincastle Resolutions of January 1775. A grand county wide celebration will take place at the muster grounds in May 2026. The 250th anniversary of the battle of King's Mountain will be in October 2030.

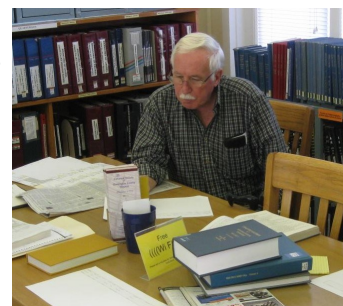
For more information on events statewide, go to va250.org or the Historical Society's Facebook group.

John H. Gregory

March 6, 1936 - July 9, 2023

John Hugh Gregory, age 87, of Emory passed away on Sunday, July 9, 2023.

A self-taught historian, John was a long-time member and president of the Historical Society. He spent many hours with other volunteers updating cemetery records in Washington County which resulted in "High on a Windy Hill."



John was a life-long resident of Emory, a 1957 graduate of Emory & Henry College and a teacher at Marion Junior High School in Smyth Co. Virginia.

John was passionate about world history that extended beyond the boundaries of Washington County. In 1968, his foreign travels began with Europe and continued for nearly 30 years taking groups of teenagers to Europe in the summers.

In lieu of flowers, the family asked that in John's memory you read a book rich in history, enjoy a glass of wine, and embrace your interests as he did throughout his life.

