

Vol. 41, No. 1
Spring 2024



Bulletin

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*Prof. Risa Goluboff,
Dean of the UVA
School of Law, packed
the house for our Jan.
23rd Annual Meeting
at The Center at
Belvedere. Photo by
Tom Chapman.*



Local History Rising

For many people, the short chilly days of winter are when things tend to slow down. But not for the ACHS; we entered into the new year hot and heavy. We exceeded our end of year fund raising goal and started off 2024 with two big programs: a panel discussion on *Painting History: Frances Brand and the "Firsts"* and our Annual Membership Meeting with special guest speaker UVA Law School Dean Risa Goluboff that proved to be a huge smash. Check out the

In the News section on page 6 for more details on both programs.

Looking back on 2023, we had great programs on topics including the challenges local history school teachers face, what happened to Robert E. Lee's army after Appomattox, exploring Civil Rights history by road tripping, Virginia POW camps in WWII, renaming local institutions, Virginia's presidential homes, archaeology at Monticello, the Virginia Lewis & Clark Legacy Trail, and how

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Jan. 10th Painting History panel discussion attendees view Frances Brand's "Firsts" portraits before the program at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Performing Arts Center. Photo by Tom Chapman.

Local History Rising *continued from page 1*

the media created #Charlottesville. In all, we had 964 in-person attendees for our programs in 2023 and another 142 viewed them via live streaming, with additional views on-going on our YouTube channel. Also in 2023, we had a workshop on best preservation practices for our collections led by the Northeast Document Conservation Center, and we took part in WCHV's 90th anniversary and recorded news stories for each of those 90 years. We held the Cultivating Local Knowledge Symposium, we worked with the Friends of Charlottesville Downtown to research downtown buildings, and we took part in UVA's Center for Liberal Arts' Race & Sports professional development program showcasing our No Playbook website. We offered three special walking tour experiences: Cville's Walls of Worship, the Barbers of Cville, and Innovation Comes to Cville. We continued to offer our regular slate of walking tours as well, resulting in: 155 people taking the Court Square tour, including students from Agnor-Hurt Elementary; 29 took the Secret Cville tour, including Common House members; 48 went on the Maplewood Cemetery tour, including two OLLI groups; 45 did the Downtown Mall tour, including Charlottesville Albemarle Convention & Visitors Bureau (CACVB) staff; and 133 ventured on our Black History tour, including groups from Peabody School, the UVA Surgery Department, USA AID, and local government staff.

But, that's not even all. We also unveiled our noplaybook.albemarlehistory.org oral history website, secured an endowment for Hatton Ferry (Thanks to the Margaret Hulvey Wright Charitable

Trust!!!), made progress towards creating a digital library for our oral history collection, coordinated a special tour and presentation at Hollymead House, put Frances Brand's "Firsts" on display again, helped facilitate and promote three performances of the play *Can't Feel at Home* (about the families displaced for the creation of the Shenandoah National Park), presented on Western Albemarle County local history to Foxfield's Founder's Circle, participated as a partner at Monticello's Founder's Day and 4th of July events, and convened with three descendants of the Pen Park enslaved community to discuss important next steps to commemorate their ancestors (more below). And finally, we published volume 80 of the *Magazine of Albemarle Charlottesville History*. What a year!

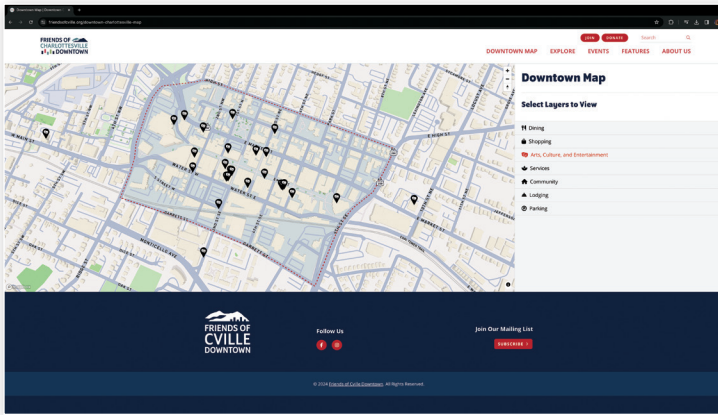
It's hard to believe that just four years ago, we weren't sure that the ACHS would survive another six months. Since 2020, we have made huge strides to realize our mission and vision! But, there is still so much more to do. Today, when history has become such a flashpoint political football, it is more important than ever to preserve and share our true local history — all of it! And, that's what we're trying to do. We want to keep digging, keep collecting, keep doing more innovative and exciting programs, keep leading tours, keep publishing, and keep working with our friends and partners to preserve and share the richness, the complexity, the beautiful and the hard to hear; all the stories that make this place and its people unique and important. Local history and the ACHS are on the rise; help us keep going!

