



# Bristol Historical Association, Inc.

## Newsletter

P.O. Box 204 Bristol, Tennessee 37621

November 2007

Chartered April 1979

**Hello Bristol Historical Association....and thank you for your membership and interest in Bristol and it's history.**

I had begun my letter before news of the passing of Bill King, one of our Past Presidents, and I cannot begin any message, at this time, without sharing my thoughts about Bill, a true gentleman, with each of you. He will be missed by all.

Bill King spent untold hours working for us, the Bristol Historical Association. He offered us secure storage for all our "collections", our furniture, clothing, photos, files, and all the merchandise our Association sells to the public, including our newest publications, t-shirts, hats, pins, postcards and a variety of other items intended to raise money for our operations.

He allowed us the service of his dedicated and competent assistant Teresa West, to perform the duties of Postman(woman), telephone operator, information center, accountant and permanent treasurer to assure us that our financial records would be accurate and kept in a timely fashion - no easy job with almost 200 members and 4 properties, each with their own budget.

Bill was always on hand to help us with any project. He and Ruth generously offered their wonderful store to us, and for that matter to any community organization, for any social gathering. And Bill, always the perfect gentleman, served as host---he was our mover and shaker, our backer and our best cheerleader!

With Bill at the helm, the Historical Association showed remarkable growth. His soft spoken, kind and thoughtful words, his firm determination and yet gentle encouragement, prove the fact that "leadership" in a word - is the single most important factor in whether an organization fails or succeeds. What will we do without him?

A gentleman in every sense of the word, Bill King will be remembered for his devotion to family, his love of Bristol, his 'no problem' positive attitude, his generous spirit and his kindness to all. Bill King's name will live on with the contributions being made to the restoration of his grandparent's home, the E.W. King House.



*(continued on next page)*

**And now, speaking of leadership...please read this newsletter carefully as the suggested slate of officers is included.**

We are so proud of Bud Phillips, and so grateful to the City of Bristol Tennessee for recognizing the location of Bristol's beginnings...watch in the near future for a marker to be placed on the corner of State Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

The Tennessee Ernie Ford House committee is to be congratulated for their improvements to the Ford House and for the many tourists that have visited. The E.W. King House committee continues their progress to make that house into the Museum of Bristol's History. The Preston House committee continues in their endeavor to preserve and protect that important property. And the I.C. Fowler House committee is on the brink of securing new ownership that assures the community that the wonderful property will exist for many more generations. That's a lot of work for a little organization...but that isn't all...

I spent the most wonderful morning with Joyce Kistner and the 4th graders from Highland View School. It has been a dream of the Association to take Bristol's history to the children in school. With the help of Joyce and Linda Brittle, Jan Rainero and Doris Boothe and others it became a reality the other day...The children really enjoyed the one hour presentation, and so did I! It is the hope of the Association that this will become routine and that all 4th graders in both Bristol Virginia and Bristol Tennessee will learn about their town every year. We are a remarkable community with a marvelous history!

Other important news...important houses continue to make application to be recognized as Bristol Landmarks. The Merchandise committee continues to bring in revenue so that the Finance Committee can help us make end meet. Our Programs Committee has done a fine job planning programs to be open to the public...there is one on the 13th of November and then there is a special program planned for "Black History Month" in February. And the Membership Committee is getting the word out on how to join as a member.

Amy Hopper has worked diligently to set up a new website and we are anxiously waiting for it to become available.

Thank you to all of you for your membership...we would welcome you as a volunteer, especially now with our school program, and also we are always looking for someone with creative ideas to help us plan our windows display in the Dent K. Burke windows in November. We welcome you to join our board...and you are welcome to attend the meetings at any time.

Thank you to Roxann Coulthard for her arrangements for our meetings and programs and especially for our planned Christmas Luncheon...it takes a lot of planning for this group...and I guess that is all. Please join us...we still have so much to identify, preserve, interpret, and present.

**Mary Beth**

# *A Historic Open House*

The Bristol Historical Association's E.W. King House Committee held an Open House at the E. W. King House and Grounds on Saturday, September 15th in conjunction with the Rhythm and Roots Reunion Festival. This event featured live performances by two Bluegrass bands-- the Green Bean String Band from Asheville, NC and the Tennessee High School Bluegrass Band "Slim Pickens". The festivities also included an Antiques and Collectibles Sale and an Exhibit of Historic Artifacts of local and regional significance, including furniture, documents, and musical instruments, inside the house. Special exhibit items were generously placed on loan for the day by Bristol historians Tim Buchanan and V.N. "Bud" Phillips. In addition, Mr. Phillips brought a varied selection of his books detailing aspects of Bristol's history and remained present for book sales and signings throughout the day.