Monetary Donations

April 1, 2023 through April 30, 2024

Abingdon Olive Oil Company* - Abingdon, VA	K-VA-T Corporation* - Abingdon, VA
Anonymous	John and Annette Legard - Abingdon, VA
Linda and Robert Bailey - Friendswood, TX	Brenda Lester - Bristol, VA
Greer Gibson Bacon - Spokane, WA	Cheryl LeSueur - Bristol, VA
Victoria Baker - New Castle, DE	Clyde and Susan Long - Bristol, VA
Belfor USA Group, Inc. - Birmingham, MI	Robin Luhmann - Big Island, VA
Nancy Cooper Bennett - Phoenix, AZ	Bob Maiden - Abingdon, VA
Helen and Robert Bepko - Fairfield, CT	Mamma Mia Italian Restaurant* - Abingdon, VA
Carl Bergstrom - Ashland MA	Martha Washington Inn & Spa* - Abingdon, VA
David Black - Rockford, TN	Janna McConnell - Abingdon, VA
Blue Ridge Auto Group* - Abingdon, VA	Karen McCormack - Abingdon, VA
Dr. and Mrs. J.H. Bowden Jr. - Abingdon, VA	Nancy McGregor - Bristol, VA
Jane Bryan - Abingdon, VA	Leslie Mechem - Saratoga Springs, NY
Bob Buchanan - Berkeley, CA	Allen Mock - Mechanicsville, VA
Katherine Burland - Southfield, MI	Richard Morgan - Abingdon, VA
Charles Byrd - Glade Spring, VA	Amanda Morris - Stony Brook, NY
Larry and Deborah Calhoun - Coronado, CA	Steven Mulvaney - Tannersville, VA
Danny and Tammy Carter - Bristol, VA	Network for Good - Southfield, MI
Pat Carty - Abingdon, VA	New Peoples Bank* - Abingdon, VA
Cary Street Partners* - Abingdon, VA	Carol Noonkester - Abingdon, VA
Ronald Cassel - Los Gatos, CA	Mary Nunchuck - Waukegan, IL
Billy Childress - Abingdon, VA	Charlotte Parsons - Abingdon, VA
Phil and Gwen Clark - Easley, SC	Ida Patton - Abingdon, VA
Riley and Emma Clark - Abingdon, VA	Barbara & Larry Pendry - North Wilkesboro, NC
Clinch Mountain Press LLC/Kathy Shearer* - Emory, VA	Betty Ramming - Hinton, OK
Carl and Mary Coalson - Bristol, TN	John and Nancy Ray - Abingdon, VA
Mary Jane Cox - Richmond, VA	Budne Charles Reinke - Silver Spring, MD
Creeper's End Lodging/David and Jill Dalton* - Abingdon, VA	Anne Robilio - Memphis, TN
Wallace Davenport - Houston, TX	Theresa Rogers - Crest Hill, IL
Tom Davidson - Lebanon, OH	Diana Rosen - Flowery Branch, GA
Mary Pat Daviet - Greeley, CO	Carolyn Ryburn - Glade Spring, VA
James and Linda Day - Abingdon, VA	Fielden Sanders - Wytheville, VA
Jean Dilworth - Waxhaw, NC	Robert and Nancy Sherwood - E. Falmouth, MA
Bucky and Betty Edmondson - Abingdon, VA	Donna Short - Abingdon, VA
Susan Elliott-Chikar - Limestone, TN	Michael & Catherine Smeltzer - Roanoke VA
First Bank & Trust* - Abingdon, VA	Mary Sue Maiden Smith - Winston-Salem, NC
James Fleenor - Richmond, KY	William Smith - Chester, VA
Foxglove Antiques & Etc./Karen McClanahan* - Abingdon, VA	David Snodgrass - Greenwood Village, CO
Brian and Cheri Heath Fullen - Saltville, VA	Sheila Stevenson - Maurertown, VA
J.W. Garrison and K. Ahern - Chattanooga, TN	Barb Stewart - Bristol, VA
Nathan Graybeal - Emory, VA	Tombstone Trackers/Charlie Barnette* - Bristol, TN
Sue and James Hanson - Bella Vista, AR	Greg and Nancy Thomas - Cleveland, TN
Kathryn Harrison - Bingham Farms, MI	Susan Tredwell - Kittery Point, ME
Shelley Hart - Moses Lake, WA	Michael Trueblood - Cape Girardeau, MO
Pat Musick Hatfield - Abingdon, VA	TruPoint Bank* - Abingdon, VA
Ralph and Holly Haynes - Auburn, WA	Lisa Tuck - Williamsburg, VA
Carol Hawthorne-Taylor* - Bristol, TN	United Daughters of the Confederacy - Washington County, VA
Karla Henderlong* - Danville, CA	James and Leigh Van Blarcom - Tega Cay, SC
History Alive Tours/Michael Henningsen* - Abingdon, VA	Gus and Elizabeth Velarde* - Emory, VA
Mary Ann Hinshelwood - Abingdon, VA	Pam Wallace - Abingdon, VA
Deborah Icenhour - Abingdon, VA	Wampler's Insurance Agency* - Abingdon, VA
Pamela Jamarik & Charles Wallace - Abingdon, VA	Michael Weaver - Abingdon, VA
Walter and Rose Ann Jenny* - Abingdon, VA	Doris Wells - Meadowview, VA
Nancy Jett - Beaverdam, VA	Jeri Whitely - Bristol, VA
Dr. C. Phillip Kestner - Kingsport, TN	Arthur Wills - Raleigh, NC
Martha Keys - Abingdon, VA	Janet Woolwine—Abingdon, VA
Sandra Kruse - Friendswood, TX	

