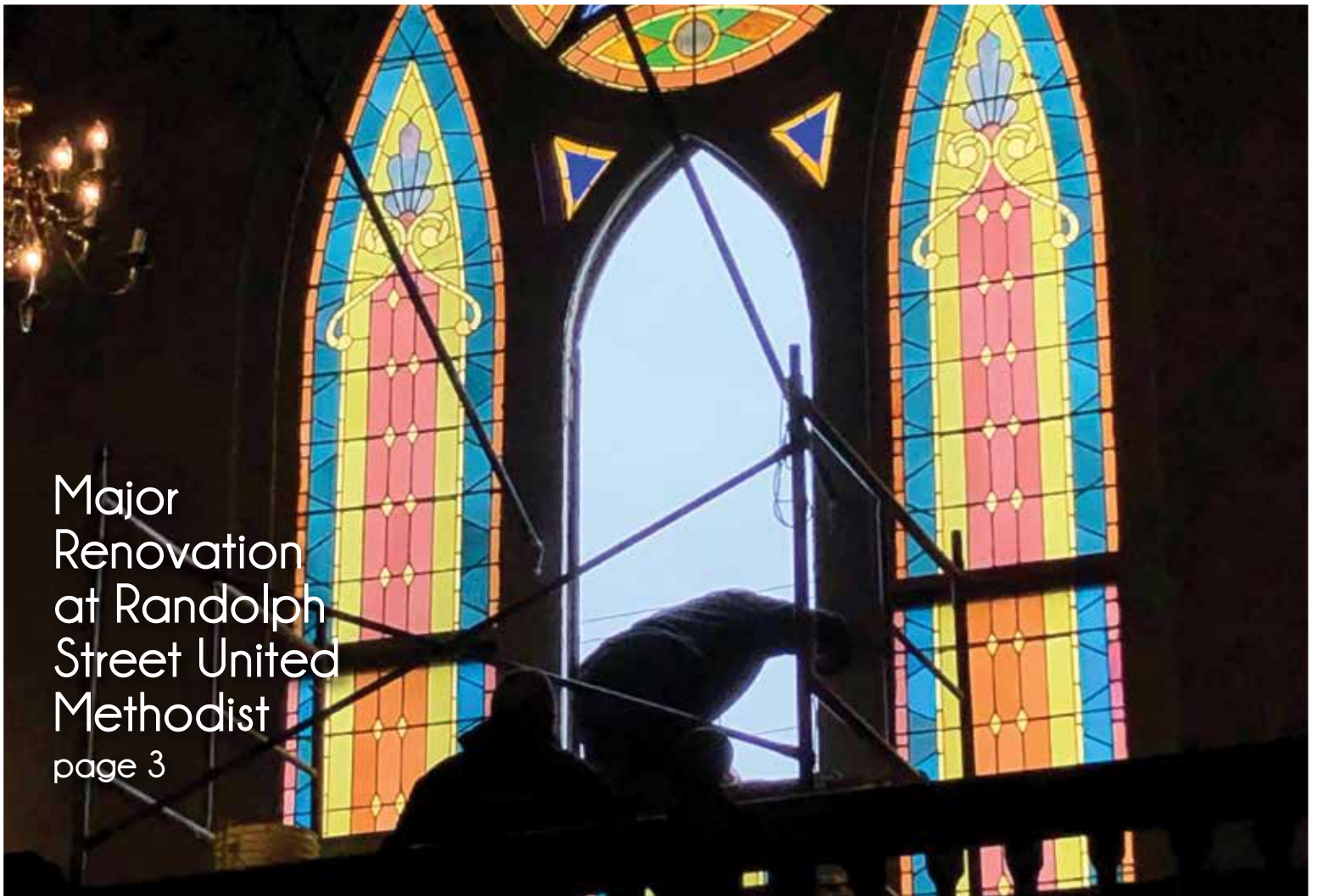


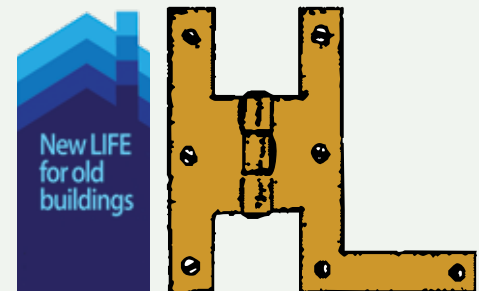
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From the President's Desk

Dear Members and Friends of HLF:

It is my privilege to serve as HLF's President for 2023 and my first opportunity to communicate with you in our newsletter. I was born and grew up in Lexington, living here until 1964 when I left for school and life beyond, returning only for visits until my husband and I retired here in 2014. In those intervening years the positive changes that have been made, by the City's leaders and by civic organizations like HLF, to Lexington's streetscapes have been transformative. Lexington is more beautiful and interesting than ever.

