



# BRISTOL HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

*Dedicated to the  
preservation of local history*

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

October 2012

Chartered April 1979

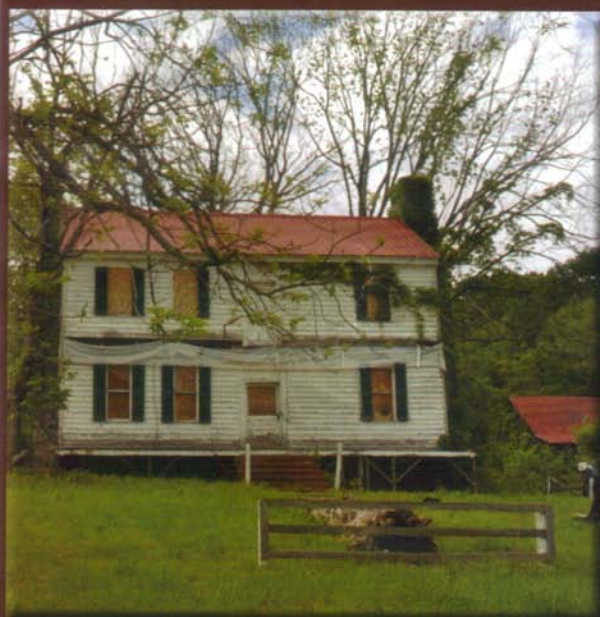
## Robert Preston House

The Robert Preston House At Walnut Grove brochure has been printed and is being sent in the coming weeks to prospective contributors. You may read more about this project by going to our website [www.BristolHistoricalAssociation.com](http://www.BristolHistoricalAssociation.com). About ten years ago, BHA began efforts to save and restore this historic and architecturally important house as a living history site for students and a destination for tourists and groups interested in the history of this area. Two years ago, following consultations with Alpha Natural Resources management, an agreement was reached with the owners of the Preston site to sell the land to BHA, a move which eliminated the possibility of having to relocate the house. A list of all the accomplishments achieved over the last ten years as well as a description of the house's historical significance can be found in this informative new brochure now available for download from our web site. The Tobacco Commission recently awarded \$75,000.00 for restoration of the house.

Memorials and gifts will soon be accepted at the BHA address P. O. Box 204, Bristol, Tennessee, 37621. After November 1, 2012, gifts to the Preston House Project may also be made through Paypal by visiting our website [www.bristolhistoricalassociation.com](http://www.bristolhistoricalassociation.com) and clicking on the donate tab. Any questions regarding the Preston House Project or alternate ways to donate may be sent to [bha@bristolhistoricalassociation.com](mailto:bha@bristolhistoricalassociation.com). With the help and support of the region's citizens and others interested in historic preservation, BHA hopes to preserve the Robert Preston home place and its history for future generations.

**Go to [www.BristolHistoricalAssociation.com](http://www.BristolHistoricalAssociation.com)  
to read the brochure**

## The Robert Preston House At Walnut Grove (c. 1790-1815)



*"...[T]he Preston House site  
is [one of] the most important  
historic period archaeological  
site[s] so far discovered in all  
Southwest Virginia."*

*~ Tom Klatka, State Regional Archaeologist  
for Southwest Virginia for over 22 years*



# Preston house one of oldest in region

**D**oubtless, the old Robert Preston house on what was the vast Walnut Grove plantation



**PIONEERS IN PARADISE**  
BUD PHILLIPS

near our famed Exit 7, is one of the oldest in this area.

It is likely a few years beyond its second century mark. This was once the manor house on what was one of the largest plantations ever to exist in the vicinity of Bristol. Much has been written about it so I will try not to be repetitious.

The basic plan of the main house is the common two over two arrangement with dividing hall on both floors. But there is a little difference here; the hall is not in the center; thus two rooms are smaller than the others.

A very old picture (pre-1900) shows that there was a narrow, two-story portico at the front of the house. About 1910, this was removed and a one-story porch was added that extended along the entire length of the house. Originally, there was no in-house kitchen.

