



Bulletin

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New local history
art book featuring
Frances Brand's
FIRSTS portraits in
the works! See Art
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Beyond Boundaries

“My philosophy is that the sculpture must live, have a presence and a personality, if you will. They must ‘look’ good. I do not say the surface must look good. I mean that the beauty must radiate from inside where the soul is.” This is how Alice Wesley Ivory (1931-1999) described her art in an autobiography written for a class at UVA.

She was born Alice Elizabeth Wesley in White Hall during the Great Depression. One of seven children, she walked two miles to an all-Black elementary school and later rode “a very, very crowded bus fourteen miles to attend the Albemarle County Training School” – one of the only schools in the county to offer African Americans an education beyond the 7th grade. After high school, she earned a Bachelor’s degree from Virginia State College and taught at Jackson P. Burley High School. Beginning in 1957, her life “as a welded metal sculptor began.” Ivory wanted to pursue graduate

study in Art Education during her summer breaks, but she did not want to abide by the University of Virginia’s segregation practices. Instead, she traveled to the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Because she had thus far only studied at Black-only institutions, she was not accepted to full status, but had to “prove” herself.

She came across metal sculpture by accident – happening upon a group of male students playing with welding torches she was immediately fascinated. Initially, her interest in welding was discouraged to the point that she was told she would receive no instruction if she pursued that medium. So, she decided to “tinker around” on her own, until one of the other students demonstrated the safe operation of the torch. Then, after Ivory’s first advisor passed away, Austrian-born metal sculptor Leo Steppat took over. Their relationship began precariously when Steppat exclaimed, “You’re acting like a first-semester freshman” upon seeing Ivory’s method of mixing plaster for a mold. She considered quitting right then, but chose a different approach. She meekly requested instruction on



Crow ca. 1960, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond. General Endowment Fund, 61.11, Photo: Travis Fullerton © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

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proper technique from Steppat only to confidently demonstrate to him that their methods were not so different after all. Not long after that, Steppat would be referring to Ivory as “a natural born sculptor,” and saying “I’d give her three A’s if it were possible.”

After completing her degree, Ivory returned to life in White Hall, teaching, attending to the domestic demands of a wife and mother of two, and making sculpture. In 1969, she was appointed Art Director at the Blue Ridge School for Boys in Dyke where she worked for 20 years. She described teaching at the all-boys school as both “rewarding and challenging,” where merely being accepted by the privileged students could be the most difficult accomplishment.

While she was teaching art, she was also making art, when life allowed. Ivory created more than 100 sculptures, mostly of animals, birds, fish, and insects.

“The subjects that I use are mostly things that are familiar to me, things that are a part of my life... NONE of my sculpture is anatomically or biologically accurate. I sculpt things according to the mood I am in and base them on the way I ‘feel’ about the subjects. The sculptures are not based on a love for the creatures. It is based on a love for beautiful form.”

A remarkable legacy follows Alice Ivory. She was an influential woman – confident and driven. Alice broke the boundaries placed around her based on her gender and the color of her skin. Another local artist, France Brand, created an oil painting of Ivory, posed with two of her sculptures, “Eagle” and “Dog.” As a “First,” Brand recognized Ivory as a pioneer in the field of art in Charlottesville. Her reputation as an outstanding sculptor even traveled internationally when she was mentioned in the International Biographical Center’s 1986 publishing of *World Who’s Who of Women*.

This fall, the ACHS is pleased to sponsor *Beyond Boundaries: The Sculpture of Alice Wesley Ivory*, an exhibit celebrating the life and works of a local artist who broke gender and racial boundaries in both her artistic and teaching careers. The exhibit will be held in the Contemporary Gallery of the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center from September 14 to December 14, with an opening reception and gallery talks Saturday, September 14, 6-8 pm.

We hope the exhibition will encourage future artists to follow their dreams, beyond any boundaries.

