



BLAND COUNTY JAIL
ESTABLISHED 1866

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BLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Quarterly Newsletter Winter 2015

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 2015

BCHS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nov 27, 2015 (Friday) 9 am – 4 pm - Office open as usual for Black Friday Christmas Shopping.

Nov 28, 2015 (Saturday) 1pm – 5 pm - Open House before the Bland Christmas Parade. Join us for a hot beverage and Christmas Shopping.

Dec. 1, 2015 (Tuesday) 1:30 pm Board of Directors Meeting at BCHS (Jail).

Dec 4, 2015 (Friday) – 9 am – 4 pm. Office open as usual for Christmas shopping and other society business.

Dec 5, 2015 (Saturday) 1:30 pm – Winter Membership Meeting at the Bland County Historical Society (old jail).

Dec 11, 2015 (Friday) – 9 am to 4 pm. Final day BCHS Office will be open for Christmas Shopping and other assistance.

December 12, 2015 – April, 2016 - Office Closed for Winter. Any assistance needed with orders or questions, please contact the BCHS at info@blandcountyhistsoc.org or call 276-688-0088 to leave message.

Society Office Update

We have had a couple of freezing nights which means that the beautiful flowers that graced the Jail exterior are either dead or in their winter sleep. Thanks to Molly Thompson and Louise Aliff for planting and maintaining the annuals throughout this year. They brought so much beauty to the whole courthouse square.

Looking back on this past year I must say our mission has continued despite our difficult start. That is, having no one to step forward and take the presidency of the Bland County Historical Society. As vice president I have tried to carry on with help from our board members and volunteers. I am happy to tell you that this December we do have a full slate of officers to vote on in our **December Membership Meeting, scheduled for December 5th at the Bland County Historical Society Office in the old Jail. The meeting starts at 1:30pm as usual.** We hope that you will be there for what should be a fairly short meeting as we have no speaker planned. This is also a good time to raise any suggestions or ideas you have for the coming year.

I am happy to report that we have been able to maintain our one day a week office hours on Friday thanks to some dependable volunteers, particularly Jenny Gills and Barbara Kemp who have been on hand every Friday afternoon, week after week, month after month. I can also report that financially we remain on positive ground with ongoing memberships, sales of books and calendar and donations. We continue to receive frequent requests for assistance on finding family history. Ann Beardshall has been a help to numerous people throughout the country searching for their Bland roots. I appreciate the time she gives to each of these requests. She will continue answering requests after we close for the winter.

As I end my time in this chair, I would like to say that it has been an honor to have the support of so many good people. I know that I have learned a lot about Bland County's history and its people. There have been many opportunities to meet new people, hear new stories, see old photos and broaden my knowledge of history. I will happily continue to serve on the Board and hope that I can assist our next slate of officers. Please plan on joining us for our Membership Meeting on December 5th.

Sue Ellen Tate, Vice President

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Open House Before Bland Christmas Parade
Saturday, November 28th, 1 - 5 pm
At the Bland County Historical Society (Old Jail)

On your way to your spot on the Court House Lawn to watch the Bland Christmas Parade, join us for a hot beverage, tour the historical society and old jail, and pick up a few Christmas presents of local historical interest.

December Quarterly Membership Meeting
Saturday, December 5th at 1:30 p. m.
At the Bland County Historical Society

The Bland County Historical Society will hold its final membership meeting for 2015 on December 5, 2015 at 1:30 pm at the Society Office located in the Old Jail. The meeting will be a business meeting only with the primary purpose to elect the new officers for 2016-2017 along with several board members. A slate of officers will be proposed by the nominating committee and nominations will be taken from the floor. There will be no program.

Bland County Historical 2016 Landmark Calendar

If you have not purchased one of our spectacular Bland County Historical Society 2016 Landmark Calendars, please stop on Black Friday, before the Bland Parade on Saturday or one of the Fridays before Christmas. The last day BCHS will be open before Winter Closing is December 11, 9am to 4pm. The cost and features of the 2016 Landmark Calendar are listed below:

\$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**

If you are unable to come by the office, a calendar can be mailed to you. Details for ordering can be found on the website (www.blandcountyhistsoc.org) or **by sending a check for \$20 (\$15 + \$5 mailing) to the Bland County Historical Society, PO Box 416, Bland, VA 24315.**

We also have a number of items suitable for gift giving at Christmas:

- **Ornaments from past years plus Big Walker Tunnel or Big Walker Lookout from the Wythe County Historical Society**
- **Afghans, hats**
- **Prints of Bland County Communities by Sharon Puckett and Randy Newberry**
- **Books of local interests: Historical Glimpses; History of Bland County (1961), Family Histories of Bland Count (2013), Images of Bland County, plus many more.**

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*****Yearbook Donation to the Bland Library*****

The Bland Public Library recently sent out a request for Bland County High School yearbooks prior to consolidation. Cameron Burton, Head Librarian, said that there are numerous requests for the yearbooks. BCHS had multiple copies for a number of years of the *Bland High School Echo* and the *Rocky Gap High School Rogahi*. The Board of Directors voted to donate duplicate copies to the Library. We were able to give them 36 yearbooks from Bland High School and 15 yearbooks from Rocky Gap High School.

