

# BLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2019 EDITION

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## President's Message

Spring is here and Summer is knocking on the door! I hope that you and your families are enjoying quality time together and are making many memories. While you are making these memories, I encourage you to take pictures and keep journals. These forms of documentation are vital for preserving your memories for years to come!

Preserving our History, of any kind, is important because it helps to connect us to places, events and times that are significant milestones of our past. Local History is especially important because it helps to shape and pave the way for future generations. Without proper documentation, through handwritings or photographs, these History lessons are lost, stories become faint memories in someone's mind and eventually fade away. If you don't know where you came from, how can you really know where you are going? History helps to teach us of mistakes in the past and how to correct or avoid them.

Preserving monuments and buildings are just as important as keeping journalized or photographed memories. Old buildings and monuments are a direct reflection of our History, of our past. They help us to better understand and respect the people who came before us and set forth traditions, laws and paved roads that have lead us where we are today. We learn the architectural ways of our ancestors through these buildings and monuments. When you walk into an old home, store, museum, etc., do you close your eyes and try to imagine who stood at that EXACT spot? Do you look at both the inside and outside architecture and grow an overwhelming appreciation for the blood, sweat and tears that went into creating such a masterpiece?

This is why we, at Bland County Historical Society, encourage you to help to preserve your local community. Offer your volunteer time at our office, offer to mow the grass or help to paint at your local community center, offer your time at an elderly center and ask to record stories that these folks tell you. We want future generations to know where they came from! We don't want our memories to become dust in the wind.

*Eisle Havens - President*

***"A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots."***

**- Marcus Garvey**

### 2018 Officers/Board of Directors

President	Eisle Havens
V. President	Molly Thompson
Secretary	Barbara Justice
Treasurer	Brenda Thompson

### Other Board Members

Kathy Havens - Johnny Goins - Virginia Gills  
Barbara Laban - Sue Ellen Tate

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#### “Old Jail Restoration Project”

Have you seen the crumbling bricks at the old jail, our office? You need to stop and look. The deterioration of 143 years is showing. That is why the Bland County Historical Society Board of Directors have made that the number one project at this time.

Mark Smith, owner of Bricksmith, LLC has given a bid that was accepted by the board. We are now on his “to do” list and hope to get started this fall, weather permitting. Mr. Smith currently lives in the Hollybrook section of Bland County with his wife Kacie Havens Smith and their four children. He graduated from Pulaski County High School in 2003 and has studied at both Ferrum College and University of Virginia on the preservation and restoration of buildings. His work can be viewed in many sections of our area (Also check out his FB Page “Bricksmith”). We feel very fortunate to find such a qualified craftsman in our area and are very pleased he is a citizen of our county. Donations for this project have been generous thus far, however, if you have not donated we encourage you to support this effort of your BCBS. We welcome your donation and would love to have you come and volunteer, not only in this effort but in all of those yet to come.

*Molly Thompson, Vice President*

Our efforts to continue to preserve the history of Bland County is solely funded by membership fees, donations and merchandise sales. If you have not sent in your membership renewal, we encourage you to do so. Forms can be obtained on our website <http://blandcountyhistsoc.org/>. You may also email us at [info@blandcountyhistsoc.org](mailto:info@blandcountyhistsoc.org) for a copy or stop by the office on any Friday during our office hours. Membership is \$15.00 yearly for individual, \$25.00 yearly for couples, \$5.00 yearly for students (public school age), \$50.00 yearly for organizations and \$150.00 each for a Lifetime membership.

We also offer gift items such as afghans, ornaments, books, t-shirts, mugs and other items for sale.

#### COMING EVENTS

**June 7 – Central UMC Bake Sale (@ Farmer’s Market Shelter)**

**June 8 – VFW Yard Sale**

**June 8 – BCBS Quarterly Membership Meeting**

**June 16 – Father’s Day**

**June 29 – Rocky Gap Ruritan Community Yard Sale**

**August 16 – 18 – Battles of Saltville Civil War Reenactment**

**August 29 – 31- Bland County Fair**

**August 31- Heritage Day @ BC Fair**

**September 6 & 7 – Bland County Horse Show**

**October 5 – Lord’s Acre Sale**

**October 12 & 13 – Festival of Leaves**

**The Bland County Historical Society remains open every Friday from April through December 9am to 3pm.**

**However, if you need something and cannot come in during those hours we will gladly attempt to meet you at another time. You may contact us at 276-688-0088 and leave a message or email us at [info@blandcountyhistsoc.org](mailto:info@blandcountyhistsoc.org).**

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#### Marie Carr Groseclose

It is with great sadness that we note the passing of one of our great citizens and historians, Marie Groseclose. She was one of the leaders of many local events and remembered fondly for her efforts on the Centennial Celebration, the writing of the Bland County History Book and her encouragement of the founding of the Bland County Historical Society. We have included the obituary from the Bland County Messenger dated May 8, 2019.



