Preservation of Historic Winchester, Inc.



Winter 2014

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PHW RECEIVES BEQUEST FROM VIRGINIA WATKINS MITCHELL

It was a sincerely heartwarming surprise for PHW County in 2009. She passed away on July 31, 2013. to learn that Virginia (Gin) Watkins Mitchell left PHW a bequest in her will. She and her husband Gin is survived by her daughter, Virginia Page Roland had been "early joiners" to Preservation of Mitchell of White Post; two nieces, Diana Watkins Historic Winchester, first appearing on member- White and Virginia Stuart Watkins; two nephews, ship rosters in the early

During World War II, Gin served with the Red Cross as a nurse's assistant in the Philippines. It was during that service that she met Roland (Rolie) Greene Mitchell, Jr., who was serving in the Army. They were married on May 1, 1948, and lived at The Quarters in Millwood until 1957. Then they moved to their beloved home, Saratoga. She was active in a number of organizations, including Blue Ridge Hunt, the Women's Auxiliary of the Boyce Volunteer Fire Company, Blue Ridge Players, Christ Church of Millwood, the Greenway Garden Club, the Millwood Country Club, the Seal Harbor Club, and the Sulgrave Club.

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1970s. William B. Watkins III and Frazer Welsh Watkins; and seven great nieces and nephews.



She was preceded in death by her husband in 2002 and by her brother William Bell Watkins II of Clarke

MIXED BAG FOR 2013 HOLIDAY HOUSE TOUR



It was a rollercoaster of highs and lows for the 2013 Holiday House Tour. The Bough and Dough Shop was bustling on Saturday with the wreath-making lesson, a plethora of vendors with unique handcrafted items, and mini-tours of the Winchester Little Theatre. We had a fabulous party at the home of Bruce and Donna Downing, with over 160 guests passing through the party and touring the homes on Saturday night. By all measures Saturday was a smashing success.

Unfortunately, rapidly deteriorating weather conditions on Sunday led to the tour being cancelled for the first time in its 37 year history. We are all

deeply disappointed, but we could not have proceeded with the tour in good conscience. The Tour Committee is formulating an inclement weather policy for next year to combat the possibility of another late cancellation in 2014. We hope you'll give the tour another try, as we are excited to revisit "Potato Hill," the first neighborhood PHW worked to preserve, in conjunction with PHW's 50th Anniversary in 2014. ♦

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A MILESTONE FOR THE DOWNTOWN **BY JOHN BARKER**

There was a milestone reached recently for the City of There is still more work to be done. The Taylor Hotel Winchester and its citizens. It took the work of many folks project will be wrapping up this year with a new restaurant, and a lot of thinking outside of the box to make this the outdoor pavilion, and the fly tower. There are many happen. There probably isn't a person in or around more properties in Winchester that are in need of Winchester that hasn't talked about it at some point over preservation, that are an important part of Winchester's the past few years, had an opinion about it, or wished it history, and offer great opportunities. We are seeing would just go away.

I'm talking about the Taylor Hotel, with the recent opening On behalf of Preservation of Historic Winchester (PHW), I of the five apartments on the upper floors. Who would want to extend our most heartfelt thanks and have thought three or four years ago that this would ever congratulations to those who made the Taylor Hotel a become a reality, that the dilapidated building could even reality. This would not have been possible without the have been saved? Who would not have thought three or team of the Winchester Economic Development Authority four years ago that it would eventually just fall down, or be and Wishneff and Associates, and their creative solutions. torn down because of the safety hazard?

This milestone is a testament to the dedication the City of happen. Winchester has to its history and its commitment to the Resources in Richmond and the National Park Service in downtown area.

I've been in Winchester for over 30 years now. I remember would not be financially possible. Thanks to the architects when JC Penney and Leggetts were fixtures on the and engineers, the contractors and subcontractors who downtown mall. I remember when they moved out, how took on this challenging work. And thank you to everyone other businesses followed suit or had to close their doors, behind the scenes, including the downtown businesses, and how the future of the Loudoun Street Mall was in shops, and tenants, for their patience over the years. question. Downtown declined for years.