Adding these yearbooks to the ones already there, the Bland Library now has a nearly complete collection. We hope you will take the opportunity to view these yearbooks when you have occasion to be at the Bland Library. They are kept in a special cabinet and can be viewed in the library by asking the clerk at the Circulation Desk. They do not circulate, but they are now more accessible in our warm, comfortable Bland Public Library which is open many hours during the week and on Saturdays. For hours, please see their website: <http://www.sbri.org/locations/bland-county-library>.

*****Volunteers*****

During the last quarter we have had at least a dozen people help us with various projects or problems. ***Pat Turner, Elmer and Ann Beardshall, Virginia Gills, Dewayne and Clay Hubble and Tommy Clark receive "high-fives" for all their help at the Festival of Leaves.***

A Big Thank You to Our Volunteers This Quarter

Barbara Laban	Virginia Gills	Barbara Kemp	Molly Thompson
Louise Aliff	Ann Beardshall	Kim Stowers	Kathryn Cooper
Sue Ellen Tate	Elmer Beardshall	Tommy Clark	Dewayne & Clay Hubble

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Memorial Tribute to BCHS Member:

Richard "Chaw" Havens

The Bland County Historical Society lost a valued member in September. Richard or "Chaw" Havens, as he was known to most, supported us through his knowledge of Bland County History and Genealogy. He was the "go-to" guy for "who was related to whom" for those of us called upon to answer genealogy questions. He helped solve many of the "Aunt Gertrude's Journal" questions. He regaled us with his Bland County stories – both true and exaggerated – when we joined him for breakfast at Tommy's (Town Square Restaurant). And then there was his influence as a history teacher for the hundreds of students he taught at Bland High School. All this knowledge about Bland County and his ability to relate it to us will be sorely missed.

"Chaw" Haven's obituary as it appeared in the Bland Messenger: Richard Crockett "Chaw" Havens, age 70 of Bland, Va., passed away Wednesday September 2, 2015. He was born in Bluefield on February 8, 1945, to the late Gordon "Doc" Crockett and Edith "Pete" Dillow Havens. Chaw was an avid historian and served on the Bland County Historical Society and a life time farmer in Bland County. He retired after 30 years of service in the Bland County School system, having served as Assistant Principal, History teacher, Business teacher and coach. He was a mentor to many students and parents throughout the county. Chaw was a member of two State Championship Basketball teams in 1962 and 1963 at Bland High School, and after graduating they retired his number 32 jersey. He said his greatest accomplishments in life was his son "Ritchie" and grandchildren especially Dylan. "He was loved by so many past students, colleagues, friend, family and citizens of Bland County. He has left an incredible legacy in the hearts of all that had the privilege to know him and love him. Survivors include his wife, Kathy Havens of Bland; son, Richard Gordon "Ritchie" and Sherri Havens of Bland; brother and sister-in-law, T. Cicero and Christine Havens of Bland; sister and brother-in-law, Jane and Ronnie Hall of Bland; three grandchildren, Richard Dylan Havens, Heather Dawn Rhodes, and Derek Neal Rhodes; special nieces and nephews Cicely M. Havens, Rachel Havens and Andy Slaughter, Brian and Anna Hall, Jason and Lisa Hall; sister-in-law and brothers-in-law, Pat Mitchell and Frank Underwood; two brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, William Craig and Tina Hamilton and Jamie and Annette Chewning. A funeral service was held 6 p.m.. Saturday, September 5, 2015, at Highland Bland Funeral Chapel with the Reverend Kevin Richardson officiating. Graveside service were held Sunday, September 6, 2015, at 1 p.m. at the Morning Star Cemetery in Bland. The family received friends from 4 until 6 p.m. on Saturday at the Highland Bland Funeral Chapel. In lieu of flowers, the family is starting a Scholarship fund in memory of Richard "Chaw" Havens to be sent to BB&T c/o Cicely Havens or donations be made to the Bland County Historical Society or Bland County Fair Association. Online condolences can be made to the family at www.highlandfuneralservice.com. Highland Funeral Service Bland Chapel is serving the Havens family.

Donations made to BCHS in Chaw Haven's memory by:

Ron and Jane Hall * Buzz and Tom Richardson * Butch and Brenda King * David and Janet Miller * Judy Bird Wolcott * John and Bonnie Dodson * Bob and Betty Munsey * Charles Cresap * Cicero and Christine Havens