



Bristol Historical Association, Inc.

Newsletter

P.O. Box 204 Bristol, Tennessee 37621-0204

August 2010

Chartered April 1979

Bristol Historical Association Receives Archival Grant

The Bristol Historical Association was recently awarded a State and National Archival Partnership (SNAP) grant in the amount of \$4200 for the support of the Association's archival and historical records work. On behalf of the Tennessee Historical Records Advisory Board, Assistant State Archivist Wayne Moore presented the award to BHA President Isabelle Ladd on June 29th. Funding for this grant comes from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) and is administered through the Tennessee Historical Records Advisory Board. The purpose of this grant is to increase funding for the preservation of and access to Tennessee's historical records, educate and train archivists, and support archival program development and enhancement.

According to Bristol Historical Association Directors of Archives, Carolyn and Roy Williams, the funds from the SNAP grant are dedicated solely for the procurement of archival supplies such as acid free folders, sleeves, and boxes; shelving; equipment; and furnishings that help to salvage, stabilize, and preserve Bristol Historical Association's photographs, negatives, and records.

A sampling from the Association's extensive collection of historical Bristol photographs will soon be available for purchase through its web site, www.bristolhistoricalassociation.com, or by contacting Merchandising Assistant Pat Buckles at 423-844-0627. Some of the Association's photos can be viewed as part of the decor at many local

restaurants including Fatz, Applebee's, O'Charley's, Ryan's and Pizza Hut.

If anyone would like to donate or share old photographs and/or negatives of historical interest, the Bristol Historical Association would be happy to add them to the local Archives. Interested parties should call 423-844-0627 and leave a message.

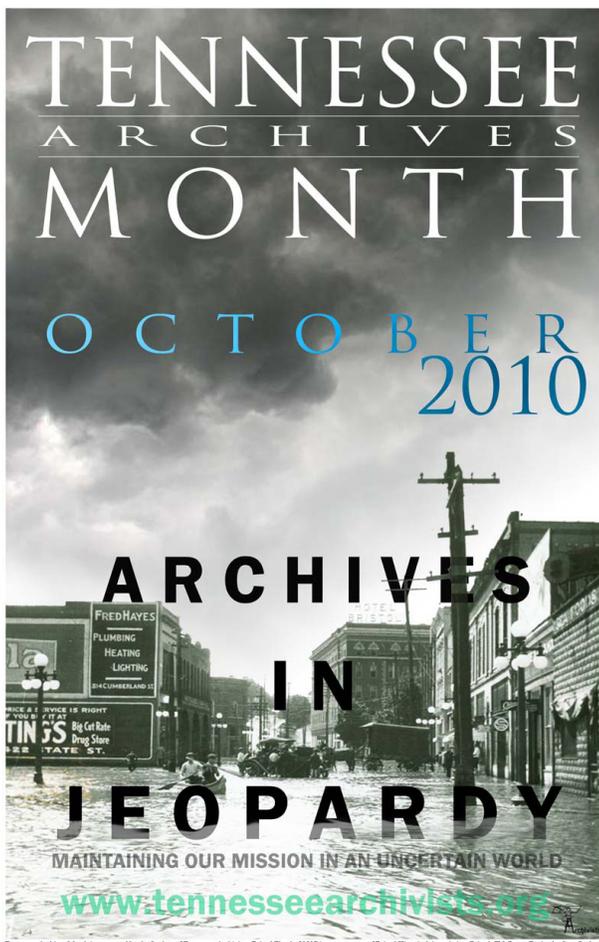


Carolyn Williams shows one of three hundred plus negatives from the 1930s and 1940s to Roy Williams and Isabelle Ladd, President of the Bristol Historical Association. The grant money will enable the association to provide archival quality storage for these and other negatives and photographs

Panoramic View of Bristol in 1910

Making panoramic views of cities has been popular for many years. The Haines Photo Co. of Conneaut, Ohio, sent photographers across the U.S. to document what our nation looked like in the early 1900s. The company photographed not only Bristol, but also Abingdon, Johnson City, Roanoke, Knoxville and many others. Roy and Carolyn Williams are displaying an exact size copy of an original print, c. 1910, which Bristol Historical Association recently acquired. Carolyn points to the St. Lawrence Hotel, later the site of the General Shelby, and Roy indicates a building on State Street. Close inspection reveals many landmarks such as Old Sullins College (burned in 1915) on Solar Hill, State Street Methodist Church, Bristol Virginia City Hall (built 1908-09), Union Depot, the YMCA, Hotel Bristol, and countless others. The original was in need of

restoration which has been expertly done. A limited number of copies, size 10 inches by 52 inches, will soon be available for purchase at \$125 each. For inquiries about buying historic pictures of Bristol and ordering web site items call Pat Buckles at the Bristol Historical Association 423-844-0627.



