

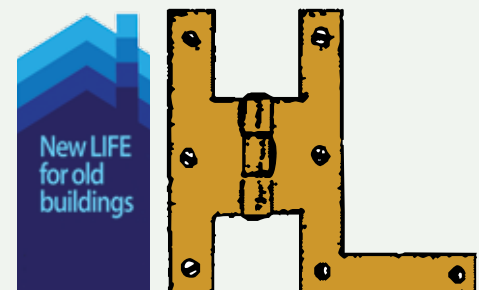
Newsletter

HLF Celebrates Its
50th Anniversary
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From the President's Desk

When we build, let us build for ever... for the greatest glory of a building is not in its stones, nor its gold. It is the glory of its age and that deep sense of voicefulness, its mysterious sympathy which we feel in its walls that have long been washed by the passing waves of humanity.

—John Ruskin, 1890

We are the passing waves of humanity and in so being, we are the keepers of those walls. If you have ever experienced the feelings of walking into an abandoned structure and been led to wonder what tales it would tell, you may understand Ruskin's statement regarding the importance of our responsibility as keepers. If we take that mission seriously, we agree to save the walls so that we may hear what they tell us. They speak of the past, which is a public possession and belongs to anyone who is aware of it, then it grows by being shared.

Literary and social historian Dr. Walter Havighurst spoke of the displaced Oklahomans in John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. They loaded their goods in an old truck, and though they had very little, they asked a poignant and universal question: "How will we know it's us without our past?"

So it is, that when we in Historic Lexington Foundation commit to saving our walls, we are saving our past so that we will know it is us. What more worthy endeavor?

Sincerely,

Beverly Tucker
President

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Cover image: North Main Street, Lexington, Virginia

Perhaps no other location represents the heart and the soul of Historic Lexington Foundation more than the block of North Main Street between Washington and Henry Streets. It was here in the late 1960s and early 1970s that HLF purchased, stabilized, and partially restored the Alexander-Withrow House, McCampbell Inn, Jacob Ruff House, and Dold Building.

Pictured in this photo taken by HLF Executive Director Don Hasfurther are the McCampbell Inn, now part of The Georges, and the Jacob Ruff House. Both received HLF Founders' Awards in 2015 for the restorations undertaken by their current owners. Additionally, the McCampbell Inn and the First Baptist Church, also pictured in the cover photo, have been recipients of HLF façade grants.

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HLF Celebrates 50th Anniversary of Its Founding

Imagine Lexington's Main Street without the distinctive profile and diamond-patterned brickwork of the Alexander-Withrow House. If you'd rather not contemplate its loss, then thank the community leaders who rallied to save this iconic structure from the imminent threat of demolition by neglect. In 1966, in order to save it and other architectural treasures, these inspired citizens formed Historic Lexington Foundation. For 50 years HLF and its many determined volunteers have worked tirelessly to safeguard the architectural heritage of Lexington and Rockbridge County.

When you walk through Lexington and admire its historic architecture and vibrant downtown, you may not know that many buildings exist because HLF played a role in protecting them. In some cases HLF purchased, renovated, found a buyer, and sold them. On many of them, HLF attached an easement to guarantee that the exterior (and in a few cases, the interior) was maintained in perpetuity.

What began with the Alexander-Withrow House was quickly followed with the Central Hotel (now McCampbell Inn), and in the

1970s by the Stonewall Jackson House, Jacob Ruff House, Dold Building, Reid-White-Philben House, Davidson-Tucker House, and Boiler House. Later the Lorwood Building, Lyric Theatre, Miller's House at Jordan's Point, Hopkins House, Hopkins Green, Roberson-Phalen House, and Holmes House joined the list of properties safeguarded by HLF. Most recently, in 2015, at the request of Lexington Presbyterian Church, HLF placed an easement on the exterior and interior of the Presbyterian Manse.

As you continue walking through Lexington's downtown historic district, you will also notice buildings with a fresh coat of paint or repointed brick. In 2013 HLF undertook a partnership with the City of Lexington, offering façade grants to business and property owners to foster improvements. To date the grants have assisted such properties as the Alexander-Withrow House, McCampbell Inn, First Baptist Church, Campbell House, Palms Restaurant, and State Theatre.