During the period in which the original house was built, and for many years thereafter, it was common for such houses to have detached, or as they were commonly called, yard kitchens. This kept the main house cooler in summer, and also helped with any kitchen odors that might develop. Too, it was hoped that if the main house should burn, the kitchen might be left to use as a shelter until another house could be built. It is very likely that the log house that still stands in the back yard was the



PHOTO COURTESY BUD PHILLIPS

**The main house at Walnut Grove is thought to be the oldest frame house still standing in Washington County, Va.**

outside kitchen for Walnut Grove.

A careful inspection of this old log structure clearly shows that it was not built for a smoke house or other utility building. Instead, it appears to have been built as a dwelling house. This leads me and several other researchers to think that this may have been the original Preston home. This would mean that it is several years older than the large frame house near it. I further think that when the big frame house was built, the much smaller log house became the yard kitchen.

Over the years a myth developed that the big house was constructed of logs and was later covered over with lumber. It appears that confusion with the older house was the source of this myth.

About 1900, a full-length lean-to section was added to the back of the frame house. This housed a



PHOTO COURTESY BUD PHILLIPS

**This very old log structure is thought by many historians to have been the original Preston home at Walnut Grove. There is good evidence that it later served as the detached kitchen for the main house.**

kitchen and dining room. Later a bathroom was built in the dining room area of the addition.

The grove of giant walnut trees that once surrounded the home yard has long been gone, but remaining

here are two of the oldest structures in Washington County, Va. Certainly they are worthy of careful restoration and preservation.

**BUD PHILLIPS** is a local historian and author. He can be reached at (276) 466-6435.



# BHA's Earned Income Opportunities

BHA volunteers have been busy selling hats, pens, t-shirts, and other BHA merchandise at the Mumford and Sons Concert, Thursday Night August's Food City Family Race Night, Friday Night Border Bashes, and Rhythm and Roots Weekend. Over \$900 was received from these many hours of service, and we were able to tell a lot of people about BHA and our work of identifying, preserving, and promoting our regional heritage.

The other exciting and profitable endeavor was parking cars during Rhythm and Roots Weekend. Mary Beth Rainero, Isabelle Ladd, Barry and Amy Hopper, Jackie Piper, Brenda Otis, Clyde and



*Mary Beth Rainero, Jackie Piper, Barry Hopper, and Isabelle Ladd*

Susan Long, Gwen King, and many more parked cars from 8 AM to whenever the lots were full. Thanks to the offices of Massengill, Caldwell, Coughlin, Larry Weddington, and Kennedy and Malcolm for giving us the opportunity to raise \$1700.00 in profits. We hope next year to have more volunteers who want to meet and greet.



*Janet Smith, Ruth King, Wilma Gill, Nat Copenhaver, Nedra Hartley and Jane Copenhaver*

## Archives Committee Update

The Archives Committee has seen a marked increase in the number of requests for images from both individuals and groups this year. The Committee worked with the State Street branch of Wells Fargo Bank to create a large double-sided colorized mural of historic Bristol images which is on permanent display in the lobby of the bank. If you have not yet seen this beautiful mural, we encourage you to go into Wells Fargo the

next time you are downtown and admire it! Images were also purchased by the Bill Gatton Automotive

Dealership on State Street this summer for their newly renovated showroom. The Archives Committee is currently working with BCMA officials to provide images for museum exhibits which will be representative of the era of the Bristol Sessions.





# Tennessee Ernie Ford House

The Tennessee Ernie Ford House at 1223 Anderson Street, Bristol, Tennessee, received a Tennessee historical marker September 27, 2012. BHA members and guests attended the open house and reception following the ceremony. Brenda Otis,



**Brenda Otis and Rex Montgomery unveiling state historical marker.**

chairperson for the Ford House, welcomed Rex Montgomery who is Transportation Planning Manager for the City of Bristol, Tennessee. The preservation of Ford's birthplace was started in 1991 and after that time the house was used briefly



**BHA members and guests attend the open house after the ceremony.**

as headquarters for BHA. The restoration of the Ford House was completed in 2009 and is open by appointment by calling Mrs. Jim Otis (276-466-9116) or the Bristol Chamber of Commerce (423-989-4850). The most recent work at the Ford House has been a complete chimney repair and a new metal roof. BHA thanks Jim, Scott, and Brenda Otis for their dedication to preserving this historical house.