BHA's Photograph Featured on Poster for Tennessee Archives Month

October is Tennessee Archives Month and every year the Society of Tennessee Archivists designs a poster to be sent to all the state archives in the nation, all archives in Tennessee, as well as schools, universities, and anywhere else that may be interested. Our photo of the 1917 Bristol flood was used to illustrate this year's theme of "Archives in Jeopardy."

Tennessee Archives Month strives to create awareness for Tennessee's archival treasures and coincides with American Archives Month, the purpose of which is to raise awareness about the value of archives and archivists.

For further information see the Society of Tennessee Archivists website at:

2 www.tennesseearchivists.org

DONATIONS, MEMORIALS AND SERVICES

September 1, 2009 to August 1, 2010

DONATIONS:

Ron and Anna Morgan
Janet and Robert Howard, Delray Beach, FL
Geneva Dillard
Mr. and Mrs. Don Moneyhun
Linda Roberts
John and Brenda Fincher
Pat Buckles
Barbara Kitty and Emerson C. Williams
Mary Landrum
Thad O. and Judith R. Bowers
Virginia Rutherford
Julia Callahan
Clarence Wilkerson, Jr.
Thomas K. and Beth E. Rogers

MEMORIALS TO LOUIS KING:

Roy and Carolyn Williams
Clyde W. and Susan O. Long
Regions Bank, Birmingham, AL
Lundin & Rackley du Treil, Inc., Saratoga, FL
T. L. and J. A. Cantrell, Dandridge, TN
John and Laura Ann Warner
Don and Nell Beiger
LBA Technology, Inc., Greenville, NC
Ruth M. King
Fady E. Tohme, M.D., Dandridge, TN
Burl and Clara Hunt University, MS
John S. Gaines
Telos Systems, Cleveland, OH
Claire Barrus, Cary, NC
Martha's Village, Friends of Marla King Black,
Dandridge, TN
Hatfield and Dawson Consulting Engineers, LLC,
Seattle, WA

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

DONATED SERVICES:

Cawood Electric
Rev. Ronda Cole, Chaplain Virginia Intermont and
Virginia Intermont Students
Katherine Van de Brake
Joe Robinette, The Robinette Co.
Richard Ladd, Jr.
Universal Printing
Kevin Crutchfield, Alpha Natural Resources

GIFTS:

Betty Fisher Estep
Connie and Frederick Thompson
Thad Bowers III
Geneva Dillard
Polly Powell, Home Depot
Susan Long
Sherry Winebarger-Reeter
Stephen Huff
James M. Lovett

MEMORIAL TO BOB CALLAHAN:

Winona Tipton

MATCHING GRANT:

Exxon Mobil Foundation/Nedra Hartley

MEMORIALS TO JEANNE KING:

Jane G. Shore
Ruth M. King

MEMORIAL TO NANCY HARTING:

Amelia O. Jarrard

The Susong Building

by Bud Phillips

The Susong Building occupies the historic N.W. corner of State and Lee streets in downtown Bristol, Va. In 1853 Joseph R. Anderson contracted to sell this lot to John H. Moore of Russell County, Va. The deed for it was issued on July 11, 1854. Upon this lot Mr. Moore erected a frame store building and behind it he built a small frame cottage for his family home.

The first crime in Bristol happened on this lot in early 1855 and it was an unusual form of burglary. A local unemployed man bored a hole through the store's floor and into a barrel of molasses.

Mr. Moore did not remain in Bristol very long. He sold his lot to E.H. Seneker, who was a native of the area and a descendant of the pioneer Susong family. He demolished Moore's old store building and built a much

larger structure on the site. For years this area was known as Seneker's Corner. It was from this corner that the famous swinging bridge was erected to span old Main Street (now State

Street). This was so people could cross the street without sinking into mud puddles. The second story of Seneker's building was briefly used to hold civilian prisoners of war during the Yankee raid of 1864.