Upon arriving at home, open two books published by HLF: *The Architecture of Historic Lexington* (1977) by Royster Lyle and Pamela Simpson, with photographs by Sally Mann, and *The Architecture of Historic Rockbridge* (2015) by Daniel Pezzoni. Marvel again at the significant historic architecture of this county and thank HLF for its role in preserving it.

With this in mind, please join in celebrating HLF's 50th anniversary on Friday, November 4, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. at VMI's Moody Hall. Returning to Moody Hall is fitting because HLF held its very first dinner there, in 1970. The gala anniversary celebration includes a wine and hors d'oeuvres reception, three-course dinner, tribute to founders, remarks by Col. Keith Gibson, live music, video, and more. *At Fifty*, a handsomely illustrated book that tells HLF's story, will be given to attendees.



Jacob Ruff House on N. Main Street, Historic photo



Jacob Ruff House on N. Main Street, Summer 2016



Hopkins House Undergoes Extensive Restoration

The Hopkins House, located at 120 West Nelson Street, has undergone a major restoration in 2016. The property is owned by Adamson Development Corporation of Richmond, the company that restored the 1897 Rockbridge County Courthouse and the Thomas U. Walter-designed 1840 Old Jail. Both of these earlier projects received HLF Founders' Awards for the restoration.

The Hopkins House dates from the mid-1840s. As noted in *The Architecture of Historic Lexington*, "the Hopkins House is in the form of the traditional I house, but its two-story porch with Doric columns places it in the Classical Revival as well." One of the more interesting features of the house is the mantel in the west parlor. Best described as folk art, the mantel has carved scrolls and flowers and a hand reaching for a bouquet.

In 2003, HLF secured an easement from the Paxton family, owners at the time of the Hopkins House. In addition to the standard language protecting the exterior of the house, the easement states that the "character-defining architectural elements of the FOYER of the building, including the main stair case, the large arched opening between rooms, and the folk art 'hand' mantel shall not be permanently altered or removed from the subject property without the prior written approval of the Historic Lexington Foundation."

Early in the restoration process, John Adamson informed HLF of its plans and its intention to adhere strictly to the terms of the easement. "I spoke regularly with John," notes HLF's Executive Director Don Hasfurther, "and often wandered into the house to monitor the work and speak with the tradesmen." Hasfurther was



Hopkins House

particularly impressed with the effort made to repair the historic windows.

As with most restoration projects of a building of that age, the new owners discovered many issues that they had not fully anticipated. To correct years of water damage, Adamson Development undertook extensive sitework to improve drainage, excavated the basement for a new concrete floor with professional waterproofing, and rebuilt the back addition. The house now has all new plumbing and electric. Additionally, the Hopkins House now has a fiber optic connection and is hardwired throughout for data. In July, workmen placed a new copper roof on the Hopkins House.

Work on the house is to be completed in August. Washington and Lee University has leased the property for use as a program center.



Mantel at the Hopkins House

The Hopkins House was one of roughly 400 buildings recently surveyed by the Commonwealth Heritage Group. The survey was a joint Virginia Department of Historic Resources–City of Lexington undertaking with the goal of better documenting Lexington historic resources. HLF supported the project with the hope that it will lead to a new National Register nomination and perhaps an expansion of the Lexington Historic District.

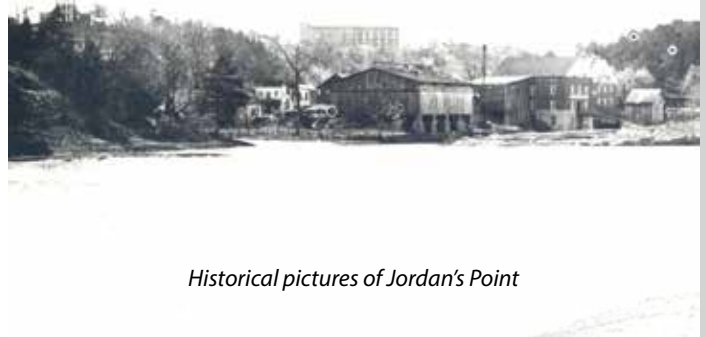
HLF Achieves Historic District Status for Jordan's Point

Jordan's Point in East Lexington has been designated as an historic district by the Commonwealth of Virginia. The designation was approved by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources State Review Board and Historic Resources Board on June 16, 2016. HLF had submitted the nomination earlier this year. Dan Pezzoni, who authored HLF's newest book, *The Architecture of Historic Rockbridge*, wrote the nomination for HLF.