“A true artist is not one who is inspired, but one who inspires others.” – *Salvador Dali*

Art Book Forthcoming

What could be more quintessentially “Charlottesville” than a distinctive, colorful body of original creative work inspired by an artist’s desire to build bridges within the community and empower people of diverse backgrounds to strive for their civil rights? Local creative professional Amy Hill posed this question when she attended an event focused on the legacy of local artist **Frances Brand** (1901-1990) in January 2024 at Martin Luther King Jr. Performing Arts Center. At the ACHS-sponsored celebration of Brand’s work, Hill learned that in the 1970s, Frances Brand undertook a series of portraits of individuals from Charlottesville and Albemarle County that would become the gallery of *Firsts*. This collection includes 157 portraits of local people that Brand believed to be “the first” in their field of study, work, or public service.

Hill, with her graphic design and marketing expertise, knew immediately that Brand’s engaging portrait collection could be the



ACHS has a new illustrated art book featuring Frances Brand’s *FIRSTS* portraits currently in production.

basis of an amazing art book. So, she approached ACHS's Tom Chapman about the idea of collaborating to create a book that would feature Brand's art and discuss the oeuvre's significance. "I discovered at the presentation in January that Mrs. Brand and her art already had a dedicated fan base among many local leaders I really admired," says Hill. "I also learned that ACHS owned most of the Brand collection, and that there was already a fair amount of written content about some of the portraits."

Hill was delighted when she received word that Chapman and ACHS board members embraced the project idea, and by Spring 2024, a production team was formed. Currently, book design and content development for *First: Frances Brand's Portraits of*

20th Century Pioneers is underway. "When we looked at the rather large collection of Brand's portrait paintings in the collection, the book design team decided it would be best to divide up the body of work into several volumes," says Hill.

Book ordering will soon be available online, and pre-ordered books will be available for shipment by early November 2024, just in time for end-of-the-year gift giving, says Hill. Proceeds from book sales will support the ongoing work of ACHS. To stay informed about the progress of the *First: Frances Brand's Portraits of 20th Century Pioneers* book and to get first notifications about book presales, please subscribe to our email list: <https://landing.mailerlite.com/webforms/landing/f6w2r3>.

The Legion

If we were inundated last summer, we have been under siege this summer. Thanks to UVA's Institute for Public History (IPH), the Internship Placement Program (IPP), and the Nau Center, along with one student from Longwood University, we have been the beneficiaries of seven remarkable student interns. Funding support for our bevy of interns came from the City of Charlottesville, the Nau Center, Prof. Liz Varon, BAMA Works, and others. We are often asked, how can such a small organization accomplish so much? Well, let us introduce our summer army:

Kaitie Aney is a rising fourth-year studying history and Spanish. Kaitie is a second-time Institute for Public History intern with past experience in digitization at the Louisa Historical Society. This summer, Kaitie is helping out with a variety of internship projects including Pen Park, Brown's Cove, and the upcoming exhibit dedicated to Alice Ivory. With each project, Kaitie has collaborated with ACHS staff and other interns to move forward in genealogy research and outreach, the use of modern technology to enhance public history, and the careful curation of an engaging exhibit. Kaitie is grateful she is able to assist in multiple projects and gain a well-rounded experience in the field of public history which she hopes to apply in her future career in history.

Yashita Keswani is a rising fourth-year majoring in history. Yashita also serves as the Executive Vice President and Team Captain of UVA's Mock Trial Team (www.virginiamocktrial.org). Yashita is

spending the summer working on the No Playbook project, expanding the website to include more primary sources that provide researchers with context about desegregation in Charlottesville. She's also been working on incorporating other oral history projects into the website, which will result in a richer, more comprehensive collection of narratives that highlight diverse perspectives and experiences. By expanding the sources available on the website, researchers, teachers, and students will have the opportunity to better understand their local history and the events that shaped local politics and culture. Check out noplaybook.albemarlehistory.org.

Jack Kreiner is entering into his junior year at Longwood University in Farmville, Virginia. He's studying for a Bachelor's Degree in History and is a member of the Cormier Honors College program, the Phi Alpha Theta academic fraternity, and works as a resident assistant on-campus. Jack came to ACHS looking for an opportunity to gain valuable experience in the world of public history while applying his passion and appreciation for historical nuance. Jack is working on Cvillepedia and you can see his many contributions here: <https://cvillepedia.org/Special:Contributions/Jackkreiner6409>.