Synchronicity

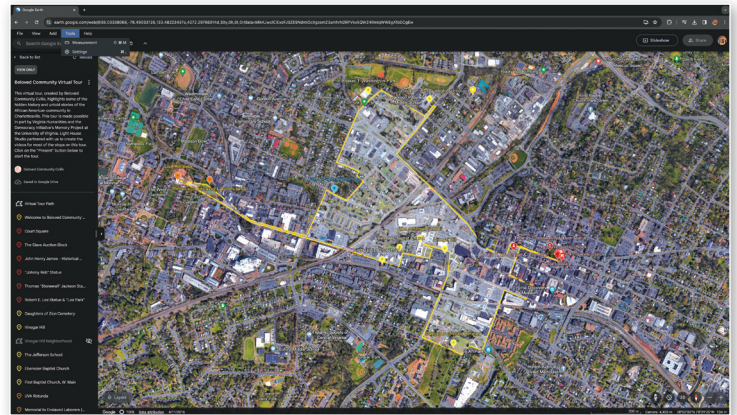
In 1930, the analytical psychologist Carl G. Jung coined the term synchronicity after spending some time studying Chinese philosophy, particularly the *I Ching*. According to Jung, synchronicity refers to "circumstances that appear meaningfully related yet lack a [clear] causal connection;" or when different people mysteriously have the same idea at the same at the same time. That's what it feels like today when we hear someone talking about maps and tours of Charlottesville. When we started opening back up from the COVID shutdown, people would frequently come in asking for a map of historic sites around Charlottesville. The problem was we didn't have any stand-alone maps; we just had some old tour books with maps inside, but the information in these books is limited and doesn't always reflect our commitment to a more comprehensive

approach to local history. Just as we were discussing the conceivability of producing a new tour map, we learned that the City of Charlottesville's Historic Resources Committee was working on the exact same thing — a map of downtown Charlottesville that would offer visitors a more inclusive view of the city's historic spaces and stories. Well, there's no sense in trying to do the exact same work someone else is already doing, so instead we sought to get involved and help the city in their efforts. Then, when we began working with the Friends of Charlottesville Downtown (<https://friendsofville.org/>) on the idea for the building decals that were put up last summer, we learned that the Friends also wanted to create a map and associated tours (<https://friendsofville.org/downtown-charlottesville-map>). So, we said "other people are working on this; instead of trying to reinvent the wheel, let's try to find a way to combine our

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www.friendsofcville.org/downtown-charlottesville-map



www.belovedcommunity-cville.com

efforts.” That led to all the work we shared in the Fall 2023 *Bulletin* (Vol. 40 No. 2) “Bringing History Back to Downtown,” of which there is more to come. Then, we were approached by Beloved Community C-ville (<https://www.belovedcommunity-cville.com/>) to help with their plan for a virtual tour of Charlottesville, specifically geared towards the racial history of the city. So, the

ACHS opened our archives for research and our staff contributed to reviewing and editing the tour videos.

We’re not sure what’s in the air, but it’s clear that people love maps; we sure do. Check out our library webpage <https://albemarlehistory.org/library/> to follow us as we make our map collections accessible. The synchronicity will be serendipity!

Ponderings of a Volunteer

By Jerry Benedict

I now realize that Texas isn’t the only state to be inhabited by adventurous and interesting, or just crazy people. When I moved from Texas to the Charlottesville area and decided to volunteer at the Historical Society, I assumed the history and the trials and tribulations of Albemarle County’s pioneers would open before me; and indeed, I discovered the antics of several ancestors. But to my surprise and enjoyment, I also discovered a Virginian who escaped a mental asylum and then filed a lawsuit to have the state declare him sane. And he won! He later killed a man in defense of a battered wife and sat with the body all night in his leather pajamas just to prove to himself he could do it. Another discovery involved a diary spanning ten years which recorded the meetings of a group of Bridge players composed of a prominent Charlottesville attorney and three University of Virginia professors. For each meeting the attorney recorded the cocktail served by the host (its history and recipe), each member’s score, and a recounting of their conversations. Since the time period



Image courtesy of Donna Benedict

of the diary included the 1950s and 1960s, the topics included racial strife, the Vietnam War, student rebellions across the United States and as the diary claimed — “Senator John Warner’s wife.” I am sure Elizabeth Taylor would prefer to be referred to by her stage name. Another manuscript revealed a recipe book complete with a formula for a cough syrup made with heroin. You never know what you might find at the Historical Society.