Jordan's Point, known as the Point for short, is the name given to the point of land formed by the confluence of the Maury River and Woods Creek. The Point is bounded on the south side by bluffs, on one of which is the individually listed National Register house Stono, built for one of the Point's early nineteenth-century developers, John Jordan. During that century and the first part of the twentieth century, the Point was the center of industry in Lexington.

Additionally, the Point was Lexington's transportation hub. The Great Road crossed the Point in the eighteenth century, superseded by a turnpike and a rail line in the nineteenth century. The Point was also the end-point of the North River Navigation System, a series of locks and dams from the James River in Glasgow to Lexington.

The new historic district contains a mix of contributing historic resources. Several of these are the foundations of nineteenth-century industrial buildings, such as the Jordan and Moorhead Merchant Mill and Cotton Factory and the Beechenbrook Foundry and Machine Works. Others are transportation-related, such as the gauge dock and wharves of the canal, a covered bridge abutment, and the remains of a railroad trestle.



Historical pictures of Jordan's Point

There are two intact historic buildings, the Miller's House (1811) and Beechenbrook Chapel (1874). The Miller's House opened as a museum in May with exhibits highlighting the Point's industrial and transportation past. Beechenbrook Chapel, built by the Lexington Presbyterian Church as a chapel for the Point's workers, is currently undergoing rehabilitation for adaptive reuse.

Jordan's Point Historic District is now listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register. The nomination document now goes to the National Park Service for consideration for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. HLF expects the historic district to be listed on the National Register in August.



*Dan Pezzoni leads a tour of Jordan's Point.
Courtesy of The News-Gazette.*

Thanks in part to donations from family and friends of the late Mitzi Perry-Miller, HLF was able to accomplish the designation of Jordan's Point as an historic district.



Preservation Month Focus on Robert E. Lee's Impact on Landscape Design at Washington College

In commemoration of National Preservative Month, HLF sponsored a lecture entitled "Washington and Lee's Front Lawn and the American Landscape Tradition." The lecture was researched and presented by Lexington landscape architect and HLF board member Arthur Bartenstein.

Robert E. Lee took great interest in campus landscape in addition to building and curricular improvements upon accepting humble Washington College's call to lead. Class of 1870 graduate Frank Bell Webb recalled, "I would often see General Lee in conversation with the janitor of the grounds, and giving him instructions, evidently, as to his work about the lawn and grounds. It was remarkable to see him (Lee) thus engaged, when he had so many other important duties to meet."

As Superintendent at West Point, Lee had taken a similar interest in the landscape of the military academy. But clearly the interest was developed much earlier, cultivated by youthful encounters with an English-influenced landscape tradition dating to Virginia's colonial plantations. Also an able civil engineer, President Lee was

fully versed in technical sitework such as earth moving, drainage design, and road layout.

Lee found the Washington College campus, neglected throughout the Civil War, cluttered by livestock fences, improvised carriage ways, discarded construction debris, and a former tannery works. Joining Robert E. Lee on a Washington College trustee design committee were eminent Lexingtonians Hugh Barclay, Dr. Alfred Leyburn, and William Ruffner.