Around 1875 Mr. Seneker built a larger store building. It was of brick construction and was used as a large mercantile establishment for several years.

On November 15, 1898 J.O. Susong, a cousin of Mr. Seneker, finished the construction of the present building on that lot. It was built of cut stone and pressed brick and was considered to be the finest building in downtown Bristol until the First National Bank was erected in 1903.

Through the years this building has had various owners and several businesses have been located

there. For a long time it was home to the Smith-Blakely Co., the forerunner of the present Blakely-Mitchell Co.



(continued next page)

(continued from page 4)

When I came to Bristol in 1953, Thrift Supply Company occupied this building. For years now this building has housed the popular Java-J's.

A long time owner of this building was the late Joseph D. Mitchell, father of Margaret Mitchell, who was a faithful member of our association. It is now the property of Mr. and Mrs. Randall Perkins.



*The Susong Building - 2010
Java J's coffee shop and cafe occupies the
ground floor of the building.*

Photo by Amy Hopper

A Tribute to Tennessee Ernie Ford by Brenda Otis

This year Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion celebrates the life of Tennessee Ernie Ford with a tribute to his music. This is the first time Ernie's music has been spotlighted at the festival. Make plans to attend the performance of local bluegrass band Duty Free's rendition of

Tennessee Ernie Ford's Music on September 19 at 1:00 at the Paramount Center of the Arts. The Bristol Historical Association will conduct the ceremony.



The Ford House will be open for tours on Sunday afternoon between 2-4 pm. The Ford House is located at 1223 Anderson Street, Bristol, TN. For more information contact Brenda Otis, Chairperson of the Tennessee Ernie Ford House, at 276-466-9116 or email The Bristol Historical Association at bha@bristolhistoricalassociation.com.



Centennial Celebration of Bristol's Historic Sign

On April 30th, Bristol celebrated the 100th anniversary of the twin cities' landmark slogan sign. The Bristol Sign has been recognized nationally as a rare and early example of electric signage straddling the state line in two cities. It is one of only thirty signs nationwide listed with the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The Bristol Sign Celebration featured a variety of events throughout the day including lectures by Tod Swormstedt, the director of the American Sign Museum, and "Snuffy Smith" cartoonist John Rose, a photo contest and exhibit, sales of Bristol related merchandise at the Bristol Train Station including commemorative posters signed by artist Sheryl Theriault, and a gala reception followed by music, entertainment and remarks by guest speakers including the Mayberry Sheriff David Browning and the mayors of both Bristols. The celebration culminated in a rededication and grand lighting of the Sign at dusk accompanied by an impressive fireworks display. The festivities concluded with an exceptional musical variety show at the Paramount Theatre.

According to Tim Buchanan, chairman of the centennial committee, the events were designed to be "a fitting tribute to the most notable and unique landmark in the Twin-Cities". Many thanks to everyone who worked with such great diligence to achieve this goal with outstanding success!



Tracking Bristol's History

Expanded by Andrew McGrady from Joe Tennis's Article in *The Bristol Herald Courier*

Almost every kid wanted to be Daniel Boone. Or even the "Marrying Parson" of Bristol.

Retired schoolteacher Joyce Kistner handed out history lessons recently at St. Anne's Catholic School, exploring the stories of Bristol's State Street, Bristol Motor Speedway, Cumberland Square Park and how Bristol, Va., was once called "Goodson." And when it came to role playing? Well, that's when Kistner really won with a flurry of raised hands. "Me! Me! Me!" the kids collectively shouted, all wanting to stand in the stage of their fellow pupils.

Retired since 1991, Kistner taught fourth graders for years at Stonewall Jackson Elementary School in Bristol, Va., and later served on the city's school board in the mid-1990s.

Now Kistner volunteers her time to speak to schools, along with Barbara Smith, a fellow member of the Bristol Historical Association. "I just saw a need for it," Kistner said. "The state tells you to teach local history. But to have a clear-cut guide, we really didn't have one."

Kistner and Smith are visiting the schools of both Bristols with their history lessons. The two have created a CD that includes paintings and questions that better helps to visualize the program. The titles of the paintings include: The

Arrival of the Train, 1856, A Bristol-Goodson Train Wreck, The Conestoga Wagon, Parson

Burroughs, State Street Masquerade Party, 1940's. A major question asked on the CD is "Why Did Bristol Need A Train?" As a part of the program Kistner and Smith are collecting stories and poems written by the children they've visited. They

plan to exhibit these works in the future.

