



BRISTOL HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Dedicated to the preservation of local history



Bristol Historical Association, Inc. Newsletter • P.O. Box 204 • Bristol, Tennessee 37621-0204

September 2015

Founded April 1979

Wells Fargo Mural

The Wells Fargo Community Mural Program team recently presented Bristol with a new outdoor mural reflecting the city's history. The mural features historical views of Bristol, including the Paramount Theater, early local musicians, the fire department, State Street scenes, King College, and the Goodpasture Motors building, now the Birthplace of Country Music Museum. The design also includes an 1860s map, along with several local historical documents. Most of the images for the mural were purchased from the Bristol Historical Association's Carolyn and Roy Williams Collection of Historical Photographs, and some were provided by the Library of Congress.



The large mural – a whopping 25 feet wide by 18.5 feet tall – is mounted on the exterior brick wall of the bank at 709 State Street, and is readily visible to pedestrians and passing traffic along State Street. A mural key was also installed, providing captions describing each of the images featured in the design. The target date range for the imagery is the late 1800s through the 1940s.

The smaller mural, consisting of four unique mural panels, once located inside the bank's former location, has been reinstalled inside the new office along with its key. Each mural is comprised of a variety of subjects, including early buildings, prominent individuals, diverse communities, municipal organizations, local business, and historical landmarks. The historical photographs in both murals are beautifully colorized and artfully arranged.

The Wells Fargo Mural is sure to join the Bristol Sign, Train Station, and Birthplace of Country Music Museum as one of Bristol's most photographed tourist stops. The Bristol Historical Association is proud to have partnered with Wells Fargo in the creation of this wonderful, educational, and highly visible tribute to our rich heritage.

According to Graphic Design Consultant, Julian Torres, "The Mural Program conducts all of its research remotely from their San Francisco office, and relies on its partners to aid in the image research process and provide access to image archives along with local historical knowledge. The murals have been extremely well received by the local communities, as they demonstrate – in a strong, visual way – that Wells Fargo is deeply committed to being America's Community Bank. Since its inception in 2002, the Wells Fargo Community Mural Program has worked with local historical and community organizations to design and install over 2,100 murals nationwide, highlighting points of pride for the diverse communities that bank with Wells Fargo. From small towns to big cities, this program has been dedicated to creating unique, custom-designed, historical artwork that respects the community's legacy, celebrates its diversity, and honors the past upon which the community was founded."

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Preston House Restoration Highlights for 2015

1. Exterior wood siding installed with square cut nails.
2. Painting of the exterior of the House to be completed by the end of August, 2015.
3. Hand forged strap hinges and thumb latches made by a local blacksmith ready to be installed on newly reproduced entry doors.
4. Hand-blown restoration glass installed in the wooden window sashes and transoms.
5. Wooden storm windows with plexiglass installed on lower windows for protection.
6. Maintenance of yard kept with monthly mowing and building debris removed from the work area this summer.
7. Wallace Bros. has quote to make repairs on and flash both chimneys in the attic.
8. Meeting planned with Washington county Building Official to discuss the beginning of the next phase which is the interior of the House.
9. Weekly meetings held throughout the year with the Committee studying architectural and building plans with the architect, job supervisor, Treasurer, Committee Chairpersons and an active Committee.
10. Local CBS Station WHJL reporter Micah Smith conducted interviews with Susan Tanner, DAR representative of Bristol.
11. The NSDAR, the Virginia Tobacco Commission support, and matching grant of \$5000, and dozens of private individuals and foundations have provided the monies for the Restoration of the Preston House.



Micah Smith of WHJL TV and Susan Tanner, DAR of Bristol.Va



Gifts in honor of and in memory of, as well as donations, may be sent to the Bristol Historical Association at PO BOX 201 Bristol, Tn 37621-0204

New Preston House Video can be viewed online at:
<http://tinyurl.com/BHA-RobertPreston>

Bud Phillips Day



BHA President Tim Buchanan and Bud Phillips



Catherine Brillhart and Bud Phillips

A Tree Planting Ceremony recognizing V. N. “Bud” Phillips Day was held June 15, 2015. Presided over by The Honorable Lea Powers, Mayor of the City of Bristol, Tennessee and The Honorable Catherine Brillhart, Mayor of the City of Bristol, Virginia, the Ceremonies were held in Bristol, Tennessee, at Anderson Park and in Bristol, Virginia, at Cumberland Park. An Historic District Preservation Award was presented to Bud Phillips during the Bristol Virginia ceremony. Trees were planted at Anderson Park and Cumberland Park in his honor.