My duties in the ACHS library require the completion of a summary of each manuscript folder, of which there are over 1,000 owned by the Society. Another volunteer inputs the summaries into our website database to enable researchers to identify folders that would assist their studies. The work can be exciting as related above or, if not, at least important. There are folders which contain the original incorporation documents and minutes of meetings for the first telephone company in Albemarle County and the original documents of the dueling organizations created to provide educational programs to Charlottesville students when the Governor closed their schools in 1959 due to racial integration. The Society’s photograph collection alone excites me as a volunteer!

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But, the ACHS is more than the pictures, documents, and artifacts; it's also the people. I am now 75 years old and a genealogical researcher for over 45 years, yet I have never encountered a better librarian than the Society's, Miranda Burnett. When patrons enter they may see a clutter of items, but if they had seen the library as I first saw it three years ago they would be amazed at all she has accomplished while limited to a half day shift and the help of untrained and inexperienced volunteers. I am also in awe of the accomplishments of Tom Chapman, the Executive Director and of Sterling Howell, the Programs Manager. They do so much to tell the area's

history in all its forms and do it with so little. We are lucky to have them. I must also say, I have formed close friendships with Sandy DeKay and other volunteers: Gail Angell, Dan Devereux, Dawn Page, Mark Hoffman, John Forsyth and others. They come from many different backgrounds but are equally thoughtful, entertaining, and dedicated to make the Society vital to the community we serve. If I have not been clear, I love my work here and the people with whom I work, and I challenge you to join us as a volunteer and help make our local history accessible to all.

To volunteer at ACHS, email: programs@albemarlehistory.org.

FROM THE BOARD

An Eclectic Experience of History

Kay Slaughter

For the past 30 years, I have loved visiting ACHS in its beautiful McIntire Building on Second Street. Its library led me to important information about my family, and special exhibits and programs increased my knowledge of local history. My library holds past copies of the Society's excellent journal with its groundbreaking pieces.

The great programs and stories of ACHS reflect the evolving history of our community: Most recently we heard Risa Goluboff discuss the impact of Charlottesville's August 2017 confrontation on civil rights. Old timers will recall the 1994 program: "To Seek the Peace of the City: Jewish Life in Charlottesville," full of other stories which I hope we can re-tell in the near future. In 2018, ACHS exhibited the history of the Daughters of Zion Cemetery, created in the 1870s and revitalized by several women in the 21st century. The stories of that sacred place and the energy of the Preservers of the DoZ to bring that history to life is inspiring as well as interesting.



Photo courtesy of Kay Slaughter

ACHS continues under the current leadership to hold programs free to the public and lead Downtown walks to tell more stories. Its library has been vital to people like me doing historical or genealogical research. And ACHS continues to expand its offerings: operating Hatton Ferry, helping the City and descendants discover enslaved ancestors buried in unmarked graves at Pen Park, exhibiting art, such as Frances Brand's Portraits of the "Firsts" honoring barrier breakers. And this fall, ACHS and the Jefferson School

African American Heritage Center will showcase the art and life of Alice Ivory, a local sculptor and art teacher. It's this kind of eclectic experience of history and storytelling that I dearly love.

ACHS is truly mining local history and finding some gems that you too can enjoy through our many free programs, website, and the terrific annual journal. Join now or renew your membership for 2024.

You can support local history by making a donation at: www.albemarlehistory.org/support/.