"I love knowing what preceded us, what came before us," said Smith, a retired Sullins Academy teacher. "And I think it's important for

these kids to know - to get them excited about history right now."



E.W. King House News

Original Roof Finial Returns to E.W. King House

Professor Stephen Huff of High Point University in North Carolina recently placed on indefinite loan one of the two original roof finials which once graced the highest points of the historic E.W. King House. The finial is approximately three feet tall and is mounted on a custom made pedestal using the profile of the finial as a decorative motif.



To see photos showing Dr. Huff delivering the finial and the finial in its original location centered on the roof of the house, visit the "NEWS" section of BHA's website: www.bristolhistoricalassociation.com

Historical Masons Work On E.W. King House

The E.W. King House's magnificent chimneys are a striking and familiar landmark that have towered over downtown Bristol for 108 years. Masonry specialists from Midwest Maintenance Inc, headquartered in Piqua, Ohio, have completed repairs of the damage to the elaborate brickwork of the chimneys. It is believed that the damage was caused by lightning during last year's storm season; bricks were shattered, and the structural integrity of

at least one chimney was badly compromised. Midwest Maintenance was highly recommended by architect Ellen Harris of Brevard, NC, who is preparing the preservation plan for the house. Midwest has performed historical restoration masonry work on many historic properties across the country, most recently the Hermitage in Nashville, TN.

The Bristol Historical Association plans to restore the E.W. King House as a house museum as well as a repository for artifacts and revolving exhibits relating to important area events and an academic resource for school systems to use in making local history a fundamental and exciting aspect of students' curriculum. Additionally, several rooms of the 3 story structure will be dedicated for hosting parties, meetings, and a variety of community events. The E.W. King House is located at the corner of Anderson and 7th Streets in Bristol, TN. For more information on this and other Historical Association projects, visit www.bristolhistoricalassociation.com



BHA'S April Meeting Featured Judge Charles Flannagan

Charles Flannagan, retired judge from the Bristol Virginia Circuit Court, presented a fascinating, educational, and highly entertaining lecture for the BHA membership and general public on April 19th, entitled "Tales of Justice and Judges from Early Bristol". Judge Flannagan's presentation detailed the Bristol Virginia court system from its



inception in the 19th century and included discussion on the famous state line issues, Bristol's only death penalty case, a courtroom shooting, the court's relation to at least one US President, as well as many other fascinating human interest stories.

David Luther, Dick Gordon, Charles(Butch) Flannagan

Want to see your BHA Newsletter in beautiful color? Send your email address to bha@bristolhistoricalassociation.com and ask to have the newsletter delivered to your email inbox! Or view the archived newsletters online at www.bristolhistoricalassociation.com Become a member of the Bristol Historical Association - download an application from the website!



Letter From the President

If you are reading this newsletter or visiting our web site, you are interested in the activities of the BHA. For that interest we are grateful. Without friends and members we could not continue to do the work with which our organization is charged: to preserve and share the history of the two Bristols. No other local group does this, and it is only when an object of our history - whether it be a building or an important document or photograph - is threatened, that most of us sit up and pay attention. Because of your support, the BHA can be proactive in protecting our history even as it is happening.

Isabelle Ladd, President

Bristol Historical Association

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

New Bristol Historical Association T-Shirts



\$20 each. Get yours by contacting Pat Buckles at the BHA telephone number 423-844-0627 or online at www.bristolhistoricalassociation.com

Bristol Historical Association Important Meetings 2010

September 13th Board Meeting Only at 5:00 PM

At the Bristol Public Library

October 4th Board Meeting at 5:00 PM

General Membership Meeting at 6:30 PM

Bristol and the founding of the Boy Scouts of America by Bart Koontz. The slightly forgotten Story of Ben L. Dulaney, one of the original founders of the BSA

At the Bristol Public Library

November 8th Board Meeting at 5:00 PM

General Membership Meeting at 6:30 PM

Bristol Through the Eyes of a Child by Jerry Necessary Ivey. Bristol of the 40's and 50's as remembered by a Bristol storyteller

At the Bristol Public Library

December 5th Christmas General Membership Meeting

At The Centre at 12:30 PM

Program to be announced in the November invitation

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 & please visit our website www.bristolhistoricalassociation.com