Marie Carr Groseclose, age 98, passed away on Sunday, May 5, 2019, at Carrington Place in Wytheville with family at her side. She was born Hattie Marie Carr in her beloved Bland County, Virginia on January 31, 1921, to John Edward Carr and Etta Florence Lampert Carr. She graduated from Bland High School in 1938 and earned a B.S. Degree in Elementary Education from Radford University. She began her teaching career for Bland County Public Schools in 1940 at Oak Dale, a one room school located at Walkers Creeks. She taught there for three memorable years until she was transferred to Bland school where she taught seventh grade for 35 years before retiring. Teaching had always been a great joy to her and she deeply appreciated all of the kindness and affection shown to her over the years by former students. Marie married Henry C. Groseclose in 1947. She was very proud of his role as the father of the Future Farmers of America and enjoyed carrying on his legacy. She was a devout member of Bland United Methodist Church since 1938. Serving the church was a priority for her. She was a youth leader, Sunday school teacher, treasurer, historian, board member and a longtime member of United Methodist Women. Marie also was a member of the Chi Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, an international organization for key women teachers, Bland Chapter No. 41 of the Eastern Star, Wythe Grey Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Bland County Retired Teachers Association where she was a charter member. Marie loved Bland County and her many friends. She will be missed as a valuable resource for Bland County history. She was blessed with an amazing ability to recall people and events and she was always willing to share her knowledge. She was a great story teller. In her retirement years she enjoyed giving presentations depicting historical women. She also volunteered at the Rock House Museum in Wytheville. She was a skilled quilter, a devoted Hokie fan and an avid bridge player. Until late in life she belonged to two bridge groups. Marie had a half-sister, Nellie Robinette; and half-brothers, Samuel Roy Repass, Everette Fulton Repass and James Straley Repass, all deceased. She was also preceded in death by her husband, Henry C. Groseclose; stepsons, Lt. Col. Tom S. Groseclose and Henry C. Groseclose II. She is survived by four grandchildren, George Groseclose (Elizabeth), Tom S. Groseclose Jr. (Kathy), Warren Groseclose (Sarah), and Virginia Atkinson; eight great-grandchildren and seven great-great-grandchildren. Marie loved her family and her close neighbors, whom she considered as family. Above all she loved her Lord who supplied her with all her needs. In lieu of flowers, Marie had requested donations to Bland United Methodist Church, 75 Church Hill Lane, Jackson Street, Bland, VA 24315, or the Henry C. Groseclose Museum, 1886 Stowers Hill Road, Ceres, Virginia 24318. The family will greet friends at Highland Funeral Home in Bland on Monday, May 13, 2019, from 5 until 7 p.m. A funeral service will be held at the funeral home on Tuesday, May 14, 2019, at 11 a.m., followed by interment at Sharon Lutheran Church Cemetery in Ceres, Virginia. Refreshments will be served at the Ceres Alumni Association gymnasium and the H.C.

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#### The Nancy Tate and Zareda Earnest Scholarship

The 2019 winner of the Bland County Historical Society's Scholarship is Oak Bradshaw, the oldest son of Meagan Morehead Bradshaw and Dallas Bradshaw. Oak's accomplishment was recognized on May 21st during the Senior Awards Night ceremony. The \$500.00 award was given to him on the basis of his interest and shown abilities in the field of history.

Oak was involved with the Calculus Club, Statistics Club, Spanish Club, Spanish Honor Society, a co-founder and Vice-President of the National Art Honor Society, Captain of the Social Studies and All-Around MACC team, Vice President of the Beta Club, in the top 10 of his class, an early college scholar, participated in forensics, STEM, and varsity golf.

We spoke with Oak to learn more about his future plans. He stated, "I plan on attending Radford University to major in political science on a pre-law track and then go to law school. I would like to become a lawyer and one day return to southwest Virginia and help the local population. Some of my hobbies are spending time with my friends, outdoor activities, and just staying busy in general."

We wish him all the best as he pursues his dreams and represents Bland County! This is the third year the scholarship has been presented to a Bland County graduating senior.



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#### June Membership Speaker

We are pleased to once again have Dr. Terry Mullins as our speaker for the June Membership Meeting to be held on June 8th at 1:30 at the Bland Library.

Dr. Mullins is a Professor of Education at Concord University where he has taught since 2007. Many of you may know him from his previous teaching of history and government here in Bland and Tazewell County. Just as importantly, he is a founding member and former President of the Tazewell County Historical Society. He is also a very active community member, serving on numerous boards including a currently elected member of the Tazewell Town Council and is Vice Chair of the Tazewell County Tourism Committee.

Terry is a graduate of James Madison University and completed his doctorate at Virginia Tech. He has published several articles and presented programs related to education, the Melungeon people, cultural diversity, Virginia history, coalfield history, and Tazewell history to a wide variety of audiences and organizations.

He has also authored and coauthored a number of books ranging from the "Pisgah UMC History", several local "Images of America" series and books on Melungeons, as well as other local stories. We are very pleased to welcome Dr. Mullins back with a new story, the development of a new scenic byway (Route 61) that travels through Bland linking Tazewell to Bland and on to Giles County. Remembering how much we all enjoyed his presentation on the Melungeons, we look forward to hearing this story.

We invite everyone to join us on Saturday, June 8th at 1:30 at the Bland County Library.



#### 2020 Calendar Photo Contest

We are looking for "old photos of Bland County". All photos entered must be properly labeled with the name(s) of the person(s) involved, the location, and the approximate time period. You may scan your photos and email them to the Historical Society at [info@blandcountyhistsoc.org](mailto:info@blandcountyhistsoc.org) or stop by the office on any Friday between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. and have a volunteer scan them into our computer for you. Other days and times are available upon appointment by contacting 276-613-4626 or 276-688-0088. All photos must be submitted by June 30, 2019. The photos will be on display for public voting from July 15th until August 20th. We look forward to venturing into the past with you!