It is with your support that HLF has grown from its beginning in 1966 to an organization fully able to implement its mission of helping to preserve, interpret, and present the historical heritage of Lexington and Rockbridge County.

Through our newsletters we want to keep you up-to-date on the many activities in which HLF is involved—those over past months; those ongoing, such as repair of the stained glass window in the Randolph Street United Methodist Church; and those forthcoming, like our April 8 annual meeting and the events planned for Preservation Month during May.

I look forward to working with our Board members, our Executive Director, and with you, our supporters, to make 2023 a productive year for HLF. We have some exciting new preservation projects in our sights. So stay tuned!

Dee Joyce-Hayes

Board of Directors 2023

Dee Joyce-Hayes
President

Susan Minor
Vice President

Will Moore
Treasurer

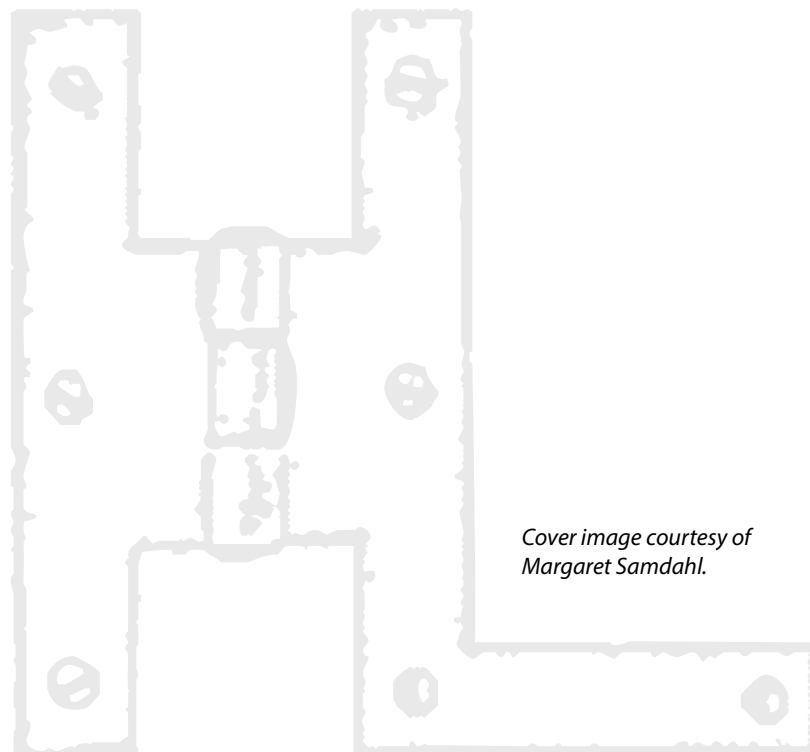
Joan Harden
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Larry Wiese
Past President

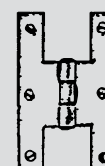
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HLF Partners with the Randolph Street United Methodist Church for Repair of Historic Stained Glass Window

Historic Lexington Foundation takes pride in the fact that in late 2022 it was able to help in the restoration of a prominent stained glass window in one of Lexington's most historic churches.

HLF provided matching funding from its Lyle-Simpson Fund for the repair and preservation of a stained glass window over the front door of the Randolph Street UMC. The window had been severely damaged in a windstorm and is being repaired by Lynchburg Stained Glass.

The company came to Lexington on December 8 and removed the window. Documenting the removal were HLF executive director Don Hasfurther and HLF board member Margaret Samdahl. The photos in this article were taken by Samdahl.

Randolph Street UMC was completed in 1864. The windows are period to that date. As noted in the church literature, the church

at that time was made up of both white and African Americans. It was not unusual prior to the abolition of slavery for churches to have enslaved blacks as members of the congregation. Following the Civil War, the congregation split, but today it is made up of white and black members.

The morning of the window removal, Hasfurther and Samdahl met with Rev. Reginald Early, the church's pastor, and church member Ken Davis. Davis has responsibilities for repair of the church's historic stained glass windows. On that occasion, HLF provided Rev. Early with a check for the window repair. Both Early and Davis personally thanked HLF on behalf of the congregation for its financial support in making the repair possible.

