

BLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Quarterly Newsletter

Spring 2015

MARCH QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**PROGRAM: HISTORY
COMES ALIVE**

**SPEAKER: PAT HATFIELD,
LIBRARY DIRECTOR
SMYTH BLAND REGIONAL
LIBRARY**

**MARCH 14, 2015
1:30 PM**

Our March Membership Meeting at the Bland County Library will be held on Saturday, March 14th beginning at 1:30pm. **Pat Hatfield, Library Director of the Smyth Bland Regional Library will be presenting information on a new online resource "History Comes Alive"** which will give us access to much more historical information.

This resource is the Smyth-Bland Digital Collection of local materials consisting of church records, family histories, newspapers, photographs and many other items of interest to our members. It can be accessed through the library's website: **www.sbri.org**

We will also be **voting on the slate of officers** at this meeting, and as always there will be refreshments following the meeting along with a chance to visit. If you have ideas for future programs please share those suggestions.

Please join us on March 14!



Society Office Update

The days are getting longer now, reminding us that long winter nights will soon be gone and spring will come again. So, too, for the Bland County Historical Society, it is time to start planning for the coming year. **We plan to reopen the office on Friday, April 3, 2015 at 9AM.**

Ann Beardshall completed her 2 year term as President in December. She and Elmer have our deep appreciation for the dedication and expertise they brought to us over the last few years. Because of their knowledge and effort, some major advances were made, particularly in developing online access to many of our records including our obituary project, and online sales of books and gifts. Ann promises to remain active with the board and I know we will continue to rely on her knowledge. Elmer will continue to serve as our webmaster and database manager.

As you will recall from Ann's last President's Message we postponed our vote for a new slate of officers until our upcoming March Membership Meeting in hopes that a new President might be found. Unfortunately, I must report that no one has come forward to take on this responsibility yet. However, the Board of Directors will continue to operate the Historical Society and I, as Vice President, will be Acting President until a new President is found. Please let us know if you would like to serve either as a volunteer or on the Board. The lifeblood of any organization is its members and we need your involvement.

Your membership renewal and donation request is enclosed with this newsletter.

Sue Ellen Tate, Vice President

**Bland County Historical Society
Quarterly Newsletter
Activities for 2015**

**Family History Institute of Southwest
Virginia**

March 28, 2015

8AM – 4:45 PM, Banquet 6:30 PM

The Family History Institute sponsored by the Wythe County Genealogical and History Association will be held on Saturday, March 28th at the Wytheville Meeting Center. We have been attending these Institutes for several years and have been impressed with the speakers and topics they offer. We would encourage anyone interested in genealogy whether just beginning or an “old pro” to check out this program online at www@wythecogha.org or by calling 276-228-2445. A registration fee is required.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

We plan to reopen the Bland County Historical Society at least on a one day a week basis beginning April 3, 2015. We need volunteers to work in the office and gift shop during the hours that we are open. We hope to be working on several projects including cataloguing and organizing more of our collections and would welcome any volunteers with those projects. It is not necessary to have any particular knowledge or experience and even a few hours per month would help us. Also, if you have a project that you would like to suggest and work on, let us know. There are plenty of interesting topics to explore! **If you would like to help out with the Special Projects and/or work in the BCHS Office. please call us at BCHS- 276-688-0088 and leave a message.**

PHOTO CONTEST FOR 2016 BCHS CALENDAR
(THEME: LANDMARKS OF BLAND COUNTY)

We are currently accepting photographs for our 2016 BCHS Calendar with the theme, Landmarks of Bland County. The rules for photographs and submission are:

- Photographs should be of landmarks in Bland County. They must be recognizable as located in Bland County. For example, do not stand atop Big Walker Lookout and take the view of Wythe County!
- Since this is a historical calendar, please try to write a short description of the landmark and why it is so considered by Bland residents. We will try to include more historical background in our 2016 calendar.
- The photographs must have been taken during the past five years (2011-2015).
- This year we will only be accepting digital images. No prints, please.
- We request that you submit pictures as they were taken. No “photo-shopping,” no filters or other enhancements.
- We will begin accepting pictures on or after March 1, 2015. No pictures accepted after July 15, 2015.
- Voting will take place from July 16 – August 15, 2015.
- The calendar will be available for sale at the 2015 Festival of Leaves.

UPCOMING Event April – June 2015

Spring Membership Meeting – March 14, 2015
Family History Institute - March 28, 2015
Ceres Day – May 2, 2015
Wolf Creek Indian Village Family Day – June 6
Wytheville Chautauqua Festival – June 20-27

BCHS Website and Facebook Page

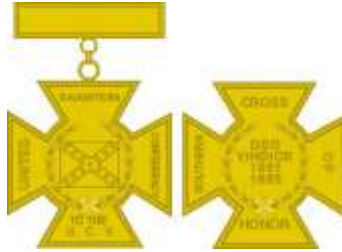
For the latest information between newsletters, please refer to the following:

Website: www.blandcountyhistsoc.org

Facebook: Bland County Historical Society.

