



Historic Fincastle, Inc. Newsletter Spring 2020

President's Report—2019

A Letter from Lynne

Greetings from HFI!

Last year was a fun and successful one for HFI. After our great Festival in 2018, we decided to test the waters again and to partner with the Fincastle Fire & Rescue to present the Fincastle Festival in September. Despite the heat, it was a wonderful success, with vendors and visitors saying this needed to be an annual event going forward.....and so, stay tuned for a celebratory 2020 Fincastle Festival joining in the fun of the County's 250th Birthday!

We are very grateful to Betty and Jim Reynolds for hosting our 2019 Members' Holiday Party! Their home, which was also on the Home Tour the following weekend, was beautifully decorated, and it provided a perfect layout for handling that sized gathering. Thank you Reynolds!!

Although it is covered later in this newsletter, I would also like to brag on the Board members again! The workload to pull together each Holiday Home Tour and Marketplace is not inconsequential. We begin planning each January – if not in December right after that year's event – and it takes many hours and many meetings to line up the amazing homes which are featured each year and the outreach to find the quality artists and crafters who populate our Marketplace as well. In fact, I think I'll propose giving each at least a 50% raise for 2020! Let's see, \$0.00 plus a 50% raise equals.....??? What an amazing group of dedicated workers!

Last, but by no means least, thank you to all of our members for your support through the years monetary contributions, certainly, but even more for your support of the various history and preservation focused events. It is only because of you that we have been able to purchase and to restore heritage buildings and to continue to raise funds to preserve our historic buildings and to educate people – children as well as adults – about our history, Thank you!

The Mission of HFI

The village that is Fincastle today will continue to be a distinctive and culturally significant community that balances an abiding respect for its history with the needs of 21st century Botetourt County. In the midst of new residential development, Historic Fincastle, Inc., will participate in the development and success of programs to preserve and conserve the spirit of Fincastle, its historic streets and buildings, and its natural setting in a vibrant local economy. Fincastle will remain the center of an eclectic, working community that embraces new people and new ideas—a pleasing, educational place that makes visitors glad they came and anxious to return to an old town with a progressive spirit.

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Officers of HFI (2020)

President—Lynne Bolton
Vice-President—Sarah Meadows
Secretary—Marcia Neighbors
Treasurer—Lyn Burton

Carol Brenner — A Life of Service

Carol Wiek Camper Snyder Brenner was born and raised in Fincastle. She graduated from Lord Botetourt in 1975 and attended Radford University. After graduation she worked for Leggett. Carol decided that was not her “forever” job, so she got a teaching certificate and first worked at William Fleming High School as Marketing teacher and then as a Guidance Counselor. She had found her “forever” job as a counselor and worked at Hidden Valley High School, Read Mountain Middle School and finished her school career at James River High School as Counselor.

Carol always loved Fincastle. When living in Roanoke, she and Alan would come to Fincastle to visit her mother, Peggy Davis, or to attend church or events. She followed closely what was happening in town with HFI activities. Finally, in 2006, she had the opportunity to return home when Bo and Susan Trumbo offered to sell back to Carol the home place that her grandparents, Hunter and Viola Painter, had built in 1939.



Her love for Fincastle can be seen in a letter that she wrote to Alan in 2009.

Carol wrote to Alan:

“I try to visualize my life before August 9, 1996 [their wedding date] and there are so few memories that flash forward. So, at times, I wonder if my ‘real’ life started that day. I remember clearly the Fincastle Big Spring Gazebo with you (Alan) and me (Carol) committing ourselves to each other, hearing [from Neal Dunnivant, officiant] about the ‘dance’ we were about to start and the thoughts of our life together. Our words flowed so easily, our feelings for each other so real and true, and having no worry about the future, such love and trust for one another.

At the time, the Fincastle Gazebo was not terribly sentimental to me, but now that our home is in Fincastle, the whole town has a new place in my heart. Every time I see the Gazebo, I smile and feel happy, sweet thoughts of you! The fact that you have adopted my home town as your own and cherish it as much as I do reflects the person that you are and the family we are.....”