President’s Message

The year 2015 has been wonderful for the association, but we are not resting on our laurels. We know that preserving and telling the story of Bristol is an ongoing work in a changing environment. We are thrilled with the progress of the preservation of the Robert Preston house located at Exit 7. After working on the foundation of the house in 2013-14, we are close to finishing the exterior of the 200-plus year old residence. Work will continue on the interior in 2016 and forward. Another property that will be the center of interest later in the year will be Tennessee Ernie Ford’s birthplace as the city celebrates the 60th Anniversary of his number 1 hit, *Sixteen Tons*. We are also challenged to preserve the high-profile E.W. King House in Downtown Bristol. We do have it on the market to get it in the hands of a preservation-minded individual or organization. It is the jewel overlooking downtown Bristol!

This Fall we have some very high-profile programs that you will not want to miss. On Monday, October 26, we are privileged to welcome Dr. Kenneth Noe from Auburn University. His inspiring program will tell the story of

the Bristol region during the American Civil War. The loyalties between the North and South were mixed in East Tennessee which placed Bristol in continual confrontation with Northern invaders. Also, remember to make your reservations for the annual Christmas Luncheon set for Sunday, December 6, at The Virginian. Our guest speaker will be Dr. Ted Olson of ETSU who will tell the story of our own Tennessee Ernie Ford. We have much more planned to enlighten all of us on Twin-Cities history.

We continue to work toward a permanent office and museum in Bristol. We might just have a member that would provide us space or know of a good location where we can “hang our shingle”. Keep your eyes open and we’ll keep you updated!

With Friendship,

Tim Buchanan
President

Dr. Kenneth Noe to Present Lecture on Southwest Virginia at the Close of the American Civil War

We are pleased to announce an upcoming program that will commemorate the 150th anniversary of the ending of the American Civil War in 2015. Dr. Kenneth W. Noe, Draughton Professor of Southern History at Auburn University, will present a lecture entitled "Like a Storm over the Ridges: From War to Peace in Southwest Virginia, 1865". This presentation is a collaboration between the Bristol Historical Association and the History Department of King University and will be held on Monday, October 26, 2015, 6:30pm at the Bristol Public Library.



Noe is a native of Virginia and is a frequent speaker on the Civil War Round Table circuit, as well as a participant in the Organization of American Historians Distinguished

Lectureship Program. He currently serves on the Board of Editors of Civil War History, and was a consultant to the NBC series Who Do You Think You Are? He is an accomplished writer of numerous books, articles and essays, including a regional history, Southwest Virginia's Railroad: Modernization and the Sectional Crisis, published in 1994.

We look forward to this special presentation and encourage the membership to place this date on the calendar. This meeting will be open to the public, but you are advised to come early to be seated. For further details contact Tim Buchanan, BHA President at buchanan03@bvu.net

DVDs of BHA Presentations

Through the support of Heritage TV, the BHA can provide copies of our past programs to purchase on DVD. Heritage TV videos most BHA programs at no charge to the association and any DVD sales helps defray programming costs. DVD's are \$15/each and may be purchased by contacting David Hartley at heritage.tv@gmail.com, or mailing a check to Heritage TV, PO Box 197, Norton, VA 24273, or by phone (276) 821-6154.

Below is a selection of some past BHA programs. If you do not see a particular program, contact Heritage TV and identify the speaker or program subject.

- Bart Koontz - History of Boy Scouts of America and Benjamin L. Delaney
- Dr. John Gaines - The story of John Breckinridge
- Dr. Lawrence Fleenor - The Holston Region During the Late Eighteenth Century
- Jerry Ivey - Bristol Through the Eyes of a Child
- Judge Charles Flannagan - Tales of Justice and Judges from Early Bristol
- Judge Charles Flannagan - Judge John A. Kelly, A Man to Remember from Early Southwest Virginia
- Dr. William Wade - History of King College
- Dr. Catherine Vande Brake - A Century of Progress: The Melungeons Experience Through A Literacy Lens

