

# BLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Quarterly Newsletter

December, 2014

### DECEMBER 2014 QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

### CANCELLED

The purpose of the December quarterly membership meeting is to elect officers and members of the Board of Directors for the coming year. Since we have delayed the elections until March, 2015, we will not be holding the meeting as scheduled. Please read the President's Message for details.



### *President's Message*

Alas, we have come to the end of another year. At year's end my term as President of BCHS is expiring. It is now time for someone else to take the reins and move the organization forward. That person has not yet been revealed to us so we are delaying action on selecting the next President until our March, 2015 Membership Meeting. If any of you are willing or know someone who is willing to become the next president, please call the Society Office at 276-688-0088 and let us know.

We also continue to look for anyone interested in serving on our Board of Directors. As many have found out, it is not enough to just attend the board meetings. It is necessary to be a working member of the Board. We have no paid employees and must rely on volunteers to perform the many jobs of the organization. As with most volunteer organizations, it is hard to find members willing to help out. Please consider donating your time.

I would like to personally thank our most faithful volunteers. **Barbara Kemp and Jenny Gills** have spent every Friday afternoon working on our obituary collection. See our website for the link to the collection or come by the office to browse the collection. **Barbara Laban** has also worked on the obituary collection also almost every week until her recent illness. She also is responsible for the beautiful flowers that adorn our building. **Sue Ellen Tate** has helped so much as my backup when I have been away from Bland. And all of the above have worked to keep the office open 2 days a week until recently. Thanks to all of you. You are great volunteers.

We know that you have noticed that we used to be open 2 days a week. This fall we cut back our hours to one day a week. One option we are discussing going forward is being **open by appointment only**. While we would hate to do this, it may be necessary unless more volunteers step up.

Elmer and I will continue to work on the BCHS Database. I will continue to answer research questions and do some writing about Bland County History. These are my passions that I have had little time for during the past two years. Administrative tasks have taken up most of my time.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to be the president during the past two years.

### *Announcements*

**Nov 21, 28 - Dec 5, 12, 19**

**Christmas Shopping at BCHS. We will be open the next 5 Fridays between now and December 19, including Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving from 9 AM to 4 PM.**

**Dec 13, 2014** Bland Christmas Parade 6 pm  
**Dec 19 2014** LAST SHOPPING DAY  
AT BCHS OFFICE.  
Office will close for winter (January -March, 2015).  
We will continue to answer questions via email [info@blandcountyhist.soc](mailto:info@blandcountyhist.soc) or by phone 276-688-0088.

**Mar 28, 2015** Family History Institute, WCGHA

**Mar 2015** March Quarterly Membership Meeting – Exact date TBD

**Apr 2015** BCHS Office re-opens for 2014.  
Exact date TBD.

**Contest for 2016 Calendar:** Next year's theme for the 2016 Calendar will be **Bland County Landmarks**, suggested by one of our members. Please submit photographs of seasonal scenes featuring a favorite Bland landmark (e.g., tunnels, High Rock, Dismal Falls). We request that you take pictures of landmarks that are recognizable as being located in Bland County. Photo submission (July 1-31-2015). Photo voting (August 1-31).

*An n Hardy Beardshall*

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### Happenings at BCHS in 2014

This has been another busy, productive year at the BCHS, with over **300 visitors** at the BCHS Office and over **50 requests** for family research.

The jail is looking a little better every year. Last year's clearing out all the accumulations in the jail cells from the 1954 addition was followed this year by a ServiceMaster professional cleaning. Other improvements included some painting inside and out, and some new flooring added to one room. The outside of the building was greatly enhanced by the flowers in the boxes and around the flagpole. Thanks to our "green thumb" members, **Barbara Laban, Sue Ellen Tate, Molly Thompson and Pat Turner. Harold Ramsey** has repaired holes and wrapped pipes to winterize this old building.

A big accomplishment this year has been organizing our **Obituary Collection**. Deserving special credit for seeing this completed are: **Barbara Laban, Virginia Gills and Barbara Kemp**, for putting in many hours collecting, pasting, and organizing these obituaries; **Ann Beardshall** for computer assistance and cross checking; and **Goldie Kiser** for entering many obits into our database. Now, thanks to **Elmer Beardshall**, that great information source is available in our office or online (index only). Elmer Beardshall has also developed a BCHS Database designed to help us to locate information in the office about our collection of Bland County genealogy and history.

We again participated in the April WCGHA Family History Institute at WCC as a vendor. Those in attendance greatly enjoyed the program and would suggest members interested in learning more about genealogy mark their calendars to attend next spring. We also took part in Ceres Day, spoke to many folks there about our shared interest in Bland County history, and sold some of our books. We had a booth at the October Festival of Leaves, where despite heavy rains we had many visitors on Saturday.

We appreciate the support from Bland County photographers for our 2015 Calendar contest with over 65 entries of Homes of Bland County. Over 75 people came to our Historical Society Office to vote for their favorites.

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to the success of the Bland County Historical Society in 2014 through donations of artifacts, money or most importantly your time.

### Christmas Shopping at BCHS

#### 5 Shopping Fridays left until the Bland County Historical Society Closes for the Winter

The Bland County Historical Society is open on Fridays from 9-4. We have lots of interesting Christmas gifts for you and your Bland County relatives, near and far.

