



# Preservation focus

Newsletter of the  
Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation

## Preservation Awards Announced

On November 15, the RVPF gave out nine Preservation Awards to recipients across the Roanoke Valley. The event was held in the redone Virginian Railway Passenger Station, and the presentation can be viewed online through our website. Congratulations to all the award recipients!

**Friends of the Greenfield Preston Plantation**  
Award for Advocacy

**Roanoke City Municipal Building Front Entrance**  
Award for Restoration

**Virginian Railway Passenger Station**  
Award for Restoration

**Maker Mart After School Enrichment Program**  
Award for Adaptive Reuse

**Clay Street House**  
Award for Restoration



**The Carver Project**  
Award for African-American Heritage Education

**Southwest Virginia Antique Power Festival**  
Award for Agricultural Heritage Education

**Deedie Kagey**  
Award for Education

**Joel Richert**  
Lifetime Achievement Award

## History by Bike Tour



The RVPF has partnered with Ride Solutions to develop bike routes that highlight historic resources in the Roanoke Valley. The first route, to be launched with an inaugural ride on Sunday May 14, focuses on four properties in North Roanoke that predate the establishment of the city. These sites, which have all been RVPF Endangered Sites, include: the Compton Bateman House/Villa Heights (seen here), the site of Nestlebrook, Melrose, and the Caretaker's House at Washington Park, as well as many other historic 20th-century neighborhoods and sites along the way. The online bike route includes a map, current and historic photos, and the history of each property.

The goal of this project is to help raise awareness of Roanoke's historic resources - particularly those endangered - by reaching new audiences in non-traditional ways. The RVPF and Ride Solutions plan to add more routes in the future. Check

out the first History by Bike route at: <http://ridesolutions.org/event/social-ride-history-by-bike/>. Watch the RVPF and Ride Solutions websites for additional routes in the future.

Visit us on the web at [www.roanokepreservation.org](http://www.roanokepreservation.org)  
Like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/roanokepreservation](https://www.facebook.com/roanokepreservation)  
Follow us on Twitter at [@PreserveRoanoke](https://twitter.com/PreserveRoanoke)  
Follow us on Instagram at [@roanokepreservation](https://www.instagram.com/roanokepreservation)

# PAINT FOR PRESERVATION

**Save the Date!**

**Thursday,  
September 14**

RVPF is hosting an art auction to raise money for preservation advocacy and education in the Roanoke Valley. This year's event will take place on Thursday, September 14, at the Salem Museum. Each year we focus on specific locations that have been featured on our Endangered Sites list that have been preserved with our help or that still need awareness of their circumstances. At the event, guests will enjoy light refreshments and drinks while buying local artwork during live and silent auctions.

The locations we plan to spotlight this year are:

Preston House  
Hollins University

Roanoke College  
Crystal Spring Fire House

We are still seeking artists to participate in this event: for more information about how to participate, please visit our website [www.roanokepreservation.org/paintforpreservation](http://www.roanokepreservation.org/paintforpreservation)

## Board of Trustees

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Erin Coogan



## Preservation Pub Talks

The RVPF introduced the Preservation Pub Talk series last fall as a way to encourage people interested in preservation-related topics to gather for an informal discussion. The first Pub Talk, held in November at the Tap House in Daleville, was "Lessons Learned from Greenfield." Led by Tom Klatka, archaeologist with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, that discussion touched on ways to avoid situations like the moving of the slave quarters at Greenfield in Botetourt County. In February, Isabel Thornton of Restoration Housing Inc. led a discussion on "Keeping It Real: Preserving Authenticity as well as Buildings." Held at Taaza in the Grandin Village, we had a provocative and relevant conversation about how the use of the space by people, past and present, can often be as valuable as the historic building itself.

Our next Preservation Pub Talk, "Taking it to the Streets - Making History Relevant," will be held at 6:00pm on Wednesday, June 14, at Billy's in downtown Roanoke. Stephen Warren, president of the Board of Trustees for the Historical Society and History Museum of Western Virginia, will facilitate the conversation. No reservations are required - just come join us, order a drink or an appetizer, and enjoy an informal discussion. Check out the RVPF website and Facebook for future pub talks. Submit an idea for future talks and facilitators, and we'll buy you a beer!

## Historic Plaque Program

The RVPF will unveil two new additions to our Historic Plaque Program in May. Plaques will go up on the reopened entry of the Roanoke City Municipal Building and outside of Davidsons (412 S. Jefferson St). A generous donation from the Colonial Dames paid for the Municipal Building plaque. For more information on our Historic Plaque Program, as well as current locations, visit our website [www.roanokepreservation.org/historic-plaque-program](http://www.roanokepreservation.org/historic-plaque-program).

