



HFFI Happenings | Fall 2023

A Letter from the President

Fall is upon us in Historic Fredericksburg, and with fall, comes change. A recent City Council meeting on September 12, 2023, focused on the report from Dan Becker, Owner and Principal Consultant for Heritage Arts of North Carolina LLC. Mr. Becker's report reviewed the city's current historic preservation economic development incentives and Spot Blight/Demolition by Neglect provisions.

The report highlighted current incentives offered by our government and made a strong case that although we have great incentives programs, they are not often used. Most property owners are not even aware of the incentives. One suggestion by Mr. Becker was that the Economic Development Authority should increase promotion of the economic benefits of historic preservation. However, incentives are just one piece of the puzzle. Helping people take advantage of existing building codes; adopting specific criteria for determining inordinate hardship for historic district certificates of appropriateness requesting demolition, removal, or relocation; and changing the city code to prevent demolition by neglect would be steps in the right direction for our city and for Historic Fredericksburg Foundation's mission.

Anyone who has read our newsletter knows that demolition by neglect is a problem that HFFI is very passionate about. Most of the key points in Mr. Becker's report address problems HFFI has focused on, offering recommendations to help fix those problems. HFFI continues to be committed to helping the city to fix these problems in any way it can.

HFFI strongly supports Mr. Becker's recommendations, and we look forward to continuing to preserve, protect, and revitalize our historic city.

You can read the report in its entirety [HERE](#)

David Kelly James

President, Historic Fredericksburg Foundation, Inc.

Lou Silvey, a Tribute

Historic Fredericksburg and many local organizations lost a strong supporter when Lourene “Lou” Tate Silvey died in July. Lou, a native of Georgia, came here in 1946. She was soon involved in the community while raising three daughters. She was a strong supporter of the Junior Board at HFFI, which started the Candlelight Tours in 1971, the holiday tours of local homes. Her special interest was gardens, particularly Garden Week and the Rappahannock Valley Garden Club. She was also a faithful member of the Ladies’ Memorial Association, and fittingly, she was buried in the Confederate Cemetery. We will all miss the Southern lady who never stepped out without being perfectly dressed, made up, coiffed, and wearing a stylish hat.



Welcome to Our New Preservation Coordinator!

It's official! HFFI has a new part-time Preservation Coordinator on staff to coordinate the organization's preservation services and advocacy efforts: Danae Peckler. Danae is not new to HFFI—she's served on the Board and as Chair of the Real Estate Committee since 2016, organized HFFI's 2019 Renwick Lecture Series, and—like countless Fredericksburg residents in years past—has volunteered for many a Candlelight Tour. Danae has also been attending Architectural Review Board meetings and delivering comments on behalf of HFFI in recent months. She is most excited about the opportunities her new role provides to engage more directly in local preservation matters and to help others make meaningful connections between the past and the present for the future in Fredericksburg.

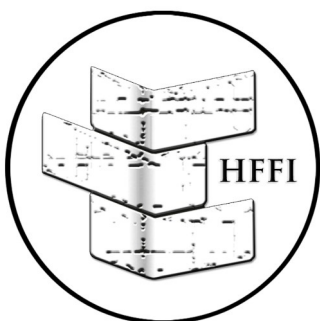
If you have ever met Danae, you likely know that she chose her passion for a profession. A native of a Danville, Kentucky, she obtained a Bachelor of Arts from Transylvania University with a major in History and a Master's of Historic Preservation from the University of Kentucky. Before moving to Fredericksburg in 2009, she worked at her alma mater as part of UK's Center for Historic Preservation and the Kentucky State Historic Preservation Office. Her education and professional preservation experience meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for Historian and Architectural Historian.