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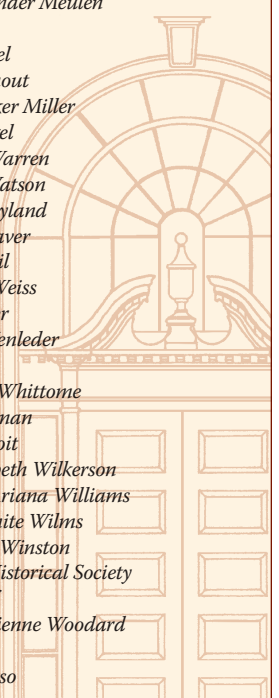
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Painting History: Frances Brand and the “Firsts”

For a few months, 25 of Frances Brand’s “Firsts” portraits hung on display at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Performing Arts Center where students, educators, and performance attendees could view the art and contemplate the local stories they represent. On January 10th, we held a panel discussion about the legacy of local artist, Frances Brand, and the connections between history, art, and breaking barriers. We were proud to be joined by one of the “Firsts” herself, Cornelia Johnson, Charlottesville Police Department’s first Black female officer; local artist, Frank Walker; and as moderator, former Mayor, Virginia Daugherty. Eighty community members joined us for the interesting discussion that ensued. If you missed the program, you can learn more about Frances Brand and her subjects at <https://cvillepedia.org/FrancesBrand> and on our YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/@achistsoc/videos).

“Charlottesville” as Legal History

For this year’s Annual Membership Meeting we were very fortunate to have UVA Law School Dean Risa Goluboff educate us about “Charlottesville” as *Legal History*. We were also fortunate enough to have Tropical Smoothie Café provide our 260 attendees with a tremendous spread of smoothies and sandwiches, and for Greenberry’s Coffee Co to provide additional beverages, all of which was generously sponsored and funded by Daniel and Rosamond Smythe!

Dean Goluboff’s lecture included an analysis of the white supremacist and anti-Semitic violence that took place here in 2017



Angus Arrington IV, Risa Goluboff, Phyllis Leffler, and Shelley Murphy; photo courtesy of Shelley Murphy

from the complex perspective of the law. Goluboff explained, that the law has analytical, personal, institutional, and normative dimensions — the law is “input” (shaping perspectives, rhetoric, and the legal landscape within which people act) and is “output” (the legal process as an area of struggle and as a weapon). She also shared with us her autobiographical journey, from thinking about the significance of so many individual legal cases arising from the events of 2017, to herself serving on a jury for one particular case, and to being invited to give a lecture on the subject in 2019. And, finally, she gave us an intimate view into her own personal tug-of-war over whether or not to write a book about this subject — which can be so painful to confront, so difficult to analyze objectively, and yet so necessary to face. If you missed it, you can read a published version of the talk here: <https://repository.law.wisc.edu/s/uwlaw/media/307042>.

The food was great, the presentation was erudite, and the audience was the largest we have gathered yet — thanks to all!

Pen Park Update: We’re not done yet

If you recall the spring and summer issues, we received some great help on the Pen Park Project from UVA interns over the past year. In January 2023, Architectural School graduate student, Josephine “Jo” Blount helped us convene three descendants of the Pen Park enslaved community — Diane Brown Townes, Lorenzo Dickerson, and Stephen Waller — to make the initial steps towards defining a Pen Park Descendant Group who should guide a memorialization and commemoration process. This past summer, we had two interns — Emily Miller and Katelyn

continued on page 6

In the News

Pen Park Update *continued from page 5*

Friedline — carry forward our efforts to identify descendants by updating genealogy databases, studying historic documents, and conducting interviews with known descendants.

Now, we are ready to start the next phase. But, we are going to need more help to make it happen. Currently, we are seeking grant funding to help us coordinate next steps. At the same time, our partners, the City of Charlottesville, will be reviewing a funding request to conduct more archaeological research to fully define and delineate the burial ground of the Pen Park enslaved community. We will also continue working with descendants to facilitate the formalization of the Pen Park Descendants Group and organize a Pen Park Descendants Reunion event this summer. In short, there's much more to come; so, stay tuned and consider supporting this important work: <https://albemarlehistory.org/support/>.

From the ACHS Library: one vital component

The ACHS library is one vital component of our mission to collect and preserve our local history. But the many materials in our library collection must be able to be found, searched, and read to be useful to our community. And to do this, we need a librarian. Fortunately, ACHS has a strong partnership with JMRL who provides us with one. And our librarian, Miranda Burnett, leading a core of volunteers, is bringing the ACHS library into the 21st century with online catalogs and finding aids. As part of this process, all of our manuscript and pamphlet collections are being re-evaluated. Sometimes this means renaming the file

to better reflect the material. For everything, it includes adding subject headings to tie records together in the catalog, so you can now click on “Bible Records” or “School Yearbooks” and see all of the materials we have for those topics.

