



BLAND COUNTY JAIL  
ESTABLISHED 1866

**Mailing Address:**  
PO Box 416  
Bland, VA 24315  
**Email:**  
[info@blandcountyhistsoc.org](mailto:info@blandcountyhistsoc.org)

**Phone:** 276-688-0088

**Website:**  
[www.blandcountyhistsoc.org](http://www.blandcountyhistsoc.org)

# BLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Quarterly Newsletter

Fall, 2015

SEPTEMBER, 2015

### **BCHS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Sep 26, 2015 1:30 pm**

***BCHS Fall Quarterly Meeting at the Bland Public Library. Speaker: Dr. Terry Mullins on The Melungeons.***

**Oct 10-11, 2015**

***Festival of Leaves at the Bland Fairgrounds. BCHS will have a booth. BCHS 2016 Landmarks of Bland County Calendar will be first available.***

**Nov - Dec, 2015 - TBA**

***Winter Quarterly Meeting of BCHS at the Library 1:30. Ann Beardshall will present framed portrait of August Wesendonck to BCHS and will offer a preview of her book about him.***

### **Society Office Update**

Another summer almost gone. We have been busy at the Old Jail, especially with the office open only on Fridays. While open only one day a week has its drawbacks, it has also had its benefits in terms of coverage and also the support and friendship of having a number of volunteers working together on our numerous projects. This past Friday was a good example, with a total of 6 volunteers working parts of the day and at least 4 local people stopping in for various reasons.

We continue to have new out of town visitors, as well as local folks, come by with questions about their families or some local history. However, many of our enquiries are now on line and Ann Beardshall continues to help many with those tough genealogy questions.

We also wish to thank all of you who have offered us so many donations for our collection, and while we appreciate all those gifts we have had to be selective in terms of what we add to our collection. We wish we could accept everything offered, but it is very difficult at this point to accept larger items, unless they are of great historic importance to Bland County, because of our limited space.

We are very excited to have Terry Mullins as our speaker for the September Membership Meeting on September 26, 2015, 1:30pm at the Bland Library, and hope that you will be able to attend. We think from all the feedback we have received that it will be an enjoyable and interesting meeting.

In October, in accordance with our by-laws, we will be forming a nominating committee to select a President, Vice President and Treasurer for the Society. These nominations are crucial this year because we have been functioning without a president for the last year. Leadership is essential to all organizations. Please let us know if you would like to serve on the board or as an officer.

***Sue Ellen Tate, Vice President***

## **September Quarterly Membership Meeting**

**Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p. m.**

**Dr. Terry Mullins, Professor at Concord University**

**will speak on**

### **The Melungeons**

**At the Bland Public Library**

**The Public is welcome**

The Bland County Historical Society is delighted to welcome Dr. Terry Mullins as our guest speaker for the September Membership Meeting. Terry is a "local boy", born in Bluefield, WV and a graduate of Tazewell High School who received degrees from James Madison, Radford and Virginia Tech. Prior to moving into college teaching, he was a highly regarded teacher at Rocky Gap and Tazewell High Schools. He also comes to us as a founding member and former president of the Tazewell County Historical Society. He is the author of several published articles, including on the Appalachian Region, the coalfield history, and cultural diversity. The story of the Melungeon people has been a special interest.

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**Stop by our Booth at the Festival of Leaves  
for a Bland County Historical 2016 Landmark Calendar**

We have sent our calendar to the printer. We did not have time to post the pictures and have a contest this year so we formed a committee to select the pictures. Even though the photographs were fewer in number, we received some excellent entries. The BCHS Landmarks of Bland County 2016 Calendar will be available for sale at our booth at the Festival of Leaves.

**\$15.00**

**Features of the New 2016 Calendar**

- **13 selected photographs of Landmarks of Bland County**
- **13 Historical descriptions of the selected photographs**
- **48 submitted photographs also included**

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**\*\*\*Donations\*\*\***

Through the generosity of our members and other supporters, we acknowledge the donations to the Bland County Historical Society since the last newsletter:

<b>DONOR</b>	<b>Donations</b>
Nancy Beasley Underwood	Memorabilia belonging to mother, <b>Hazel Nicewander</b> , 1941 Bland High School Graduate
Michael Price	Sheriff items belonging to grandfather, <b>Whitt Price</b>
Garnette Helvey Bane	10 copies of her new book, <i><b>Faithful</b></i> for us to sell about her great great grandfather, <b>Rev. William Rice Miller</b> . Also several of his personal items
Betty Hardy Hubble	1951, 1952 BHS Yearbooks, The Echo belonging to <b>David Hubble</b>
Sue Ellison	Research on the <b>Ellison Family</b>
Lois Webb	Research on the AEP Kv765 (1995-2000) Line
Jeanie Owens	Witness Stand and Chair from old Courtroom; 2 windows from the old Courthouse
Denise Herring	Donation in memory of <b>Arlie Elizabeth Lundy</b>
Ronnie and Jane Havens Hall	Donation in memory of her brother, <b>Richard "Chaw" Havens</b>

**\*\*\*Volunteers\*\*\***

During the last quarter we have had at least a dozen people help us with various projects or problems. To all of you we say:

**"A Big Thank You"**

Barbara Laban	Virginia Gills	Barbara Kemp	Molly Thompson
Louise Aliff	Ann Beardshall	Kim Stowers	Kathryn Cooper
Goldie Kiser	Sue Ellen Tate	Elmer Beardshall	

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*August Wesendonck (1819-1870)*  
*from*  
*Elberfeld (Rhineland Province), Prussia*  
*to*  
*Holly Brook (Bland County), Virginia*  
*(in process: Bland County Historical Glimpses, IV)*



**August Wesendonck**



**Wesendonck Methodist Church**

In November of 2012 the Bland County Historical Society received an email from Thomas Seidel from Berlin, Germany inquiring about whether or not the Wesendonck for whom the Wesendonck United Methodist Church and Wesendonck Road in Nobusiness are named was a relative to the Wesendonck that he was researching for an exhibit in Bonn, Germany.

As it turned out, our August Wesendonck was the brother of his Otto Wesendonck. While collecting information for Mr. Seidel, we found information about August Wesendonck that I felt would make an interesting subject for our fourth glimpse of Bland County. In the 1850s the Wesendoncks purchased and developed their home place called Cluxi along the banks of Nobusiness Creek. Mr. Wesendonck was a Giles County petitioner for the formation of Bland County; was present at the first organizational meeting of Bland County officials in May, 1861 where he was authorized to seek funding for the formation of the militia in Bland County; and during the Civil War provided food to the Confederate Hospital and the citizenry of Richmond.

In 1906 the Wesendonck heirs donated the land to build the Wesendonck United Methodist Church, thus naming the church after him. In late August, 2015 at the Church Homecoming, I presented a framed portrait of August Wesendonck sent to me by Thomas Seidel in appreciation for the information and pictures supplied to him for his exhibit and blog. I intend to present a second framed portrait to the BCHS and make a presentation of my findings at the Winter Membership Meeting. The 4<sup>th</sup> Historical Glimpse of Bland County is a work in progress and I hope to have it finished by next year.

*Ann Hardy Beardshall*