Carol served as President of HFI for several years until her health forced her to step down. During her tenure, she did much of the preparation of mailings, the newsletter, organizing events and planning for the future. Some of her major accomplishments were to help put HFI on a secure financial footing, re-roofing the Early Cabin, designing and coordinating funding and construction of the stone sign at Main St. and Rt. 220.

(This article was lovingly submitted by Alan Brenner.)

Carol died October 14, 2019 of ovarian cancer. She is survived by two sons, Andrew Snyder (and his wife Val) of Roanoke and Benton Snyder of Charlotte. Her husband, Alan, and her mother, Peggy Davis both live in Fincastle. She also has a stepson Andrew (Holly) and a stepdaughter Evie and three grandchildren (Henry, Pierce and Hannah). She has 3 sisters and 1 brother and a “bushel” of nieces and nephews and their families.



Pictures from the 2019 HFI Festival



"The town of Fincastle has been described as a virtual museum of 18th. and 19th. Centuries American architecture with some dwellings dating back to the late 1770's."—from the timeline history of HFI

Marketplace— 2019

There were 40 craftsmen participating in the Marketplace in December 2019. Many had participated in previous years. There were craftsmen that made glass work, pottery, wood working, knitted and crocheted items, food items, sewn items, hand painted and other types of jewelry, copper items and paper crafting.



Holiday House Tour—2019



This year we had a wonderful Home Tour! Five special homes were on the tour. Each home was decorated for the season with care and the individuality of the owners. Two of the owners were actually HFI Board members!!

We are always so proud of our Fincastle homes. The home tour has been a great way to show off our community to all. People come year after year just to see what will be on tour in our town.

We thank the owners of the Wild Flower Farm, Jacob Carper Saddle's Shop, Dickerson Home, 671 Pine Hills and Hillcrest. You are special to HFI and to Fincastle!





Report of the 2019 Annual Meeting

Historic Fincastle, Inc. (HFI) held its 2019 Annual Business Meeting on October 17, 2019 at the Fincastle Presbyterian Church. The Board of Directors was pleased to report on the great year experienced thus far in terms of events as well as in the growing members. The meeting, however, began with the president, Lynne Bolton, sharing the wonderful memories of and the contributions by Carol Brenner, the long-time president and tireless worker of HFI who lost her valiant battle with cancer shortly before this meeting.

A short video was presented from the September Fincastle Festival, and attendees were able to see for themselves how the Festival has expanded in both size and in attendance. The event was a success, and HFI voted to continue the tradition with hopefully even more vendors and activities in 2020!

Lyn Burton presented the treasurer's report, and she was able to share that the club was securely operating in the black as of the close of this financial year. The report was accepted as presented. Lyn also provided the attendees with information about the upcoming Holiday Home Tour and Marketplace, including the chosen homes for this year's event, and a successful summary of last December's Home Tour as well. She also noted that the 2019 Membership Holiday Party would be held at the home of Jim and Betty Reynolds on December 7th.

The main presentation for the evening was made by Lynne Bolton and Judy Barnett.

The membership was informed that a grant request had been submitted by HFI partnering with Botetourt County Historical Society and the Countywide League to the Division of Parks and Recreation for a matching grant to help cover the costs of erecting an historic marker noting the location and importance of "Academy Hill" where the first county-organized school for local African American children was established. Judy Barnett shared her memories of attending the Academy Hill school on the hill at the end of Murray St., including the hardships those students endured versus the schools the white students were able to attend.



Academy Hill Boys circa 1930

Picture from an article announcing the featured exhibit at the Botetourt County Historical Museum beginning Feb. 1, 2020.

Getting to Know the HFI Board of Directors

The Board of Directors welcomes the return of **Jim Lambert**. Jim lives on Muse Road at Oakland Farm. He and his late wife Wilma have been active in HFI and in the community for many years. He brings back to HFI his expertise as a writer. Being a retired newspaper man, his writing skill has been a valuable tool for HFI. He has contributed articles to the paper for events including the Fincastle Festival and the Christmas Home Tour.

Thank you, **Jim**, for being a part of Historic Fincastle Inc. and serving on the Board of Directors.

(We are pleased to be able to report that the grant was approved, and efforts are underway to create the wording/information which will be on the Historic Marker for Academy Hill. The marker will be erected on Main Street at the bottom of the hill where the original Academy Hill School stood.)