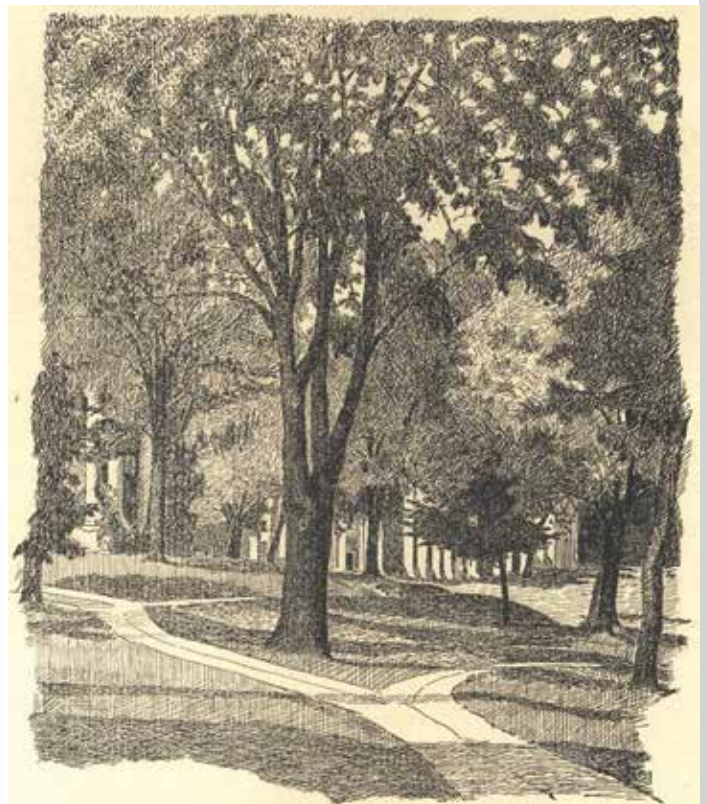
Included in Bartenstein's presentation were many "before and after," pre-Civil War and post-R.E. Lee era campus views, most by master Lexington photographer Michael Miley. In concluding his presentation, Bartenstein pointed out the lawn's oldest trees, a handful pre-dating Lee.

HLF is grateful to Washington and Lee's Special Collections staff for their help with the presentation, in particular access to many archival photographs and images of the front campus.

Washington College front lawn prior to Robert E. Lee era improvements.



Marion Junkin sketch of W&L front lawn landscape, published 1926, illustrating Lee-directed landscape improvements.



Mid-20th century view of campus walk designed by Robert E. Lee



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A list of those whose gifts were received during our 2016 Annual Campaign

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Contributing to HLF

Much of our operating expenses and special activities are covered through the generosity of people like you who believe in our mission. Through the ongoing support of donors, near and far, HLF is able to lead and encourage preservation activities, such as the designation of Jordan's Point as an historic district. By giving to the Annual Fund, you truly are helping to be the conscience of the built environment in Lexington and the surrounding area. Because we are a non-profit organization your donations are tax-deductible as allowed by the IRS.

Please also remember HLF in your estate planning. We believe that bequests and other major gifts should benefit the community. Recent bequests made to HLF have established a façade grant program for improvements in properties in the local Lexington Historic District and assisted the publication of *The Architecture of Historic Rockbridge*.

Annual Meeting Held at Paxton House in Buena Vista



HLF Program Committee Rick Wolf, Sue Van Leer, Dee Joyce-Hayes, Sunny Macdonald, Lenny Bruno, and Nancy Sullivan



Skip Ravenhorst accepts Founders' Award from Beverly Tucker

Upcoming HLF Events and Activities

Join HLF on Main Street in Lexington at the **Rockbridge Community Festival**, Saturday, August 27. Come meet members of the HLF board of directors and HLF's volunteers who do so much for the Rockbridge community.

Following the stabilization and partial restoration of the Holmes House in Lexington's Green Hill neighborhood, HLF placed an historic marker on the house. HLF is now offering such markers for other historic properties. Look for more information later this summer at www.historiclexington.org.



Coming this fall: HLF Living History Tour. In cooperation with Washington & Lee University and others in our community, HLF will be conducting walking tours of downtown Lexington to learn about the City's distinctive architecture and hear from actors portraying some of the individuals who occupied these buildings in the 19th and 20th centuries. Look for more information later this summer at www.historiclexington.org.

Join in the Festivities!
**HLF Celebrates its
50th Anniversary**

Friday, November 4, 2016

6:00 p.m.

Moody Hall at VMI

\$75.00 per person