## Education

Barbara Smith reports that BHA Education for 4th Grades in Bristol, Tennessee, and Bristol, Virginia, is an on going and busy project. Every year programs have been presented to the area 4th graders whose schools request them. A new short power point presentation introduces Bristol to this age group and teaches them about the founding of Bristol and how it grew into the Twin-Cities we know today. The program is complete with stories, dress up clothes, hands-on activities, and authentic artifacts. Committee members are Barbara Smith, Dee Flanagan, Sara Lauderback. and Ruth Icenhour.



**Dee Flanagan and Barbara Smith**

## Bristol Historical Association Board of Directors, Class of 2014:

*Slate of the Class of 2014 will be voted on at the November 5th General Meeting*

Tim Buchanan  
Susan Long  
Bud Phillips

Dee Flannagan  
Brenda Otis  
Jan Rainero

# DONATIONS, MEMORIALS, AND SERVICES

October 2011 through August 2012

## DONATIONS:

Jeanne Hurt  
Drs. Austin & Eddythe Carr  
Mr. & Mrs. Warren Crockett  
Geneva Dillard  
Emerson & Kitty Williams  
Lucretia Gilmer  
Anna Morgan Trust  
Richard & Isabelle Ladd  
County of Washington, Virginia  
Sara Burleson  
Kenneth & Joyce Kistner (in memory of John & Doris Booth)  
Linda Roberts  
Don Moneyhun  
Bristol Evening Lions Club  
Dr. William. H. & Brenda S. Johnstone  
Nat & Jane Copenhaver (in memory of Marc Dillard)  
Thomas Rogers III & Beth Rogers (in honor of Steve Slack's birthday)  
Barbara Overstreet (in memory of Paul Hartung)  
Dr. John Fincher, Jr. & Brenda Fincher  
Clyde & Susan Long (in memory of Jerry Goodpasture)  
WalMart Foundation/Susan Long

## DONATIONS FOR ROBERT PRESTON HOUSE:

Archie Hubbard III  
Jan Rainero (in memory of Tom Cheatham, Steve Liskey, Mrs. Lillian Litton & Frazier & Jeanne King)  
Isabelle Ladd  
Mary Beth Rainero  
Jan Rainero (in memory of King Rogers Jr., Mrs. Bud Tallman & Mrs. W.W. Walling)  
James M. Gregory  
Alpha Natural Resources Services LLC  
RegionsBank  
Craig & Christine Caldwell

Charles & Roxann Coulthard  
Janet Smith  
Geneva Dillard (in memory of Mary Eades)  
Clyde & Susan Long  
Gene & Wilma Gill  
Leno & Jan Rainero (in memory of Bill Wampler)  
Isabelle Ladd (in memory of Marc Dillard)  
Roy & Carolyn Williams (in memory of Marc Dillard)  
Isabelle Ladd (in memory of Paul Hartung)  
Leno & Jan Rainero (in memory of Paul Hartung & Peggy Jones)  
Ruth King (in memory of Paul & Nancy Hartung)  
Dr. James & Brenda Otis  
Robert & Janet Smith  
Nat & Jane Copenhaver  
Philip & Nedra Hartley  
Charles Flannagan II & Diane Flannagan  
Tim Buchanan  
Fred Slaughter  
Barbara Smith  
Barry and Amy Hopper  
Rebekah McGrady  
Universal Printing

## DONATED SERVICES:

Wes Rosenbalm, Bristol VA Utilities Board  
Edith Allen, S.T. Rutherford Moving Co.