Emma Ranheim is a rising fourth-year majoring in history and minoring in German. During the school year, she works for the intramural department at UVA. This summer, she is the Nau Center intern for the ACHS working with Cvillepedia. Emma has focused on updating and creating pages that reflect the history of eugenics at the University of Virginia. She has written articles about promi-

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THE LEGION



Yashita Keswani



Kaitie Aney



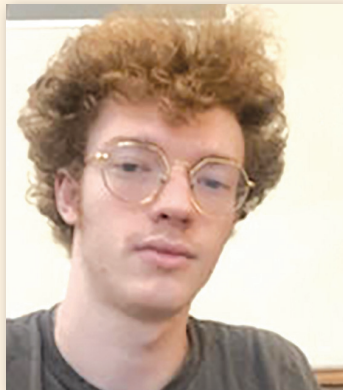
Jack Kreiner



Emma Ranheim



Grace Saunders



Joe Talley



Morgan Thomas

ment professors and faculty that conducted research and taught classes which made the University of Virginia and Charlottesville an important part of the national eugenics movement in the early 20th century. If you want to follow her research you can visit the Eugenics at UVA category on Cvillepedia.

Grace Saunders is a fourth-year studying archaeology at UVA with research interests in public history and community engagement, digital humanities, and Bronze Age Aegean archaeology. This summer she is the intern for the Pen Park Project. Grace has been helping ACHS gather information about those enslaved at Pen Park, tracing forward their descendants, sharing research with descendant families, and working on finding ways to visually present the complicated relationships uncovered with family tree charts. She says, “Accessibility of knowledge and sharing research with the community are really important to me.”

Joe Talley is a fourth-year history and philosophy major at the University of Virginia from Richmond. He has been working on a project looking into the residents of a small parcel of land in Western Albemarle, Mount Fair at Brown’s Cove, and seeking to understand the way the lives of the primary property-owning family, the enslaved and free people of color, and the smallholding independent farms on and near the property intertwined and changed from the era of slavery into Reconstruction.

Morgan Thomas is a rising fourth-year student majoring in economics. She has experience with creating marketing content and doing research for other organizations. Morgan is helping with improving the inclusiveness of ACHS social media content and promotions, researching potential partnerships, and she played a part in writing THIS Bulletin! Morgan has enjoyed meeting all of the ACHS staff and volunteers throughout the summer, and she is excited to apply the marketing techniques she has learned to her future career!

Ponderings of a Volunteer

By Xin Chen

I first arrived in Charlottesville in 2011 for a brief visit and quickly developed a fondness for this charming town. In 2015, while serving as a visiting scholar in the UVA Department of History, my family and I solidified our desire to make Charlottesville our permanent home. Over the past decade, I've witnessed the greater Charlottesville area evolve into a thriving city with a dynamic atmosphere.



Xin Chen

For me, delving into the local history is not merely a means of understand-

ing my surroundings; it is a source of profound joy. And, I was particularly intrigued by ACHS's Public History programs, especially the practical approach of integrating history with social life in this age of social media. In pursuit of this interest, I applied to become a volunteer. This opportunity allows me to contribute to the community while exploring local history and experimenting with innovative modes of historical representation. ACHS's library houses an extensive collection of historical documents pertaining to our region.

As my family and I explore the local area today, I share anecdotes with my children about the early days when UVA acquired the land for its campus from James Monroe's family. I recount stories of the challenging inclines on Vinegar Hill, where horses or mules were

once needed to pull wagons. I narrate the rumored healing properties of Fry's Spring waters, a popular weekend destination in the 1920s. I touch upon West Main Street's transformative period in the 1970s, and more. These anecdotes provide us with a connection to the historical foundation of the present community, fostering an optimistic outlook for the area's future. Occasionally, I share these narratives on ACHS's Facebook page, engaging with readers to collectively weave the

historical imagination of our locale over time and space.