A proposed slate of officers was presented to the attending members, and the slate was approved by a unanimous vote. The officers are: Lynne Bolton, President, Sarah Meadows, Vice President, Marcia Neighbors, Secretary, and Lyn Burton, Treasurer.

The meeting was then adjourned, and refreshments were served.

Save the Dates Upcoming Events in 2020

April 25

Garden Club of Virginia highlights Houses and Gardens of Fincastle. Santilane, Prospect Hill, Solitude, Wild Flower Farm, and Broad Oaks **(This event has been cancelled.)**

May 16

Step Back Into History (see article on p.8)

May 30

Dedication of the 250th Anniversary Plaque—Botetourt County Court House (p. 7)

September 19

Fincastle Festival

September 20

present day celebration for Botetourt County 250th Anniversary at Blue Ridge Vineyards (p. 7)

October 15

HFI Annual Meeting—Location: Fincastle Presbyterian Church

December 5

HFI Holiday Social—Location TBA

December 12

HFI Holiday House Tour and Crafters Market

HFI Scholarships—2019

Each year HFI awards two scholarships at each county high school to deserving seniors who will be furthering their education.

The oldest scholarship, created in 1999, is The Elizabeth and Israel Christian Scholarship. This was created to celebrate and commemorate the history of Fincastle and to encourage and support students from our local communities.

The second scholarship was created in 2016. It is the Pat Simmons and Sally Eads Volunteer Scholarship. This was created as a way to honor these two women and their long history of volunteerism to the Town of Fincastle and HFI.

During the last 20 years, HFI has awarded over \$22,000 in scholarships to college bound students from Botetourt County. The funds for these scholarships comes from membership donations and fundraising events such as Holiday Home Tour and Marketplace.

The Elizabeth and Israel Christian Scholarship Winners - \$500 each

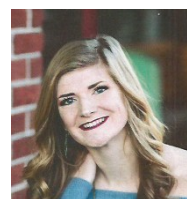


Carlissa plans to attend JMU or RU to study music.

Carlissa Martin—LBHS

From her essay : “Lord Botetourt had a major influence on the founding of Botetourt County by setting an example of the dedication required to education, the responsibility required of those to hold any public office, showing how your reputation precedes you.”

Bailey G. Marshall—JRHS



She plans to attend VaTech to study Agribusiness.

From her essay: “... (Thomas) Jefferson played a hand in establishing Fincastle and Botetourt County as an agricultural community. Botetourt owes Jefferson for the early establishment of one of the strongest industries in the county.”

The Pat Simmons and Sally Eads Volunteer Scholarship Winners—\$250 each

Sydney Grace Robinson—LBHS



Volunteer Activities:

- ⇒ 4-H Camp
- ⇒ Student Ass't Athletic Trainer
- ⇒ Lewis Gale Medical Center
- ⇒ National Honor Society

She plans on attending VCU to study pre-med.

Emma C. Butler—JRHS



Volunteer Activities:

- ⇒ Lewis Gale Medical Center Emergency Department
- ⇒ Bot. Food Pantry
- ⇒ FUMC Vacation Bible School
- ⇒ Feeding Am. SW VA
- ⇒ Greenfield Elementary Fall Festival

She plans on attending UVa to study Biology (Pre-Med)

Around Town

Have you ever just walked around the downtown part of Fincastle and looked at the different types of architecture in the design of the homes and buildings?

Below are some of the *Fences on Main Street*. Can you identify their location?



Around HFI

Membership:

All members should have recently received a letter from the Board of Directors about the 2020 Annual Membership Drive. Please remember to send your membership form and contribution to

Historic Fincastle, Inc.
P.O. Box 19
Fincastle, VA 24090

Individual Member \$25; Family Member \$35;
Patron \$200—\$499; Sponsor \$500 and up;
Friend \$36—\$199; Student member \$10; Life-time \$1000

Sarah Meadows, Membership Chairman

Members of the Board of Directors:

Cindy Bailey
Karen Beasley
Lynne Bolton
Alan Brenner
Kip Burton
Lyn Burton
Patsy Dickerson
Melodye Hollingsworth
Betty Holt

Jim Lambert
Keith McMurry
Sarah Meadows
Lissy Merenda
Marcia Neighbors
Betty Reynolds
Jim Reynolds

Historic Fincastle Website

Have you ever visited the Historic Fincastle, Inc, webpage?