*Conversation sponsors

Donations of Items

Yearbooks: E&H 1971-73; William King 1953-55; Abingdon Elementary 1972-79; E.B. Stanley 1975
 Lutheran Ladies Aid Society of Damascus; Judge Hutton Ledgers; miscellaneous obituaries
 Civil War Books
 Bill Graybeal's old Parson Cummings outfit; Aerial view of Bristol TN/VA 1912 (Library of Congress)
 Documented notes on Jennings and allied families; "Jennings Family Book"
 Books: "Rusty" by Bardsley, "How to Catch a Bumble Bee" by Worth Young; minutes of
 Mt. Rogers Appalachian Trail Club 2001-2022
 Jimmy Repass collection of Abingdon photos and newspaper albums
 Book: "Women of Old Abingdon" by Ryburn (in memory of Rachael Fowlkes)
 Floyd Co. KY 1850/1860/1870 census by Bobby W. Wells
 Newspapers and clippings: Bristol Herald Courier and Abingdon Virginia
 Wertz photos; railroad information; 1874 newspaper clipping; State Board of Education papers
 Book: Dublin and the Darsts: A Portrait of a Virginia Country Town and One of its Families, by Henry Darst
 24"x30" charcoal painting on brown paper of Frank R. and Laura (Tiffis) Nicholas
 Terra cotta sculpture "Legend of Wolf Hills" by Helen French
 Collection of yearbooks from Washington County elementary, middle and high schools
 Letters, photos and memorabilia
 "Damascus - The Town of Natural Resources," "In The Mock Family," documents and Society Bulletins
 1940s ticket book from Mongle Brothers General Merchandise store
 Miscellaneous newspapers and clippings
 Books: "Daniel Boone Wagon Train," "Virginia at War, 1862," "The Guns of August," "The Burning of
 Washington," "1776" by McCullough; Index to Wythe Co. Chancery Suits (Hoch and Kegley)
 Revolutionary War period clothing, hats and gear
 7 unidentified Wertz photographs; Clark Ryan Hagy photographs; colonial and Civil War era dresses
 War ration book; "History of Southwest Virginia 1746-1786," "Washington County 1777-1870" by
 Summers; E&H yearbooks; 1917 Liberty Hall school program; 1923 sample election ballot
 Godey's Magazine and Lady's book (Philadelphia, 1830-1878)
 Fifty Years of Virginia Highlands Festival
 Books: "Dining at Monticello," "Revolutionary Brothers" (door prizes for "Conversation" fundraiser)
 Korean War Army uniforms of R.C. Large
 Advertising fan of Abingdon Hardware; framed map, "Appalachian Region" by Clarence Kearfott 1950
 Miscellaneous newspapers and clippings
 Creeper Trail folder of French Moore
 Harvest table model, Old Meadowview town square building
 Day books of Dr. Littleton; ledger of Dr. J. Neilson, 1886-1886
 Family photos, books, Bibles and genealogical information
 Land Patents, Vol. 6, Prince George Co. VA (1666-1719)
 Book: "War Years with Jeb Stuart" by W. W. Blackford, 1945
 Reproductions of 19th Century prints of Civil War commanders
 Spiral binders for library use
 Book: "The War for the Union: The Organized War to Victory, 1864-1865" by Allan Nevins

Mary Akers, *Abingdon VA*
 Anonymous (three donors)
 James Barker, *Glade Spring VA*
 Charlie Barnette, *Bristol TN*
 Ann Blomquist, *Dandridge TN*
 Edie Bobko, *Emory VA*

 Nancy Repass Bullock, *Richmond VA*
 Robert Bundy, *Abingdon VA*
 Susan Cox, *Abingdon VA*
 Mary Jane Crosby, *Abingdon VA*
 Sandy Jones Cumbow, *Abingdon VA*
 John D. Darst, *North Olmsted, OH*
 Dale Douthit, *Charlottesville VA*
 Helen French, *Abingdon VA*
 Cheri Heath Fullen, *Saltville VA*
 Diana Grasselli, *Damascus VA*
 Eleanor Grasselli, *Damascus VA*
 Regina Green, *Abingdon VA*
 Mike Hagy, *Abingdon VA*
 Pat Musick Hatfield, *Abingdon VA*

 Wayne McClellan, *Abingdon VA*
 Carol Hawthorne-Taylor, *Bristol TN*
 Carrie Hayden, *Meadowview VA*

 Beth Henningsen, *Abingdon VA*
 Ben Jennings, *Abingdon VA*
 Walter & Rose Ann Jenny, *Abingdon VA*
 Gayle Large, *Abingdon VA*
 Susan Lowry, *Abingdon VA*
 Fred and Peggy McGuire, *Bristol VA*
 Mary Ann Moore, *Abingdon VA*
 Holly Morrow, *Meadowview VA*
 Carolyn Jones Nelson, *Charlotte NC*
 Gen. Adam Campbell Parks, *Bristol TN*
 Florence Powell, *Meadowview VA*
 Jack Rohr, *Abingdon VA*
 Robert & Pamela Wallace, *Abingdon VA*
 William Wheeler, *Abingdon VA*
 Stephen Wolfsberger, *Abingdon VA*

Memorial and Honorarium Monetary Donations

In Memory of Margaret Allen
 Doris Wells - *Meadowview, VA*

In Memory of Dean O'Flaherty
 Doris Wells - *Meadowview, VA*

In Memory of Carol Gray Wilson
 Doris Wells - *Meadowview, VA*

In Memory of John Gregory
 Jane Bryan - *Abingdon, VA*

In Memory of Charles Seaver
 Rick Morgan - *Abingdon, VA*
 Doris Wells - *Meadowview, VA*

In Honor of Charlie Barnette
 Helen and Robert Bepko - *Fairfield, CT*

In Memory of Lois Humphreys
 Doris Wells - *Meadowview, VA*

In Memory of Warren Wells
 Nathan Graybeal - *Emory, VA*

In Honor of Dr. Susan B. & Rick Humphreys
 Bucky & Betty Edmondson - *Abingdon, VA*

In Memory of Jane Oakes
 Anonymous

Thanks to all our donors for your support!