But I also remember when the City of Winchester made the believed this could be done, and who knew the importance conscious decision to focus on the revitalization of of the Taylor Hotel to Winchester. downtown. For me, it really seemed to pick up momentum Simply put, this is a success story, and once again a source with opening up Braddock and Cameron Streets to two way of pride for Winchester. traffic. The infrastructure improvements, new sidewalks, and landscaping completed with that project helped define This letter originally appeared in the Winchester Star. ♦ the core downtown area, and create a walkable center. Top that off with the recent improvements and renovations to the Old Town Mall itself, and all you have to do is look at all the people who have come back.

All the above changes have sparked new businesses, shops, restaurants, and boutiques. Apartments have been added, making downtown a place to live, not just visit. Prior to the Taylor Hotel, multiple buildings have been preserved and renovated. Look at the Union Jack Pub, the Lovett Building, the Solenberger Building, and the Old Blind Faith Building, to name a few. It's now spreading out from the mall and Loudoun Street to the side streets such as Boscawen Street, and throughout the historic district. This has all been an economic benefit to Winchester, in a time when so many other locales are still struggling with this economy.

firsthand what preservation can do for a community.

Kudos to the City officials, and the various City Departments and personnel involved in making this Thank you to the Department of Historic Washington, without their tax credit program for the preservation of historic structures, projects such as this

But most of all, thank you to Winchester and all those who



BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

Two volunteers are needed to fill open positions on the Winchester Board of Architectural Review. The Board of Architectural Review promotes preservation, protection and maintenance of buildings, structures, places and areas within The Board consists of seven voting members who are the Historic District. Prior to any alteration, reconstruction, demolition, or restoration of buildings or structures within the Historic District, the Board reviews applications and grants Certificates of Appropriateness for such changes. The Board uses the following when considering applications:

The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab Winchester Historic District Guidelines www.winchesterva.gov/planning/historic-district-designguidelines

PHW TURNS 50 IN 2014

PHW is taking a look back at our past fifty years as an organization. Thank you to all those trailblazing preservationists who went before us and to everyone who continues to be fascinated with historic buildings and the story of Winchester, Virginia. We could not have reached this major milestone without your support!

As we are a grassroots organization, much of our historical memory is held by the individuals who have volunteered or worked for the organization. We'd like your help in documenting that portion of our past before it is forever lost. Here's how you can help:

Article 14 of the Winchester Zoning Ordinance www.winchesterva.gov/planning/zoneord

appointed by City Council. One should be a registered architect or design professional, one should be a licensed real estate agent, one or more should own property or reside in the Historic District, and one or more may be from backgrounds in architectural history, history, planning, real estate, or archaeology. All members should possess knowledge of and demonstrate interest in preservation of the historic character of Winchester. The Board meets the first and third Thursdays of each month at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Rouss City Hall. ♦

- Share your personal recollections of PHW events, activities, or projects from any point in our history
- Donate or loan for copying any items and/or photographs with a PHW connection. We are particularly interested in documenting PHW's early years (1964-1976), past scripts for Holiday House Tour docents, and any images and histories of structures in Winchester
- Assist PHW in identifying unlabelled photographs in our collection

Can you think of some other way you can assist us? Let us know at phwi@verizon.net or (540) 667-3577. ♦

PHW LUNCH AND LEARN, FEB 20, 2014 **BY ED ACKER**

PHW launched its 2014 Lunch and Learn lectures on February 1976 survey never determined the "contributing" vs. "non-20th with a presentation called Winchester National Historic contributing" status of each property. A "contributing" District Amendment 2014 given by Tim Youmans, now resource is one that retains its historic character and integrity starting his 26th year as Director of Planning of the City of and contributes to the historic character of the district. Winchester.