We are also engaging in what's known in librarian-speak as “reparative cataloging.” Part of this is ensuring that underrepresented voices are heard in the catalog record. What does this look like? One of our collections is the Ballenger Creek Church Records, two record books dating from 1835. Our original inventory simply said the name of the church. The new catalog record says, “contains membership lists of white, enslaved, and free Black members.” New materials that come to the library are also processed with this principle in mind. The Bates Family Papers include receipts for hires of enslaved people. Their names — Rice, Martha, Mary Jane, Lee, Samuel, Andrew, and Winston — are now included in the catalog record.

The ACHS library has also partnered with the Archival Resources of the Virginias (<https://arvasarchive.org/>). It's a database of finding aids for archival materials from repositories such as historical societies and universities all over Virginia and West Virginia. This means that researchers from all over the world can search on a topic and see all of the resources in the Virginias, including at ACHS. Importantly, it provides another portal of access to the incredible materials in our archives.

April Showers? We hope...but not too much!

As we learned last year, when it rains it pours, or it doesn't rain at all. We were

very excited to get Hatton Ferry back up and running in 2023, but the good times only lasted a couple months. In mid-July, a big storm broke the lock and beached the ferry in Buckingham, again! Then there was not enough rain to keep the James River at the necessary running level of 4 feet for the rest of the season. Nevertheless, we're optimistic about 2024. We are getting ready for another season — every Saturday and Sunday 10am-2pm, mid-April to mid-October — and we need volunteer help! If you or someone you know would like to help pilot the country's last publicly accessible poled ferry, contact hattonferry@albemarlehistory.org and follow <https://www.facebook.com/HattonFerry>.

The Magazine

The much-anticipated 2023 *Magazine of Albemarle County History* will hit bookshelves and mailboxes in just a few short weeks. Readers will enjoy a fascinating look at colonial land patents, surveys, and county boundaries; an in-depth history of Rose Hill Farmhouse and the stories of three of its most noteworthy owner-occupants; and a door-to-door history of the 100-block of East Main Street. Together, these three articles will offer new insights into nearly 300 years of geographical, architectural, genealogical, social, and commercial history in Charlottesville and Albemarle County.

The Magazine represents an important and tangible part of our mission — to collect, preserve and interpret. Please consider a gift to support the *Magazine of Albemarle Charlottesville History*. Contact Tom Chapman at executivedirector@albemarlehistory.org or 540-222-9956.

On the Calendar

Follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/ACHistSoc) or Eventbrite (<https://ACHistSoc.eventbrite.com>) for up to date information on all of our programs and tours. Email us at programs@albemarlehistory.org or call 434-296-1492 with any questions.

- **Guided History Walking Tours** – By appointment, Court Square, Maplewood Cemetery, the Downtown Mall, and Special Themed tours offered all year round. \$8/person. Contact Sterling at programs@albemarlehistory.org or 434-296-1492.

Upcoming Special Themed History Walking Tours

- **Sat. July 6th 9:30am – Between Slavery & Freedom Tour** – Join us for a tour of Downtown Charlottesville exploring the stories of free Blacks during the era of slavery. Learn about the evolving nature of racial oppression, the rare times when the strict social hierarchy was not so strict, and those fascinating individuals who were able to exploit the cracks in the systems. **Tickets required. To purchase a ticket for the tour visit:** <https://between-slavery-and-freedom.eventbrite.com>.
- **Sat. July 20th 9:30am (and Aug. date TBD) – C’ville’s Erased History Tour with Miranda Burnett** – Join JMRL’s Historical Collection Librarian Miranda Burnett for this hour-long walking tour through Charlottesville’s downtown streets. Pass by an obliterated Green Book location and churches-turned-parking lots. Learn about the people who lived there, and the buildings erased from the landscape. This is a free tour, but registration is required. **Visit the JMRL web calendar at** <https://jmrl.org/calendar> to reserve your spot.