You should visit it at hisfin.org. There is a lot of information about the organization and the history of Fincastle and Botetourt. Points of Interest include:

- ⇒ HFI timeline from its inception in 1968
- ⇒ Online collection Database of historical documents from 1770 to present from the Dottie S. Kessler collection
- ⇒ Board of Directors bios
- ⇒ HFI Scholarships
- ⇒ Find us on Facebook link



Israel Christian House

“HONOR HISTORY, ENJOY THE PRESENT AND SHAPE OUR FUTURE”

Botetourt County 250th Celebration/Birthday

In 2018 the Board of Supervisors named a committee to plan events for the upcoming celebration of Botetourt County's 250th year (a.k.a the Sestercentennial). The committee of Angela Coon, Lois Switzer, Wendy Wingo and Donna Vaughn was appointed. The goal of the committee was to represent every part of Botetourt County and have inclusive celebrations.

On the county website—botetourtva.gov—click on the link “Botetourt County 250th Anniversary 1770—2020”. This will take you to a list **Upcoming Events** throughout the county listed by month. There are many events in many different communities through the county throughout the year.

The committee has planned several large events for 2020. The first one was held on February 1 at Lord Bo-

tetourt High School. It was a **huge birthday party** on the anniversary of the first day the county did business 250 years ago.

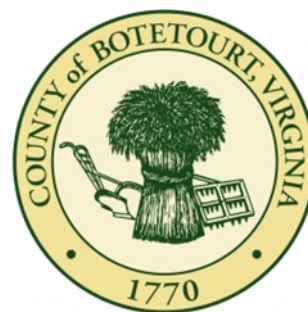
The next big event will be the **dedication of the 250th plaque on May 30 at the Court House**. There will be a guest speaker, musical entertainment and food trucks. The event is free and will run for 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

The third event is a **present day celebration on September 20**. It will be held at the Blue Ridge Vineyard from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Stone Canyon, a local well known band, will perform and there will be food trucks from local businesses. This event is also free.

The committee, otherwise known as the sester-sisters, with the leadership of Anita Firebaugh have created the

Official 250th Anniversary of Botetourt County magazine. This is available at local businesses at no cost.

This year will be a busy and exciting time for our county. Many people who are very knowledgeable about the rich history of Botetourt County have been willing to share their time and talents to make these events happen.



Step Back into History—May 16

Historic Fincastle, Inc.

May 16, 2020 - 10 am—3 pm

- ⇒ Self-guided Walking Tours of town
- ⇒ Historical Re-enactors
- ⇒ Street Musicians



In honor of the 250th Anniversary of the establishment of Botetourt County, HFI, along with Kiwanis of Botetourt, Botetourt Historical Society, and the DAR will sponsor a day of tours in historic Fincastle – the county seat of Botetourt County since the county was founded. These organizations will be coordinating with the Botetourt School System in order to develop Tour information and experiences for student visitors which will be in line with the SOL guidelines as well.

Plans include having all churches, and several historic buildings – including the Blacksmith Shop, the James Matten Early Cabin, the Botetourt Courthouse, and the Botetourt Historical Society Museum all open for visitors. A gentleman of Native American descent will be at the Big Spring Park to share about the origins of Fincastle, and Revolutionary War interpreters will have an encampment set up where visitors will be able to witness individuals engaged in traditional 18th century crafts and to talk with gentlemen dressed in traditional military uniforms from that period as well. Visitors will be able to learn about the origins of both Botetourt County and of Fincastle, the county seat, and about the important role each played in the establishment of the United States both before and after the Revolutionary War.

Groups wishing to tour will be able to do advance booking for guided tours, and individuals will be able to use Tour Maps to visit the historic places at their own pace. There will be no charge for the tours.

Historic Fincastle, Inc.

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PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5



If you are interested in volunteering with HFI, please contact HFI by calling 540-473-3077. Opportunities include serving on the Scholarship Committee, being a docent for the Holiday House Tour, helping in different capacities at the 52nd Fincastle Festival, etc.