- Carl Mallory - A Pictorial History of Abingdon (2011 Christmas Luncheon)
- Joe Tennis - Washington County Then And Now
- Jim Glanville - The Great Southwest Road to Virginia
- Randell Jones - Trailing Daniel Boone (2102 Christmas Luncheon)
- Fred Sauceman - A History of Southern Barbecue
- Garrett Jackson - A History of the 1797 Washington-Preston Ladle
- The Beaver Creek Storytellers
- Jack Arnold - A History of Moore's Snack Company
- Harry Haynes - A History of Saltville
- Wilhelmina Banks - All Aboard! A Local Rail History
- Michael K. Shaffer - Washington County in the Civil War
- Judge Charles Flanagan - 125th Anniversary of Bristol, VA
- Josh Blankenship - The Boiling Point: Events Leading up to WWI
- William Vanhuss - The Great Solar Eclipse of 1869 and Its Impact on early Bristol
- Charlie Barnette & Carol Hawthorne-Taylor - Cemeteries of Washington County, VA: Our Vanishing Historic Graveyards

I. C. Fowler House

Scott Otis, owner of the c.1867 I.C. Fowler house, continues to make progress toward the restoration of this historic structure. Scott describes some of the work being done:

“There was significant structural damage caused by the numerous holes in the roof which allowed water into the house for years. Two load-bearing walls that supported the two bedroom floors upstairs were removed by a previous owner to park a vehicle in the house. Multiple layers of building materials from previous renovations were causing strain on the understructured original framing that was never designed to carry the weight loads that were being exerted on them. This caused bowed floors and walls, sagging roof sections and even cracked some framing members from



shingles on the roof which was a significant amount of additional weight that the understructured roof was not designed to handle. The original rafters had bowed almost 3” and several were cracked from the weight load. These two damaged sections were re-framed with 2” x 6”s and new plywood sheathing. A temporary rolled roofing material was installed until the new metal roof can be installed. New wood

siding to match the original has been installed on two sides of the house and the other two sides will have new siding installed in the near future. There is still some framing to be completed inside before the wiring, plumbing and heating/cooling system can be installed.”

The I.C. Fowler house is the oldest standing house from the original Town limits of Goodson, VA. It was built by Isaac Chapman Fowler in the Greek Revival Style. Fowler owned the Bristol News, served as mayor, and was a delegate in the Virginia House of Delegates where he served as Speaker of the House. Fowler is buried in Bristol’s East Hill Cemetery.



the strain. The first floor’s floor joists have been supported in the basement with 6” x 6” beams and footers. There was 3300 lbs. of oak flooring removed from the first floor, which exposed the original wide tongue and groove pine flooring. The upstairs bedroom floors were extremely bowed, one had extensive rot and termite damage from the multiple roof leaks. These floors were removed and new framing was installed, and new pine floors to match the original ones will be installed. Two sections of the roof on the back gables had to be replaced because of rot from water leaks around both of the chimneys and roof. There were three layers of asphalt



Tyler-Gragg House

Bristol Historical Association had the opportunity to visit the Tyler-Gragg House at 107 Tyler Dr., Bristol, TN, Wednesday, March 25, at 3:00pm, to announce the addition of the Tyler Gragg Home to the BHA Registry of Historic Places. This property has been chosen for recognition because of the importance of the original builder and owner in regional history and because of the log structure's



unusual and interesting architectural features. The property was owned by a number of well known Sullivan County citizens. In 1911 John H. Caldwell sold the property to Alonzo Jason Tyler (May 11, 1861 - December 30, 1956). Tyler was a native of Sneedville in Hancock County, Tennessee, one of seven children of Henry Tyler originally from Maine. In 1883 Tyler was admitted to the bar and very shortly thereafter was elected to the Tennessee House of Representatives. Following the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands by the United States in 1898, Tyler's party affiliation enabled him to gain from President William McKinley an appointment as a Federal judge in the islands, and he also held an appointment as State Collector of Internal Revenue at about the same time. He moved back to Tennessee in 1900 after marrying May Viola

McDermott in Rogersville, Tennessee.

In 1902 Tyler became a member of the Bench of the Second Circuit Court of Tennessee, and in 1911 they purchased the 87-acre Caldwell property where they intended to raise their children. In 1917 the Tylers commissioned Clarence Baker Kearfott, a well known Bristol architect, to draw up plans for a home. It would be a rustic, two-story log structure which family tradition says resembled a Rocky Mountain cottage that Tyler had seen and admired in Colorado.