Upcoming Programs:

- **Tues. July 23rd, 6pm at JMRL Central Library 3rd Floor Swanson Room – The Laborers of Birdwood Plantation with Andi Cumbo** – In this interactive presentation, Andi Cumbo will share the genealogical, historical, and archaeological research that has been done at Birdwood Plantation in Ivy. She will discuss the research findings as well as the work to include living descendants in the process of memorialization that is just beginning at the property. Andi Cumbo is a writer, genealogist and historian, and a mom. She has conducted research on the enslaved

communities at plantations around Central Virginia including Bremo, Scotchtown, and Bracketts Farm. This is a free program. To attend in person register to save your seat at: <https://birdwood.eventbrite.com> or you can join us virtually online at www.facebook.com/ACHistSoc.

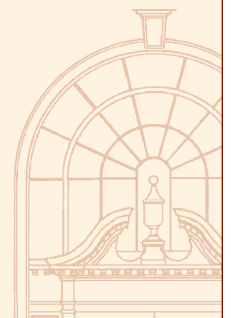
- **Thur. Aug 15th, 6pm at The Center at Belvedere – Beyond the Levys: Jewish History at Monticello with Olivia Brown** – Explore Charlottesville’s rich Jewish history through the lens of one of its most prominent landmarks. Olivia Brown, ACHS Board Member and former Research Fellow at the International Center for Jefferson Studies, investigates the ties between Charlottesville’s Jewish community and Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello, both with Jefferson himself and through the enslaved community. This lecture will discuss Jefferson’s views on Judaism, Jewish families like the Isaacs and Levys, and enslaved families like the Hemingses and Fossetts. **This is a free program. To attend in person register to save your seat at** <https://thecenterville.org/calendar/event/120149/3/> or you can join us virtually online at www.facebook.com/ACHistSoc.
- **Sept 14th to Dec 14th, 2024 – Beyond the Boundaries: Alice Wesley Ivory at the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center (JSAAHC)** – Curated in partnership with JSAAHC, a selection of Alice Wesley Ivory’s sculpture and drawings will be exhibited, including photographs of her work and a portrait of Ivory by the late artist Francis Brand. The exhibit will celebrate her legacy and work as she was widely known and appreciated for her creative depictions of animals, and produced multiple notable pieces for churches, including the steeple for Mount Calvary Baptist Church in Ivy. Ivory was the first African American teacher to lead the Blue Ridge School’s art department and was an art teacher at the segregated Burley High School for a decade. **Stay tuned for more information about dates and times for exhibit events and receptions as we get closer to the opening!**

And, there’s much more to come, stay tuned!

Volunteer Needs – Join us!

Email programs@albemarlehistory.org or call (434) 296-1492

- **Tour Guides** for our guided history walking tours.
- **Oral History enthusiasts** to help with our Going Digital project.
- **Cvillepedia.org** to help make it the go-to resource for local history.
- **Greeters** to provide ACHS hospitality to every guest that walks through our doors.
- **Hatton Ferry** operators and history ambassadors for the 2024 season: Apr. 15 – Oct. 15.

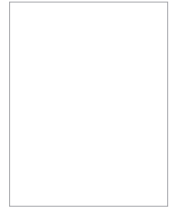




ALBEMARLE CHARLOTTESVILLE Historical Society

200 SECOND STREET NE
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA 22902-5245

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS AND NEW MEMBERS

Our Society is built on the generosity of Our Members!!

Without YOU there is no ACHS. Renewals will be sent out on the anniversary of your original membership registration. For those members who have already renewed for 2024, we thank you! For ALL MEMBERS, recommend us to your friends, family, coworkers, and anyone who shares your passion for local history. Every person has a story to tell, and every member ensures that the ACHS will be here to collect, preserve, and interpret those stories.

Join us through our website www.albemarlehistory.org or give us a call (434) 296-1492.

Join now!

Our Vision

Our vision is to reimagine and reinvent the role of the historical society in the twenty-first century: to be a strong civic organization that embraces, in all that we do, the diversity of our community's history and experience, and promotes a greater understanding of our past, to enlighten the present and foster an inclusive history for future generations.

Our Mission

History is not the past; it is the story we tell about the past. Every person in Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville has a unique and powerful story to tell. Through collecting, preserving, and interpreting the history of our community, we are committed to informing, inspiring, and bringing together all people, creating opportunities for new relationships and new understandings.

Our Values

Our work is grounded in a belief in the worth and dignity of every human being. We respect people, communities, and cultures. We value discovery, creativity, integrity, and diversity. We believe in the potential for history to enrich our lives and to create stronger relationships and more vibrant communities. We approach our work with integrity and transparency.