Southern Cross of Honor

Does your family have one of these medals?



On Nov 23, 2013, one of our members, Sara Reuning, from Bristol (great granddaughter of Estil Mustard and Stella Groseclose) came to BCHS to do some research on another of her ancestors with Bland County roots. She brought with her a stack of papers that were most intriguing. There were 31 applications for a Southern Cross of Honor to the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) for veterans from Bland County. We don't know if these applications were ever submitted and/or if the veteran received his medal. We hope you will examine the list of applicants below and let us know one of these medals is in the possession of your family.

Name of CSA Veteran	Residence (Bland County, VA)	Dates of Service
Allen, M. B.	Spring Brook, Bland County	05/20/1861 – 04/09/1865
Bogle, Clay	Point Pleasant	05/10/1861-04/10/1865
Burton, Pendleton	Crandon	09/1861 – 04/10/1865
Cox, G. C.	Ceres	05/1861 – 03/1865
Crabtree, J. H.	Ceres	05/1864 – 04/10/1865
Duncan, A. T.	Bland	09/1863-04/09/1865
Finley, J. W.	Crandon	08/08/1861-04/09/1865
Finley, L. N.	Bland	05/1864-04/10/1865
Groseclose, A. D.	Ceres	01/10/1864 – 06/19/1865
Harman, John W.	Point Pleasant	07/11/1861-04/10/1865
Hayton, Thos.	Ceres	05/06/1862 – 04/09/1865
Helvey, F. G.	Draper	05/1861 – 04/09/1865
Kitts, H. G.	Bland	05/1861 – 04/09/1865
McNiel, D. O.	Mechanicsburg	1861 – 04/09/1865
Melvin, Stanford	Mechanicsburg	05/1861 – 04/10/1865
Miller, A. F.	Mechanicsburg	05/01/1861 – 05/01/1862
Mitchell, Timothy E.	Crandon	07/10/1861 – 04/10/1865
Mustard, J. J.	Mechanicsburg	05/1862-04/10/1865
Myers, John	Crandon	08/22/1861 – 04/10/1865
Pauley, A. B.	Crandon	05/25/1863 – 04/10/1865
Smith, Obadiah	Point Pleasant	05/08/1861 – 04/10/1865
Spangler, W. J.	Ceres	05/01/1862 – 04/09/1865
Stafford, B. P.	Mechanicsburg	08/1862 – 04/10/1865
Stafford, R. M.	Mechanicsburg	08/1861 – 04/10/1865
Stowers, James M.	Ceres	04/1862 – 04/1865
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Name of CSA Veteran	Residence (Bland County)	Dates of Service
Tibbs, Henry T.	Ceres	05/1861 – 09/1865
Waddle, James F.	Ceres	03/01/1864 – 04/09/1865
Wagner, James E.	Bland	03/10/1862 – 08/26/1862
Whalen, A. J.	Mechanicsburg	No date given – 04/1865
Wilson, Thomas C.	Ceres	09/1862 – 06/30/1865
Wohlford, Gordon	Crandon	06/01/1864 – 04/10/1865

The UDC provided the following history of the awarding of the medal on their website: "While attending a reunion of Confederate veterans in Atlanta in July 1898, Mrs. Alexander S. (Mary Ann Lamar Cobb) Erwin of Athens, GA, conceived the idea of bestowing the Southern Cross of Honor on Confederate veterans. Mrs. Erwin and Mrs. Sarah E. Gabbett of Atlanta are credited with the design of the medal: a Maltese cross with a wreath of laurel surrounding the words "Deo Vindice (God our Vindicator) 1861-1865" and the inscription, "Southern Cross of Honor" on the face. On the reverse side is a Confederate battle flag surrounded by a laurel wreath and the words "United Daughters of the Confederacy to the UCV." Charles W. Crankshaw of Atlanta was chosen to manufacture the Crosses, but the first order was not given until the UDC had secured a copyright (February 20, 1900). During the first 18 months of the Cross's availability, 12,500 were ordered and delivered. Only a Confederate veteran could wear the Southern Cross of Honor, and it could only be bestowed through the UDC. Money could not buy the Cross; they were bought by loyal, honorable service to the South and given in recognition of this devotion. . . They are the most prized awards conferred by the UDC." (Website: <http://www.hqudc.org/>)

Membership Renewal for 2015 and/or Donation Requests for 2015

You are receiving a membership renewal or donation request along with this newsletter. We appreciate any support you can give us with a renewal and/or a donation.

Request for E-mail Address Update

We would like to have an update of your email address. Many organizations are now sending out Newsletters by email. It would save our organization much needed funds.

Purpose of the Bland County Historical Society

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 501c3 Non-Profit organization.