Dr. William Wade is pictured with Tyler Gragg House

In 1975 Robert and Roma Gragg bought the lot on which the original house was built in a neighborhood named Tyler Park in recognition of the Tyler family. Presently the property is owned by Roma Gragg and her son Lewis.

We Need You to Park for Rhythm & Roots!

The dates for Rhythm & Roots this year are Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, Sept. 18-20, 2015.

Hours are: 11-3, 1-5, or 3-7 -- come help out with the most successful fundraiser for BHA!!

Thanks to Massengill Caldwell & Coughlin, P.C., Randy Kennedy, and Larry Weddington for allowing BHA to manage

parking in their lots. Over \$4000 was collected last year during the three days, and \$750 was collected for Race Night August 20. To be a part of this fun event call 423-968-7224 or email shopper226@aol.com.



Co-chairs Isabelle Ladd and Amy Hopper parking for R&R

Commissioner Bob White's Residence

Bristol Historical Association visited the historic property of the Bob White House, which is listed as the Haynes-Lowry-White House, on July 26, 2015. The house was part of the Colonel James King original holdings and it has gone through a number of notable owners, including Judge Hal Haynes. Haynes purchased the farm of over 400 acres on the courthouse steps around the turn-of-the-century, and choice parts became the Haynesfield section of Bristol. The large farm spread roughly from Weaver Pike to near Volunteer Parkway to Phlox Creek subdivision. John C. and Pauline York lived there during the depression.

Pauline was descended from the Reverend James King line and is pictured in an upstairs bedroom. Local realtor Charles J. Lowry resided there and purchased surrounding

property in the 1940s during which time he developed one of many regional housing communities.

In 2004, Bob and Michelle White purchased the home from Mr. and Mrs. Kenney Ellis who had wonderfully maintained the property since 1971. The Whites have completed much renovation to preserve the home for centuries to come.



Harry and Jackie Piper, Nedra Hartley, BHA President Tim Buchanan, Mary Lou Sproles, and Barry Hopper



Coasters and Cookbooks



The BHA Coaster Project is dedicated to the memory of former President, Roy James Williams, who envisioned and designed this collection.

The Coaster Set is made of absorbent sandstone and features images of historic downtown Bristol. The

four coasters are about 4 inches square and have a cork

backing to protect furniture. They are gift-boxed and make a beautiful and useful gift. The cost is \$25.00 for a set of 4.

BHA's new cookbook, Past and Repast, A Fine Collection of Recipes, features not only local favorite recipes, both new and vintage, but also photographs and vignettes of Bristol history. The book sells for \$25.00 each.

You may order from the web site www.bristolhistoricalassociation.com or purchase at Bristol locations: Box Works, Chamber of Commerce, and the Boxwood.



Bristol Historical Association

c/o Amy Hopper
133 Spanish Oak Road
Bristol, TN 37620

Bristol Historical Association Important Meetings 2015

Monday, September 14, 2015

Bristol Public Library at 6:30 PM

Speaker: *Joe Tennis, Writer and reporter for the Bristol Herald Courier, "Rails and Trails in Southwest Virginia"*

Monday, October 26, 2015

Bristol Public Library at 6:30 PM

Speaker: *Dr. Kenneth Noe, Draughton Professor of Southern History at Auburn University, "The Civil War in Appalachia" -- Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the end of the American Civil War*

Monday, November 9, 2015

BHA General Membership meeting

Bristol Public Library at 6:30 PM

Speaker: *Josh Blankenship, BHA Board Member, "An Overview of WWI in 1915"*

Sunday, December 6, 2015

BHA Christmas Luncheon, The Virginian, 12:30pm

Speaker: *Dr. Ted Olson, Professor of Appalachian Studies at ETSU, "Tennessee Ernie Ford: Bristol's Other Major Music Story"*

Cost: \$28 RSVP by Dec 1 to:

Janet Smith, 104 Gaffney Rd. Bristol, Tn 37620

General Membership Meetings are open to the public.



photo by Amy Hopper

Memorials, Donations, and Contributions to any BHA Project may be sent to PO Box 204, Bristol, TN 37621-0204

See your BHA Newsletter in full color & save the BHA postage! Send your email address to bha@bristolhistoricalassociation.com & please visit our website www.bristolhistoricalassociation.com