It is expected that the repaired window will be reinstalled in mid-February.



A workman removes damaged stained glass window.



Don Hasfurther presents a check to Rev. Reginald Early.



HLF Annual Meeting Spotlights Rockbridge Resorts, Hotels, and Motels

Historic Lexington Foundation has scheduled its annual meeting for donors and members on Saturday, April 8. The event will take place between 2 and 4 p.m. in the historic ballroom of what was Hotel Buena Vista and is now a part of Southern Virginia University. HLF is grateful to SVU for making the space available.

The event will feature a presentation by architectural historian Dan Pezzoni on Rockbridge Resorts, Hotels, and Motels. In Pezzoni's acclaimed book, *The Architecture of Historic Rockbridge*, he describes how in the second half of the 19th century, during outbreaks of yellow fever and cholera, fashionable springs resorts in Rockbridge County became a magnet for those wanting to escape the diseases of Tidewater Virginia, and elsewhere.

The resorts included Rockbridge Alum Springs, Rockbridge Baths, and Jordan Alum Springs, the latter being the brainchild of John W. Jordan of the local iron furnace dynasty. In the early

1890s, the county saw the construction of a number of grand hotels, including the Alleghany Hotel in Goshen and Hotel Buena Vista. The great depression of 1892–93 took its toll on these hotels. One such hotel planned for Glasgow was never built.

As noted in *The Architecture of Historic Rockbridge*, the only boom hotel to survive is the 1890–91 Hotel Buena Vista. Pezzoni describes the style as Queen Anne “with a riot of gabled roof forms, turned and sawn ornament, and windows of clashing shapes and sizes.” The ballroom is grand, with a spectacular fireplace mantel.

The building's history as a hotel was brief, and in 1894 the hotel was turned into a Lutheran-affiliated girls' school. In 1901 it became the branch of a Methodist female academy later renamed Southern Seminary. In 1996, the school became Southern Virginia University.

Buena Vista Hotel, 1891



Southern Virginia University Main Hall



Fireplace Mantel in the Ballroom of Hotel Buena Vista

VA Department of Historic Resources Approves Two HLF-Sponsored Highway Markers

At its 2022 Annual Meeting in March, HLF informed participants that the Department of Historic Resources (DHR) had approved an HLF highway marker recognizing Timber Grove as the earliest European settlement in what would become Rockbridge. The site is located several miles north of Timber Ridge, the site of the annual meeting. The initiative for the highway marker came from former HLF president Reed Belden.

All that is left of the settlement is a cemetery. There is no automobile turnoff there, a requirement for the placement of a marker. Consequently, HLF made the decision to have the Timber Grove marker placed near the Timber Ridge highway marker that refers to the fact that the Timber Ridge Presbyterian Church was built in 1766, nineteen years after the first settlement.

Timber Ridge replaced the Timber Grove settlement and the 1741 meeting house there. The first settler of what became Timber Grove, John Mackey, is buried in the cemetery at Timber Ridge Presbyterian Church. His gravestone, by all accounts, is the most historically significant gravestone in Rockbridge County.



Gravestone of Timber Grove settler John Mackey

Installation is expected to occur in late winter or early spring. HLF plans to organize an event on this occasion to draw public attention to the largely forgotten settlement of Timber Grove.

In December, DHR approved a second HLF-sponsored highway marker for Lexington and the *Green Book*. *The Negro Motorist Green Book*, published from 1936 to 1966, was a guide to lodging, restaurants, and other public accommodations that welcomed Black travelers during the segregation era in the country. Listed in the guide for many years was the Franklin Colored Tourist Home operated by Zack and Arlena Franklin on Tucker Street. Another, the Wood Tourist Home, was operated nearby on Massie Street. Chauffeurs whose wealthy employers were staying in Lexington's hotels were frequent guests at these homes.

HLF determined that the highway marker was warranted due to the ever-growing interest in the *Green Book*. Plans are to place the marker off East Washington Street at the Visitor Center, a block from the former Franklin Colored Tourist Home. HLF board member Charles Rappold has shepherded the project. The marker language will be presented to the Virginia Board of Historic Resources on March 16 for official approval and then fabrication.



A VDOT workman marks the spot for installation of the Timber Grove highway marker.