*J.D. Davis, student at Tennessee High School and a member of Troop 7, earns his Eagle Scout rank for leading other scouts to clean outside and inside of the E.W. King House.*



*Laura Ann Warner, descendant of the King family welcoming visitors.*

Volunteers from the BHA and community at large combined with Committee members resulted in a total of 25 people staffing the Open House. Guest registry signatures numbered over 220, with actual attendance estimated at over 250. This event provided a wonderful opportunity to begin realizing one of the ultimate goals for this property, educating the community about local history, despite the house's currently unrestored state. Visitors who toured the house and exhibits came away enlightened of the multifaceted role it will ultimately play in the future as an integral part of Bristol's rich historic fabric and culture.



*Green Bean String Band, Asheville, NC*

*"Slim Pickens", Tennessee High Band*



# State Marker to be Placed Where Bristol Began by Bud Phillips

I have good news for all who love Bristol history. What many of us call the most historic spot in Bristol is soon to be marked. This state marker will be placed near the southwest corner of State Street and Martin Luther King Boulevard.

In 1852, Joseph Rhea Anderson contracted for one hundred acres of the best part of his father-in-law's plantation. (This father-in-law was Rev. James King.) At that time the Virginia portion of Anderson's purchase contained the beautiful King's meadows where grazed King's prize herd of shorthorn Herford cattle. The Tennessee portion was largely planted in grain crops. The survey of the planned Town of Bristol began on Monday, August 2, 1852, at a point near where this state marker will be placed. A copy of the map of the Town of Bristol, made from this survey, showing the territory covered by it, may be viewed in the office of the Circuit Court Clerk, Bristol, Virginia. It is slide number 1.

At first, Anderson chose a site for his home on the Virginia side of the town. This site was located directly across the street from where a spring then flowed from under the little hill where now stands the Bristol depot. However, he finally chose the lot upon which this marker is soon to be placed. The combined home and business house that he had erected there in 1853, was the first building erected within the boundaries of the original Town of Bristol. The new town developed around this point.



*Joseph Rhea Anderson*

Many firsts occurred in this new building. The Bristol Post Office was opened there on November 5, 1853. The Anderson store, the first in Bristol, opened for business on Christmas Eve, 1853. The first article sold in that store yet exists and is kept here at Pleasant Hill. The first church service in Bristol was held there on Christmas day, 1853. The first Sunday School was organized there in early 1854. Private banking began there later that year. And Isaac Anderson, son of Joseph R. Anderson was born there in 1854 and was the first child born in Bristol. There are several other firsts that happened in this building. For a list of them see my book "Between the States."

This house was occupied by the Anderson family until 1881, when they moved to their new home at 516 Anderson Street. This newer house was serving the local YWCA when I came to Bristol in 1953.

The historic old Anderson home was demolished about 1930. I have been told that some of the brick from it later became part of the replica of the slave quarters now standing behind the Deery Inn at Blountville.

Several years ago I came to the conclusion that the beginning point of Bristol should be marked. Now I am happy to tell you that it will be done!



# The Robert Preston Home

by Jan Rainero

A Draft Environmental Assessment has been received which outlines the city's proposal to develop a new business complex, "The Sugar Hollow Business Complex" which could incorporate the current location of the Preston House at Sugar Hollow.



The proposal includes conditions requiring the city to establish a visual buffer on the west and north sides of a 2 acre donated parcel to screen the house from the business complex. This area would allow the incorporation of the existing log building behind the house as well as a garden and orchard. The road access to this property has been approved by TVA.

In the event the house would have to be relocated, a proposal was made in October of 2006 to the Walnut Grove Presbyterian Church membership to relocate the Preston House onto their church property. The church voted to accept the house under conditions that were acceptable and agreed upon by BHA and the church.

If the log building must be moved, Emmit Yeary of Fairview Abingdon Foundation has indicated that they would be interested in it and would place a plaque on the building explaining its history.

Expenses are being calculated for the lowering of Embarq's telephone lines and other electrical lines for a potential move.

An engineer from Embarq was sent to revisit the project, and the conclusion was made that if the house were to be moved and exit the property at another location, the cost would be \$3,000 instead of \$10,000.00.

Recent acquisitions for the house include a copy of Dr. Edward Foley's book "The Preston Family of Walnut Grove" and a copy of a book of the Holston Valley by Mr. Tom Preston.

# **Bristol**

## TN-VA

### *Historical Association*

#### **Nominations and Elections**

**Section 1.** The Nominating Committee provided for in Article 6.2 shall furnish names of nominated individuals to the Board of Directors at the October meeting of the Board. The Board of Directors shall approve or disapprove the nominations by a majority vote.