Through such engagement, I've come to realize that constructing local history can be achieved through crowdsourcing. However, there is a notable scarcity of technical support. The ACHS could benefit from collaborating with data science volunteers to refine our approach to local history representation. The Albemarle/Charlottesville area is rich in talent. If more individuals from various disciplines volunteer at ACHS, perhaps we can explore new models of organizing local history and culture. This could lead to the enhancement of our living environment and social fabric, allowing history to play a more significant role in shaping our collective future.

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

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.**



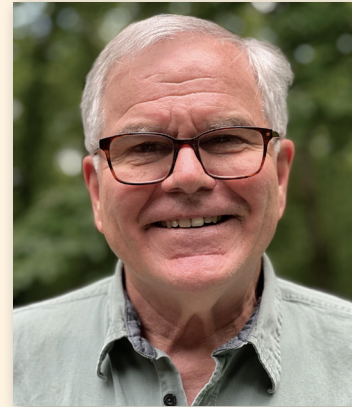
NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Olivia Brown



Tim Mullins



Ted Coates

New Board Members

On April 15, the ACHS was thrilled to welcome three distinguished professionals to its Board of Directors. The new members bring a wealth of experience, expertise, and diverse perspectives that will greatly contribute to the mission of the ACHS.

Welcome to the ACHS Board:

Olivia Brown has a BA in History and American Studies from UVA and an MA in Public History from the University of South Carolina. She has experience working at Highland, Monticello, and the Bucks County Historical Society. Currently, she works for Stanley Martin Homes, runs her own events company called Trivia with Olivia, and is her family's genealogist and photo archivist.

Tim Mullins, Chief Investment Officer, Wells Fargo, Charlotte NC. Tim has been a finance professional for 38 years. He is also a passionate architectural historian and preservationist with a deep interest in local history.

Ted Coates, Experienced, principled leader with strong background in management, operations, and finance. Extensive

experience in government (25 years in the military), private sector, and the non-profit industry.

ACHS also gives its deepest thanks to outgoing board member, Ervin L. Jordan, Jr., who served on the board for two terms, from 2018-2021 and 2021-2024.

Hatton Ferry – what will be?

Another ferry season is halfway done and we can count on one hand how many weekends we've been able to operate thanks to the hot, dry weather. And, we recently had to say goodbye to the long-time Hatton Ferry Captain, Craig Allen McPherson, who sadly passed away on June 4th (see page 7 *In Memoriam*). If that's not enough, there is a growing opinion that the ACHS should rid itself of the responsibility and liability of the Hatton Ferry. For all we've done to save the ferry and keep it going, it feels like it's drifting away – becoming forgotten history.

The rain will return at some point. But when the river rises, will there still be a ferry to cross the James? If you support the Hatton Ferry, let us know!

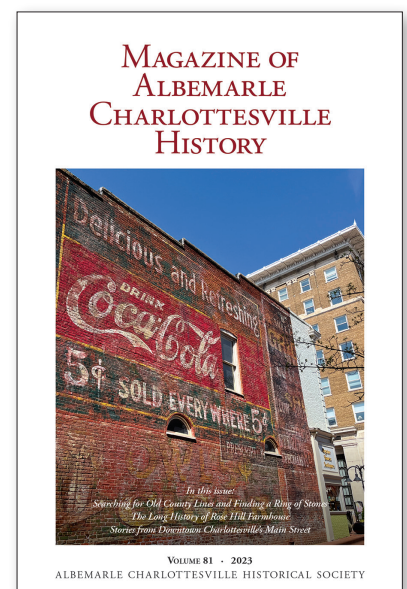
Email: hattonferry@albemarlehistory.org

Follow: facebook.com/HattonFerry

Donate: albemarlehistory.org/support

The Magazine

Volume 81 of the *MACH* has shipped! 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.