## GIFTS:

Bill Hammer  
Dr. James Otis  
Susan Long

## MATCHING GRANT:

Exxon/Mobil Foundation,  
Nedra Hartley

## GRANTS:

Massengill-DeFriece Foundation  
Belvedere Fund/ Pauline Massengill DeFriece  
WalMart Foundation  
TIC

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

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Article editors: Susan Long, Carolyn and Roy Williams  
Photographers: Barry and Amy Hopper  
Memorials, Donations and Services: Geneva Dillard

Layout and Design: Rebekah McGrady  
Web Master: Tony Fitton of Antanet  
Managing Editor: Amy Hopper

## Bristol Historical Association

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

### Notes From the President



The Association is doing more and more in presenting Bristol history to the public and encouraging preservation of the many historic buildings in the two cities and outlying areas. We are working with the BCMA to furnish materials for the impressive display spaces they have planned for their new facility. Ideas are forming for the publication of a new book of Bristol historical pictures. Education is putting together a new program to be presented to the schools. The newest grant for the Preston house gives that project hope for an early completion. Recognition of the Ford House by the State of Tennessee Historical Commission is impressive. Our financial outlook is good with some newly tried and very successful ways to increase our income. The next two programs for our public meetings are certain to be popular. Join us in keeping these and our other endeavors ongoing and vital to the community.

*Isabelle*

### Bristol Historical Association Important Meetings 2012

#### November 5th

##### **General Membership Meeting at 6:30 PM**

Jim Glanville "THE GREAT SOUTHWEST ROAD TO VIRGINIA"

**At the Bristol Public Library**



#### December 2nd **Christmas Luncheon at 12:30 PM**

Randell Jones "TRAILING DANIEL BOONE"

**At the Virginian Golf Club**



*General Membership Meetings are open to the public.*

**See your BHA Newsletter in full color & save the BHA postage! Send your email address to [bha@bristolhistoricalassociation.com](mailto:bha@bristolhistoricalassociation.com) & please visit our website [www.bristolhistoricalassociation.com](http://www.bristolhistoricalassociation.com)**

# ***Bristol Historical Association***

*C/O Roxann Coulthard, 140 Peachtree Cr, Bristol VA 24201*

[www.bristolhistoricalassociation.com](http://www.bristolhistoricalassociation.com)

## **2013 MEMBERSHIP FORM**

Bristol Historical Association is dedicated to the identification, preservation, interpretation, and presentation 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!**

### **2013 Levels of Membership:**

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 I/F	\$500-999	18% discount on BHA merchandise
Lifetime Member Ind	\$1000	20% discount on BHA merchandise
Lifetime Member Family	\$1500	20% discount on BHA merchandise

(Lifetime memberships may be paid in monthly installments, payable in full by 12/31/2013)

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

Cut along this line & mail your check & the form below to BHA c/o Roxann Coulthard, 140 Peachtree Cr, Bristol VA 24201

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

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

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

(Please Print)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

TO RECEIVE OUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER, ARTICLES, AND PICTURES OF PRESERVATION OF BRISTOL,  
PLEASE GIVE US YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS. EMAIL ADDRESSES ARE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL IN THE BHA  
DATABASE ONLY.

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

Please circle up to three committee/project areas of interest: ***BHA Merchandising for local events, Archives, Education, Historical Markers, Membership, Newsletter/Website, Programs, Tennessee Ernie Ford House, Robert Preston House.***

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



## ***BRISTOL HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION GENERAL MEMBERSHIP NOTICE MEMBERSHIP DRIVE***

Thank you for your continued support of The Bristol Historical Association. Exciting activities are continuing into 2013. The new membership form will be in the mail at the end of October. It will be on the website ([www.bristolhistoricalassociation.com](http://www.bristolhistoricalassociation.com)) as well. Please complete & return it as soon as possible.

It would be greatly appreciated if you would provide the names & addresses of prospective members along with the form. The Membership Committee is seeking to add new members in 2013. We especially need the younger generations (children of members & native Bristolians) to continue the preservation of local history in the future.

Thank you for your membership and your assistance.

*Roxann Coulthard*  
Membership Committee