For the past 13 years, Danae has worked for Fredericksburg's Dovetail Cultural Resource Group, where she has documented, researched, evaluated, and assessed historic properties across the Mid-Atlantic. This small, but mighty firm of cultural resource professionals, including architectural historians and archaeologists, has supported HFFI in countless ways since its inception in 2006 and continues to nurture best preservation practices in the region. Some of Danae's favorite projects have been closest to home as, "it's extremely rewarding to learn more about the places and spaces we pass regularly and discover stories about the people that filled them." She has also enjoyed working on historic tax credit projects in our area and volunteering for an array of preservation non-profits, including the National Barn Alliance, the Victorian Society in America and its outstanding Summer Schools programs, as well as the Preservation Trades Network and the Association for Preservation Technologies (image above taken while cleaning the Korean War Memorial with the D.C. chapter of the APT).



An Update on the 53rd Annual Candlelight Tour

Due to unforeseen circumstances HFFI has decided to not put on our annual Candlelight Tour. We do not take this lightly and we know how important this event is to so many people. We will be holding an open house at the Lewis Store instead. The Holiday Open House will take place Saturday, December 9th, from 12–6pm. The Lewis Store will be richly decorated with tours, history, music, and so much more. We will also have multiple options for walking tours during the open house. Please keep an eye [HERE](#) for more information. We do want to take a moment and thank everyone who has worked on the Candlelight Tour thus far for all they have done. In addition, we want to thank the owners of the homes that we had planned for this year.



Thank you to Washington Heritage Museums,
Robert and Leah Courtnage,
Kevin and Judy Cannon, and
Ryan and Sarah Schradin.



Upcoming Events

Rescheduled Jewish Walking Tours—Sunday, October 15, 1 pm, 2 pm. Sunday, October 22, 1 pm, 2 pm Additional Tours added. Tour the locations of the many Jewish shops and businesses that served Fredericksburg in the 20th century.

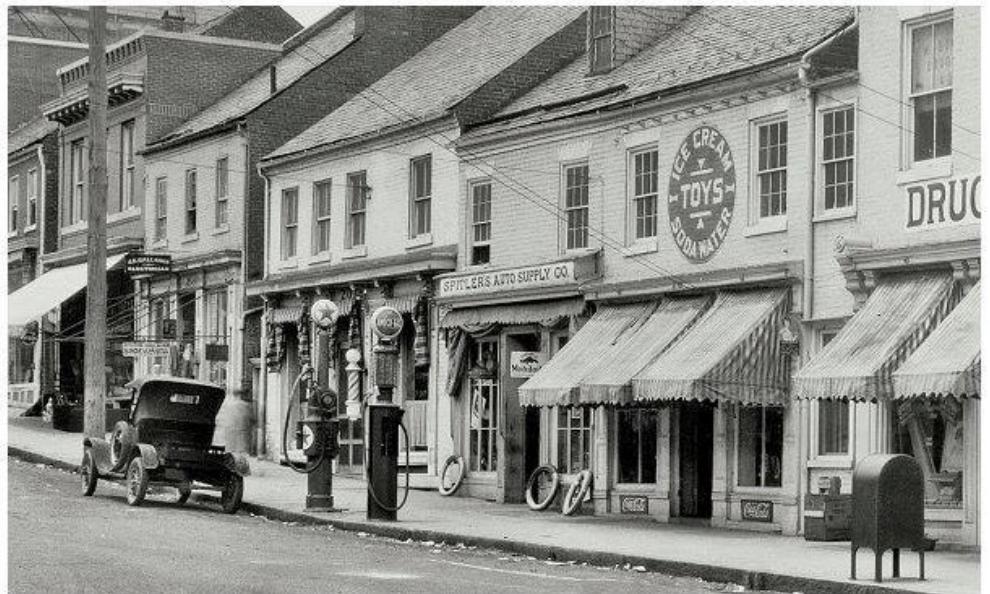
Spirits & Spirits Pub Tour —All Souls Day, Thursday, November 2, 5:30–9 pm
Ghost story hunter Stephen Sollohub will regale you with local ghost stories as you visit several bars downtown. One tour only. Tickets coming soon.