**Section 2.** The approved nominations shall be provided to the general membership in writing at least 14 days prior to the November general membership meeting.

#### **2008 Bristol Historical Association Board of Directors**

President ..... Mary Beth Rainero  
 First Vice President ..... Isabelle Ladd  
 2nd Vice President ..... Nedra Hartley  
 Recording Secretary ..... Barbara Smith  
 Corresponding Secretary ..... Jane Copenhaver  
 Treasurer ..... Teresa West

#### **Class of 2008**

Nat Copenhaver  
 Amy Hopper  
 Phyllis Harrison  
 Brenda Otis  
 Roy Williams

#### **Class of 2009**

Gwen King  
 Bud Phillips  
 Jan Rainero  
 Tim Buchanan  
 Geneva Dillard

#### **Committees**

Education & Outreach ..... Joyce Kistner  
 Arrangements and Publicity ..... Roxann Coulthard  
 Newsletter/Website ..... Amy Hopper  
 Historical Markers ..... Phyllis Harrison  
 Parliamentarian & By-laws ..... Robert S. Peel  
 Programs ..... Tim Buchanan  
 Merchandising & Marketing ..... Gwen Smith  
 Archives ..... Carolyn Williams  
 Historian ..... Bud Phillips  
 Membership ..... Eleanor Heacock  
 Finance ..... Nat Copenhaver  
 Collections and Acquisitions ..... Isabelle Ladd

#### Properties:

Ford House ..... Brenda Otis  
 E.W. King House ..... Nedra Hartley  
 Preston House ..... Jan Rainero

**Bristol Historical Association**  
**P.O. Box 204**  
**Bristol, Tennessee 37621-0204**

**2008 Membership Form**

Bristol Historical Association is dedicated to the identification, preservation, interpretation, and preservation of local history. Members enjoy a variety of service opportunities, receive quarterly newsletters, and, most importantly, take pride in the part they play in preserving and promoting the history of our area. We always welcome new members and appreciate the increasing participation in our many community projects!

Simply complete and return the membership form below. You will receive a BHA membership card to carry with you. Invest in the future...join Bristol Historical Association today!



**Eleanor Heacock**  
**BHA Membership Chairman**

**Mary Beth Rainero**  
**BHA President**

**2008 Levels of Membership:** (also includes remainder of 2007)

Individual	\$30	
Family	\$45	(2 adults & children under 18 living at home)
Researcher I/F	\$50-99	12% discount on BHA merchandise
Historian I/F	\$100-249	14% discount on BHA merchandise
Curator I/F	\$250-499	16% discount on BHA merchandise
Preservationist	\$500-999	18% discount on BHA merchandise
Lifetime Member I/F	\$1000 & Above	20% discount on BHA merchandise

BHA is a 501 (c)(3) exempt organization; your membership fees and donations are tax deductible

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 **cut along this line** 

**MEMBERSHIP LEVEL** \_\_\_\_\_ **MEMBERSHIP FEE** \_\_\_\_\_

I also want to make a donation to BHA: **DONATION** \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to: **Bristol Historical Association** **TOTAL ENCLOSED** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email** \_\_\_\_\_

**New Member** \_\_\_\_\_ **Renewal** \_\_\_\_\_

**Committee/Project interest** \_\_\_\_\_

**Suggestions/Recommendations** \_\_\_\_\_

BHA membership and community involvement continue to grow. We invite you to join us or renew your membership for 2008. Bring your check and application form to the November or December meeting or send it to :  
**BHA P.O. Box 204, Bristol TN 37621-0204**

# BRISTOL HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

## IMPORTANT MEETINGS

### **General Membership Meeting**

**Tuesday, November 13, 2007 at 6:00 PM**

**Board Meeting at 4:30 PM**

**(All members welcome)**

**Bristol Public Library**

There will be a brief business meeting at which the election of officers for 2008 and 2009 will take place. (slate included in this newsletter). The program will be given by Charlie Barnette whose antique bottle collection tells part of the history of Bristol. He has written a book, many articles, and he has his own website. You will be interested at the number of old bottles from medicine shops and breweries that he has found and saved.  
**(website is <http://tennevaguy.tripod.com>)**

### **Annual Christmas Social**

**The Virginian**

**December 9, 2007 12:30 PM**



**Luncheon Buffet \$15.95**

**Music & Stories by Sarah Scott and Friends**

**Please RSVP by December 1, 2007**

**Roxann Coulthard 276-466-5357**

### **Bristol Historical Association**

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Bristol, Tennessee 37621-0204