## Virginia Area Museums State Conference

Volunteers from the RVPF helped about 100 attendees with the Progressive Evening during The Virginia Area Museums State Conference in March. They guided participants from the Hotel Roanoke to the Taubman and Transportation Museums. It was a cold, but successful evening. One of the programs offered was a Historic Downtown Walking Tour. RVPF President Alison Blanton and trustee Anne Beckett planned and conducted a tour for about 40 participants. RVPF volunteers went along to help keep the attendees together and answer any questions they might have along the route. Thank you to all who helped with both these events and represented the RVPF well.



# Preston Place

Guest Contributor: Ginny Savage, Preston Place Committee Chair

Preston Place, the oldest residence in Salem and one of the oldest in the Roanoke Valley, has great historic significance dating back to the 1800s as a primary witness to the comings and goings on the Great Road. By the early 2000s, the thoroughfare in front of the home had changed significantly. Dr. Esther Brown, owner of Preston Place, did not want to see her family home succumb to the big box stores and parking lots of busy West Main Street. The home, built circa 1821, had been in her family since 1879. She had grown up there, and she and her husband had raised their family there. The Salem Historical Society, with its mission to preserve Salem's historic structures, helped Dr. Brown put the property under a Historic Easement in 2006.

After Dr. Brown's death, the family donated Preston Place to the Salem Historical Society in November 2014. A committee was formed to care for the property and find an appropriate use for the home which, by then, had been unoccupied for several years.

After over two years of emptying and maintaining the property, fixing gutters, painting the exterior, doing tree work, and other maintenance, the Committee was fortunate enough to find a dream tenant – the White Oak Tea Tavern of Botetourt County. Kim and Curtis Arney, owners of the Tea Tavern, were looking for a historic structure where they could expand their kitchen and dining areas. Preston Place more than doubles their space.

In November 2016, the committee began the process of turning the residence into a commercial space that adhered to the rules and regulations of the City of Salem, the state and the federal government. It has been quite a process!



First, the committee got the zoning changed, then carried out much needed interior repairs: stripping old wallpaper, painting, installing a sump pump in the basement, overhauling the rear patio, changing the existing kitchen to a space more suitable for a commercial kitchen, updating a bathroom to accommodate wheelchairs, adding central air conditioning and an ADA ramp. They also needed parking and had to have site plans and architectural drawings for all of this. They had to move a drain that was out by the road, conduct asbestos abatement, reinforce several floors, and rid the property of termites that were found in several areas. They also had to hire a certified archaeologist to conduct discovery on places that had to be disturbed to add the handicap ramp. A major hurdle was provided by a Virginia state code that necessitated 70 feet on the property for a fire engine to turn around! The committee accomplished all this and more with the help and hard work of a number of volunteers: Dave Robbins, Ginny Savage, Chum White, Whitney Leeson, Marsha Shortell, Jack Susser, Mike Pulice, Cindy Miller, and Tom Klatka.

Landscaping and plantings are the last steps, but these final improvements are coming soon. After five very busy months, the Salem Historical Society is soon going to welcome the White Oak Tea Tavern to Salem! The Society is most grateful to the Brown family for this rare gift, and for all the donors to the project and hardworking volunteers who made this dream come true. The community is excited to come to the completion of this labor of love and have this majestic old home as a gathering place for current and future generations. Come visit the White Oak Tea Tavern soon!



## Celebrate National Historic Preservation Month in May

RVPF needs your help as we shine a spotlight on all the special places in the Roanoke Valley that make it a unique place to live. The goal is to raise awareness about what we care about and to encourage dialogue about the importance of historic preservation. To participate, take photos of the places that matter most to you and share your photos online with the hashtag #roanokelivinghistory. These places can be as large as the mountains or as small as a "star" brick in the sidewalk. RVPF will spotlight our favorites @PreserveRoanoke on Twitter and Instagram.

# History by Bike and 2017 Endangered Sites

Sunday, May 14, at 4:00pm  
Compton-Bateman House/Villa Heights  
2750 Hoover Street NW  
Roanoke, VA

Bring your bike and join us for the inaugural History by Bike ride! Learn more about endangered sites in the Roanoke Valley.

## Preservation Pub Talk

Wednesday, June 14, at 6:00pm  
Billy's (102 Market St. Roanoke, VA)

"Taking it to the Streets - Making History Relevant"  
with Stephen Warren

P.O. Box 1366  
Roanoke, VA 24007