Holiday Open House—December 9, 12–6 pm Free Event
HFFI will offer a free Holiday Open House at the Lewis Store. Come enjoy the richly decorated store in a way you have never seen it before. Come hear about our town's rich history while enjoying cookies and cider, children's activities and crafts, adult activities, and various walking tours. Schedule to be published soon.

***Stay up to date on upcoming events through
Facebook or through the HFFI Events Page (hffi.org/events).
Visit the Lewis Store at 1200 Caroline Street | Phone 540-371-4504***

In Case You Missed It

August brought HFFI and friends a Historic Happy Hour with Wild Hare Cider at 205 William Street, where we enjoyed hors d'oeuvres and some of Wild Hare's excellent cider. We toured the building and got an in-depth history of the building and surrounding block. Thanks to Wild Hare for hosting us. If you want to check them out, we recommend the habanero cider.



The Wild Hare was Spitler's Auto Supply in 1926. Note the gas pumps at the curb. There is a secret courtyard behind these 200-year-old buildings.

We get a lot of questions about how to register for events with us. This easy graphic shows you what to click to make the process seamless and less stressful!

HOW TO REGISTER FOR EVENTS AT HFFI

1 CHOOSE THE EVENT YOU WANT TO ATTEND AND CLICK THE LINK THAT SAYS “GET TICKETS HERE”

Tickets: Get tickets **HERE**

\$20 members/\$25 General Public

2 CHOOSE YOUR TOUR TIME, AND HOW MANY TICKETS YOU WANT THEN FILL OUT YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

3 CLICK “ENTER PAYMENT INFORMATION”

Enter payment information

4 THEN CLICK ON “PAYPAL CHECKOUT”

PayPal Check out
The safer, easier way to pay

5 WHEN THE PAYPAL BOX POPS UP CLICK “PAY WITH DEBIT OR CREDIT CARD”

Log In

or

Pay with Debit or Credit Card

YOU DO NOT NEED A PAYPAL ACCOUNT!



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

**CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!
WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

No matter how much time
you have to give, we have a
place for you.



Our volunteers are the **heart** of our organization. Whether you can take a weekly 4-hour shift at the Lewis Store, you want to help with our events, help us do a monthly cleaning, join a specific committee, or just want to get involved, we have a place for you.

Check out our volunteer page [HERE](#) to directly sign up to volunteer or download our general volunteer form. email your completed form to us at office@hffi.org

Currently, we need volunteers to staff the Lewis Store. We are looking for individuals to volunteer 12–4 pm on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Oral History Committee

Written by Elizabeth Daly

Historic Fredericksburg Foundation, Inc. has been collecting oral histories since 1997. Initially, the goal was to record the individuals who had contributed to historic preservation. HFFI branched out to interview people who have been involved in various aspects of the community.

This year, we have been extremely fortunate and have one of each. Two couples agreed to be interviewed for the Oral History collection. They are very special and have made enormous and very different contributions. Their stories are the modern history of Fredericksburg.

The Reverend Lawrence and Mrs. Janice Davies came to Fredericksburg from Washington in 1962 to pastor at Shiloh Baptist Church (Old Site). Fredericksburg was a small, segregated southern town. In Mrs. Davies' words, it was a step backward, and she was not impressed. The Davieses worked together with churches, community organizations, politicians, educators, medical personal—as they said, people who wanted to do the right thing and who wanted to move forward. And they prevailed. In 1976, Reverend Davies was elected mayor, a position he held for 20 years. When the Davieses retired in 2012, they had witnessed the integration of the schools, the medical community, and the annexation and development of Central Park.

Charles and Mary Wynn McDaniel have made many contributions—some well-known. But who knew that Charlie is an honorary member of the Garden Club of Virginia because of his knowledge and love of history and plants? And who knew that Mary Wynn was a champion swimmer, played first clarinet, and came to Fredericksburg when she married Charles more than 60 years ago? Their passions include preservation, music, and a love for history and education. Charles served on the City Council and is a leader in the business community. He is also an expert on local transportation history. Mary Wynn has raised money and awareness for education and culture. They have enriched the community.