I N M E M O R I A M

Dan Jordan

A personal note from Phyllis Leffler, President

Dan Jordan came to Monticello in 1985. I arrived in Charlottesville and The University of Virginia in 1986. My strong interest in public history led me to explore what was happening at major historic sites in the region. I was struck by the changes that were happening at Monticello. Dan came out of an academic background, having been on the faculty of VCU. He was always interested in hiring experts. It was said that Monticello had more Ph.D's on its staff than many history departments at small universities!

Pretty quickly, during the 1990s, there was growing interest in making visible the role of slavery in the South. Dan Jordan began to have his staff talk about the Monticello "community" on the mountain. When Eugene Foster, a retired professor at Tufts and UVA, oversaw the DNA study that concluded the likely Thomas Jefferson paternity of Sally Hemmings' children, Monticello's president Dan Jordan responded immediately, appointing a staff research committee to explore the findings. Once they reported back to him validating Foster's report, he was fearless in concurring with his committee's findings, affirming "the strong likelihood that Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemmings had a relationship over time that led to the birth of one, and perhaps all, of the known children of Sally Hemmings."^[1] Committees were

established to talk about how to expand the interpretive lens. I was privileged to serve for a while on a committee with national experts on African-American interpretation. That integrity and courage had multiple ripple effects across plantation communities.



Image from www.monticello.org/exhibits-events/blog/remembering-daniel-p-jordan-1938-2024/

I also knew Dan more personally when I founded and ran U.Va.'s Institute for Public History, placing student interns at historic houses, libraries, museums, historical societies and research institutions across Virginia and beyond. I met with him multiple times, and for many years U.Va. students helped support the work of Monticello through our partnership.

In 2008, in retirement, Dan Jordan and Charles Bryan (President of the Virginia Historical Society) formed a consulting firm to serve historical organizations in multiple ways. Through our former board member George Gilliam, a close friend of Dan's, we were able to hire their firm to find our current executive director. And, as they say, "the rest is history...."!

Dan Jordan was the consummate gentleman. He *always* made people feel that they were important and doing valuable work. He *always* was generous in his praise. Many at Monticello remember how he remembered their names, names of family members and children regardless of their role. I, too, felt that generosity of his spirit. He was one of a kind.

^[1] <https://www.monticello.org/thomas-jefferson/jefferson-slavery/thomas-jefferson-and-sally-hemmings-a-brief-account/research-report-on-jefferson-and-hemmings/statement-on-the-report-by-tjmf-president-daniel-p-jordan/>.

I N M E M O R I A M

Craig Allen McPherson

(1946 - 2024)

Craig was born in Cleveland, OH and graduated from Solon High School. He studied and played football at Ashland College from 1964 to 1966 when he joined the US Navy. He trained as a cook and was assigned to the nuclear submarine USS Edison, on which he spent several 90-day underwater deployments. After his discharge, Craig graduated from the Culinary Institute of America and subsequently worked as an Executive Chef. After spending some time in Alabama to be near his ailing parents and then Texas to be near his sister, Craig



Captain Craig on the Hatton Ferry

moved to Buckingham County with his cousin Martha Louis and her husband Paul in 2009. During his final 15 years, Craig served as Elder of Maysville Presbyterian Church; President of his Ruritan Club; Teacher and Board Member of Ellis Acres; helped to bring the first mobile Food Pantry to Central Virginia; and for 7 years was the beloved Captain Craig on Hatton Ferry. Craig is survived by three sisters, nieces and nephews, and many cousins. And, he will be remembered by many long-time friends of the Hatton Ferry.

Standout, Informative, and Unforgettable Guided History Walking Tours

Programs Manager Sterling Howell knows his stuff and we have the reviews to prove it! But we need your help; he can't do it all by himself. We are looking for volunteers to help guide our walking tours. We have the tour materials and a great teacher, just need the storytellers in our community to help us bring history alive for our neighbors and visitors alike.

Contact us to volunteer: programs@albemarlehistory.org or 434-296-1492.

8/30/2024 Email Thank You:

Dear Sterling Howell,

I wanted to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude for the one-on-one guided history tour of Charlottesville you provided. Your expertise and passion for the history of this area truly made the stories come alive for me. It was an unforgettable experience.