#### **New items this year are:**

- Beautiful **2015 BCHS Calendar** featuring the **Home Sweet Homes of Bland County**
- Christmas ornaments, featuring the **Big Walker Lookout Tower** and the **Big Walker Mountain Tunnel** on I-77. We still have available ornaments from previous years of the **Bland County Courthouse**, the **old Bland County Jail**, the **historic Wolf Creek Bridge** in Rocky Gap, and a replica of **Sharon College**.
- Sharon Puckett Prints of scenes of **Mechanicsburg** (new this year); **Bland, Ceres, Rocky Gap** and **Bastian**.

#### **Other gifts available are:**

- The **BCHS Afghan** featuring a map of Bland County
- Bland County Cups and Hats
- **Images of Bland County**, A Pictorial History
- **Family Histories of Bland County** (2013) and **The History of Bland County** (1961)
- Our Historical Glimpses of Bland County: **The Lynching of Ivy Jackson, 3 Hots and A Cot, and Sharon College**
- Numerous resource books for genealogists.

## Top 10 FREE Genealogy Websites

Family Search [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)  
Find a Grave [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)  
World GenWeb Project [www.worldgenweb.org](http://www.worldgenweb.org)  
US GenWeb Project [www.usgenweb.com](http://www.usgenweb.com)  
National Archives [www.nationalarchives.gov](http://www.nationalarchives.gov)  
Genealogy Today [www.genealogytoday.com](http://www.genealogytoday.com)  
Google [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)  
Access Genealogy [www.accessgenealogy.com](http://www.accessgenealogy.com)  
Family Tree Searcher [www.familytreesearcher.com](http://www.familytreesearcher.com)  
GeneaBios [www.geneabios.com](http://www.geneabios.com)

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**OLD NEWS (50 years ago) *The Bland Messenger*, dated December 17,  
1964**

***Edited by Sue Ellen Tate***

**LOCAL PEOPLE, EVENTS & PLACES**

- Miss Betty Compton, student at Radford College has gone to Washington, D.C. to work for Trailways Bus Co. during the Christmas Holidays”
- Mr. and Mrs. R.P. Kegley and daughter spent the weekend with her mother, Mrs. Horace Davis, Rogersville, Tenn.
- R.I. (Buddy) Waddle and Miss Lorryne Strop, Washington, D.C., spent the weekend with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Everett Waddle.
- Staff Sergeant William F. Walker, son of Mrs. Steve Lambert, Route 1, Bland has been selected as a member of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Infantry’s Battalion rifle team.....at Fort Hood, Texas..... The battalion rifle team was selected in a “shoot-off”.”

**HEADLINES**

- “Rockets shoot High – Slaughter Indians” “The Bland Basketeers defeated the Indians of Rural Retreat High 82 to 58.”
- “Tips on Christmas Tree Care – Safety for your home” excerpts: “The Christmas Tree should be placed in the coolest part of the room. It should be kept away from radiators, heaters and fireplaces.” “Before hanging Christmas lights check the wires and sockets. If they have frayed wires, they should be discarded and new ones purchased. The tree lights should be controlled by a switch some distance from the tree. You should not attach the lights to a socket behind the tree unless a remote switch is used.”
- “Final Appeal for New and Used Toys for Underprivileged Children” “Fred Tate, in making the announcement said that people having such toys could contact any member of the Kiwanis....”
- “The Rocketeers Swirl Over Squaws Like Tidal Wave” “The Girls Basketball Team of Bland High...defeated the Squaws by a 51 to 18 score.”

**ADS**

- “Annual New Year’s Eve DANCE. Bland American Legion Building. Thursday, December 31. 8:00 till 12:30. Music by Bland County Ramblers. Admission – 75 cents per person. Sponsored by Bland Young Farmers Club.”
- “Dance Come One, Come All – to Ceres Gym – Sat., Dec 19 8:00pm. Music by Shady Valley Boys. Admission 75 cents Per Person Sponsored by the Ceres Ruritan Club”
- Pre-Christmas Shooting Match Wednesday, Dec 23 Starting at 10:00 A. M. Mechanicsburg School Grounds. Turkeys, Hams, Fruit, Cakes, etc. Everyone please help make this a SUCCESS. Sponsored by the Mechanicsburg Ruritan Club.

**The Bland County Historical Society is located in the "old jail building" across from the Bland County Courthouse. Phone: 276-688-0088. Please note: The BCHS Office will be closed during the months of January – March, 2015. The Office will close on December 19, 2014 and re-open in April 2015 on the date to be determined. We will continue to answer questions submitted by email or by phone.**

The purpose of the Bland County Historical Society is to bring together those people interested in history, and especially the history of Bland County. Understanding the history of our community is basic to our democratic way of life, gives us a better understanding of our state and nation, and promotes a better appreciation of our American heritage. The Society's major function is to discover and collect any material which may help to establish or illustrate the history of the area. It provides for the preservation of such material and for its accessibility, as far as may be feasible, to all who wish to examine or study it. Through the Society's office, the Bogle Library and this website, assistance with historical and genealogical questions is offered. Bland County Historical Society is a 501c 3 Non-Profit organization.

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year**



**from the Bland County Historical Society**



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