Historic Lexington Foundation Plans Preservation Month Activities

May is National Preservation Month, a month during which HLF has traditionally sponsored tours, workshops, and guest presentations highlighting our historic past and the preservation needs of the present. In 2022, HLF focused its efforts on the institution of slavery and the preservation of former slave dwellings in Rockbridge County. This year, the organization will focus on the preservation needs of the area's historic cemeteries and a look back at our transportation history.

In May, HLF will sponsor a workshop at Falling Spring Presbyterian Church on Falling Spring Road off of Rt. 11 South at Fancy Hill. The event is titled **Conserving Rockbridge County's Historic Cemeteries**. Participating in the event will be two conservators specialized in cemetery conservation from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Katherine Ridgway and Joanna Wilson. Both participated in a similar HLF workshop in May of 2018 held at Lexington Presbyterian Church.

The conservators will speak to the best practices and proper techniques for cleaning, repairing, and resetting of gravestones. As reported in the summer 2022 HLF newsletter, HLF has been involved with Hamric Memorials of Lexington in the conservation of historic gravestones in Falling Spring Cemetery. In conjunction with the workshop, there will be a tour of the cemetery to view the efforts of Shawn Hamric and his associates.

In the summer of 2022, Mary Newman and Shawn Hamric were photographed standing beside a badly damaged gravestone, sometimes referred to as a "bathtub stone," in the Falling Spring Presbyterian Church cemetery. It was the most challenging stone requiring repair. The following photographs illustrate the steps Hamric Memorials undertook to return the gravestone to its original condition.



HLF board member Mary Newman and Shawn Hamric of Hamric Memorials survey cemetery stones in need of repair.



PRESERVATION MONTH EVENTS

Conserving Rockbridge County's Historic Cemeteries (held at Falling Spring Presbyterian Church)

Transportation History of Lexington (Saturday, May 20, at 2 p.m., beginning at the former Lexington train station)

Rockbridge County has many historic church and private cemeteries. HLF intends to extend invitations to the caretakers of those cemeteries so that they may benefit from the experience of the Department of Historic Resources officials.

The second Preservation Month activity will look at the **Transportation History of Lexington**. It will take place on Saturday, May 20, at 2 p.m., and will be conducted by HLF board member Byron Faidley. Faidley is a Senior Collections Assistant at Washington and Lee University's Special Collections and Archives and serves on the board of the Miller's House Museum at Jordan's Point.

The program will begin at the former Lexington train station off of McLaughlin Street in Lexington. Participants will also have an opportunity to view remains of the train system leading from Jordan's Point to the historic 1883 railroad station. The program will conclude at Jordan's Point with a visit to the Miller's House Museum.

In addition to discussing the area's railroad history, the program will also look at road and river history. The Great Valley Road brought settlers to the region in the 18th century. Eventually turnpikes would connect the area. The Lexington and Covington Turnpike was incorporated in 1829, linking Lexington to

Covington, 41 miles to the west. In 1834, the turnpike company erected toll houses, including the extant toll house at today's junction of Lime Kiln Road and Enfield Road.

In the 19th century, a covered bridge was built over what is now the Maury, bringing traffic into Lexington through Jordan's Point. A total of three bridges were constructed on the site, one of which burned during Hunter's 1864 raid on Lexington. All that is left are the bridge abutments on either side of the river. Also visible today are several of the remaining railroad bridge supports.

On the area's waterways, boatmen braved the rapids of the James River Gorge to transport goods to the North River—now the Maury—and on to Lexington. Later, by the eve of the Civil War, the North River Navigation Company completed a canal from Balcony Downs near Glasgow to Jordan's Point in Lexington.

The railroad largely made the canal system obsolete. Today the Chessie Trail follows where the railroad tracks of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad once connected Lexington with Buena Vista. Plans were for the extension of the Lexington line south of the then town. Although never built, one can still see remains of railroad bridges for the planned line along Plank Road.

The railroad served Jordan's Point industrial complex.



The railroad bridge and the covered bridge over the Maury River



2022 Founders' Awards Presentation



HLF President Larry Wiese and Executive Director Don Hasfurther present the Founders' Award to Todd Hamric for Hamric Memorial's preservation work in area cemeteries.



Bob Keefe receives the Founders' Award from Don Hasfurther for his graphic design of numerous HLF publications.



Reed Belden is given the Founders' Award for providing text and securing approval for a Timber Grove Highway marker.



President Larry Wiese and Vice President Elizabeth Boetsch present the award to Nancy and Paul Hahn for their collaboration with HLF to document and preserve slave dwellings in the Brownsburg area.