This tour was the highlight of my solo self-guided history journey through Appalachia. The way you brought historical events, people,

and places to life added so much depth to my understanding and appreciation of this region's rich past. Your knowledge and storytelling skills made this tour a standout experience.

Thank you again for such an enlightening and enjoyable tour. I will carry the insights and memories from this experience with me for a long time to come.

Best regards, Beth Sehr

On the Calendar

Follow us on Facebook (facebook.com/ACHistSoc) or Eventbrite (ACHistSoc.eventbrite.com) for up to date information on all of our programs and tours.

Email us at programs@albemarlehistry.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. Contact Sterling at programs@albemarlehistry.org or 434-296-1492.
- **Seasonal Themed Tours** – Stay tuned for announcements through Facebook, Eventbrite, and email for upcoming FALL *Cool Weather* Tours:
 - Special Maplewood Cemetery Tours
 - Erased History with Miranda Burnett
 - Downtown Charlottesville Jewish History with Phyllis Leffler
- **Thur. Nov. 14, 6pm – Confronting Vietnam War Memories: ACHS Panel Discussion at The Center at Belvedere.** How does a community heal from war, especially one as divisive as the Vietnam War? How should Charlottesville remember its Vietnam War period? As America prepares in 2025 to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Fall of Saigon that ended the Vietnam War, join us and learn about the Charlottesville-based group that upkeeps the country's first Vietnam memorial and their plans for this important space for community healing.
- **Thur. Dec. 5, 6pm – Freedom of Religion – First Amendment Community Workshop #2 (of 3) at The Center at Belvedere.**

Join Us for these upcoming programs

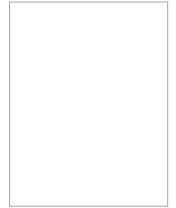
- **Sept 14 – Dec 14, 2024 – Tues-Fri 1-6pm | Sat. 10am-1pm – Beyond Boundaries: The Sculpture of Alice Wesley Ivory – Contemporary Gallery at the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center** (233 4th Street NW, Charlottesville VA 22903) – Curated in partnership with JSAAHC, a selection of Alice 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 Alice Ivory's 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. **The exhibit was made possible through the generosity of the Joseph and Robert Cornell Foundation and the support of the JSAAHC Annual Fund.**
- **Mon. Oct 21, 6pm – Libraries and Freedom of Access to Information – First Amendment Community Workshop #1 (of 3) – JMRL Central Library – 3rd Floor Swanson Room.** Join the Robert H. Smith Center for the Constitution at James Madison's Montpelier, in partnership with the ACHS for an insightful discussion on the role libraries play in safeguarding citizens' First Amendment rights. The workshop will address questions about free expression, emerging trends, and the importance of maintaining these democratic principles in an ever-evolving information landscape. **Space will be limited, registration required ACHistSoc.eventbrite.com.**
- **Wed. February 19, 6pm – Assembly and Petition – First Amendment Community Workshop #3 (of 3) at The Center at Belvedere.** Join the Center for the Constitution (James Madison's Montpelier) and the Albemarle Charlottesville Historical Society for an enlightening conversation on the First Amendment rights to assembly and petition. This event will address historical and contemporary examples of peaceful assembly and petitioning, as well as the legal protections and challenges faced today. **Space will be limited, registration required ACHistSoc.eventbrite.com.**
- **Wed. March 19, 6pm – Thomas Jefferson & the Indian Burial Mound with Rick Britton at The Center at Belvedere.** Thomas Jefferson was a true Renaissance man, a brilliant polymath with an eclectic and dizzying array of interests. Of these, he called science his "passion," and over the course of his busy lifetime, Jefferson made contributions to botany, paleontology, meteorology, entomology, ethnology, and comparative anatomy (to name but a few). He was also an amateur archaeologist, and in 1783, spurred on by a document sent him by the French government, Thomas Jefferson excavated a Monacan Indian burial mound six miles north of Charlottesville. It was both a great scientific achievement and a shocking desecration of an obviously sacred site.



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.