Conversation Continues With Jefferson and Lafayette

You won't read about it in the history books, but Thomas Jefferson brought the Marquis de Lafayette to visit the citizens on Virginia's western frontier in '24.

Or so it seemed last month.

Thomas Jefferson, portrayed by Monticello's Bill Barker, and the Marquis, interpreted by Mark Schneider of Colonial Williamsburg, addressed guests in the ballroom of the Martha Washington Inn during the Historical Society's fifth annual "Conversation with Jefferson" fundraiser on April 14 and 15.



The original Lafayette, the last surviving general of the American Revolution and hero of the victory at

Yorktown, returned to America in August of 1824 for a fourteen month tour of the twenty four united states. He spent twelve days at Monticello with Jefferson, with whom he had drafted the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen in 1789.

This year, through Barker and Schneider, the two men discussed their shared history and values and entertained questions from the audience. Eight states and Canada were represented in the crowd.

After a tour of the Muster Grounds Monday, Jefferson and Lafayette met with about 85 fascinated students at Abingdon Elementary School.



Sunday evening's program was recorded, and we plan to have it available for public viewing later this spring.

We gratefully appreciate everyone who sponsored the event, who bought tickets and attended, and who helped make the project a success.



Many thanks to our generous sponsors for making this event possible.

Be sure to thank them for their support!

Cary Street Partners

Creeper's End Lodging

First Bank & Trust Company

Food City

Jerry's Signs & Awnings

New Peoples Bank

TruPoint Bank

Abingdon Olive Oil Company

The Martha Washington Inn & Spa

Wampler's Insurance Agency

Dr. Paul & Jaymie Derden

Walter & Rose Ann Jenny

Mamma Mia's Restaurant

Joshua, Daniel & Noah Smith

Gus & Elizabeth Velarde

Humphreys Honored

Longtime Abingdon community leaders Rick and Dr. Susan Humphreys are recipients of the 2023 Outstanding Preservation Achievement Award by Preservation Virginia.

Rick and Susan have led by example. They've restored the 1834 Austin Bronaugh house and the 1840s Sandoe House (now A Tailor's Lodging), and helped rally local support to save the 1849 Dooley house from demolition in 2021. They also promoted a partnership between the Town of Abingdon and the National Park Service that protected the historic Muster Grounds in town for future generations.

The rehabilitation of the Green Cove Station along the Virginia Creeper Trail in Washington County also was among the ten statewide honorees. The awards were presented at a banquet at the Hotel John Marshall in Richmond on Sept. 29th.



Visit us on Facebook!

Historical Society of
Washington County, VA

*Join the discussion with over
12,000 page members!*



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

Annual Meeting News Inside!

Thank you to our Business Members and Sponsors!



BURKE PRINT SHOP
Abingdon, VA



Clinch Mountain Press
Kathy Shearer, Author-Publisher

Corps Values
Music Heritage



Creepers' End
Lodging



eyePHYSICIANS
of Southwest Virginia, PC



FROST
Funeral Home
Abingdon, VA

Kenny's
Auto Glass
Services



The Martha
The Martha Washington Hotel & Spa

Tombstone
Trackers
Inc.

WALLACE
Repair Shop, Inc.
Abingdon, VA



*We Have Room for
Your Business!*

Your company can support
the work of the Society as a
Business Member for only
\$50 a year or \$450 for ten
years. Contact the office
today for more details.

VIRGINIA²⁵⁰
AMERICAN REVOLUTION



Historical Society of Washington County, Virginia



276-623-8337
office@hswcv.org

Tues. - Fri. 10 am - 4 pm
Sat. 11 am - 4 pm



www.hswcv.org

341 West Main Street, PO Box 484, Abingdon, VA 24212

VIRGINIA
IS FOR
HISTORY
LOVERS™