Both oral histories will be published and available in hard copy at the Central Rappahannock Regional Library.

HFFI Marker Committee

As part of HFFI's educational program, the Marker Committee works to inform the public that a building is an important element of the community and is of historical importance. Marker Committee volunteers work tirelessly to research a property, be it a humble frame dwelling, a majestic brick edifice, a battle-worn warehouse, or an ever-evolving retail establishment. As long as a building is at least 50 years old, a marker volunteer is eager to take on the task of uncovering its history. Every structure has a story to tell. Fredericksburg has more than 300 buildings with HFFI's distinctive marker on their facades. Interestingly, there are almost 400 marker reports in HFFI's files. Not every researched property has a marker, so it never hurts to inquire about what is in the files. If you're interested in volunteering as a Marker Committee researcher, please don't hesitate to reach out to HFFI. Training in the research process is ongoing.



Advocacy

Preservation Stories from Around the Commonwealth

On August 2, Governor Glenn Youngkin announced \$8,250,000 in four Industrial Revitalization Fund (IRF) grants for the city of Staunton and the towns of Abingdon, Bluefield, and Cape Charles to provide gap financing for construction projects aligned with local and regional economic development strategies. The four awarded projects will create more than 125 jobs and leverage an additional \$20 million in public and private investment. According to Governor Youngkin, "These remarkable projects are breathing new life into dilapidated structures that have hindered our economic progress, transforming them into vibrant small businesses and symbols of community pride. By harnessing the power of IRF grants, we are making strategic investments in the infrastructure, economy, and vibrancy of Virginia and showcasing why Virginia is the place to live, work, and do business."

According to the 2024 IRF ARPA Program Guidelines, "Location in a designated Virginia Main Street community, an Opportunity Zone, a local, state, or federal historic district, a redevelopment or blight removal district, a Technology Zone; or other similar district" will achieve bonus points for a proposed project. For more information on IRF, visit dhcd.virginia.gov/irf.

Advocacy (continued)

The National Trust for Historic Places is holding its annual PastForward National Preservation Conference in Washington, DC, this year! Celebrate the power of place and join fellow preservationists and preservation lovers at the nation's premier conference for those who work to save, sustain, and interpret historic places.

When: November 8–10, 2023

Where: Omni Shoreham Hotel

Register by September 22!

Learn More: <https://savingplaces.org/conference>

Preserving the Renwick

The Renwick complex continues to be a topic of discussion at HFFI Board meetings. Our organization sent two letters to Fredericksburg's City Council about the courthouse this spring to prevent its further deterioration. The first letter renewed HFFI's 2019 offer to split the cost of preparing a National Register nomination to properly assess the historic significance of our one-of-a-kind Gothic Revival courthouse. The second letter expressed concern for much-needed basic maintenance at the complex 7 years after a Historic Structures Report (HSR) detailed the work needed to preserve it.

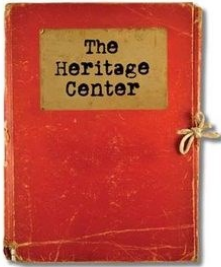
Since it was established in June, the Renwick Working Group has met twice, toured the complex, and heard from City staff and a hired consultant (REI Engineers, Inc.) assisting with the stabilization of the courthouse tower. We hope that more information will be available at the next meeting on September 28 about plans for the immediate maintenance needs of the building.

But speaking of the tower... HFFI found a 1998 memo from City staff to the ARB in our records that detailed sensitive investigative work to address moisture issues. That investigation also revealed that the cement-based stucco around the base of the building obscured the original carved stone foundation and left a portion of this decorative feature exposed to improve breathability at the tower base. Yet it also provides us a glimpse of the hand-crafted beauty that lies beneath that Cementous 20th-century stucco!



Read more about the Renwick and what is needed for its preservation at hffi.org ([HERE](#)).

THANK YOU to our non-profit and corporate members!



Historic Fredericksburg Foundation, Inc.
1200 Caroline Street
Fredericksburg, VA 22401