Mr. Youmans detailed the process by which the City of consultants from Washington, DC, surveyed 416 NHD Winchester initiated the amendment to the existing National properties in 2008, and EHT Traceries and Maral Kalbian, Historic District (NHD), a process funded by Virginia Certified local historical preservation expert from Berryville, surveyed Local Government (CLG) preservation grants administered through the Virginia Department of Historic now include that contributing vs. non-contributing Resources (DHR). The period of significance for the original determination for each property. 1976 national historic district survey was 1752 to 1929, or fifty years before the district was first placed on the National In 2013 the city hired Dovetail Cultural Resource Group to Register. The NHD was amended in 2003 and 2008 to add 17 prepare the amendment and continuation sheets (the more properties which period of significance was extended individual property documentations) for the existing NHD to 1951 for just those particular properties, bringing the NHD properties, and to survey those additional properties that to a current total of 1058 properties. However, the original were built to a new period of significance, from 1930 to 1964,

EHT Traceries, Inc., architectural and historical preservation and the remaining 592 properties in 2010-2011. Their surveys

PHW LUNCH AND LEARN, FEB 20, 2014 (CONT.)

resources that are at least 50 years old from the anticipated 2014 year of registry. The City of Winchester GIS Division provided mapping services for the amendment application.

The Dovetail survey documented 191 resources on 147 the historical consultants for possible NHD expansion options properties. Note that some properties might include multiple were primarily to bring the NHD into alignment with the local resources, such as accessory structures like garages, sheds, or barns. The resources breakdown as follows:

- 150 contributing buildings, ٠
- 1 contributing structure (not necessarily a building), ٠
- 21 non-contributing buildings, ٠
- 2 non-contributing structures, ۲
- 6 non-contributing objects, and ٠
- 11 (obviously) non-contributing that were previously ۲ demolished, but are nevertheless documented for the record.

Mr. Youmans commented that the historical consultants were surprised at the unusually small number of noncontributing properties, which implies that the historical There were also the following recommendations to further fabric of the Winchester NHD is relatively well preserved. expand the NHD beyond current lines that are still under Major architectural styles in the NHD added from 1930 - consideration. This nomination will require public hearing 1964 included Craftsmen, American Four Square (of which and state review board approval. there are many examples), Minimal Traditional, Ranch, Tudor • Revival, Modern Movement, and one example of Spanish Mission Revival on North Loudoun Street.

The NHD amendment application was completed in December 2013 and submitted to DHR. Administrative approval is all that is required and is expected in early 2014, followed by formal listing on the Virginia Landmarks Registry hopefully by June 30, 2014. Meeting that deadline will allow qualified rehab projects to apply for federal and state tax incentives for Y2014.

The survey update yields the following benefits for the city, The period of significance for the areas in the proposed the public, and NHD property owners:

- resources, a primary priority.
- ٠ electronic form.
- ٠ Determination of contributing vs. non-contributing Review (BAR) in evaluation of requests for certificate of the best attended event in this series to date. demolition applications.
- inventory of structures eligible for tax credit incentives amendment maps. ♦

available for rehabilitation work certified as appropriate.

Also investigated was the possible expansion of the National Historic District. The separate areas that were investigated by Winchester Historic District lines, thus enabling all properties within the historic districts to be equally able to take advantage of state and federal tax incentives and be subject to BAR scrutiny.

- Along Amherst Street to include the Glen Burnie mansion property and historic properties on the north side of the street.
- Along Morgan Street from the back of the Walgreens site extending north to the fruit warehouses.
- Along S. East Lane from E. Cork Street approximately to E. Leicester St.

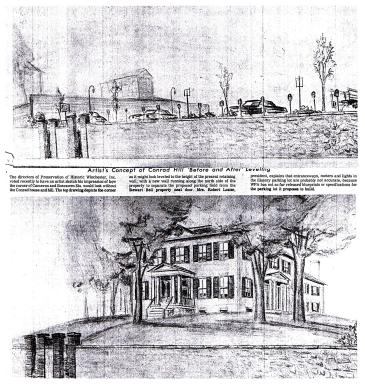
- Along S. Stewart Street and intersecting west side streets from Handley Boulevard to the Exxon gas station at the corner of W. Boscawen Street.
- ٠ The area roughly bounded by the southern line of the Winchester and National Historic Districts extended south to E. Gerrard St., from S. Kent St. to the present line at the backs of properties facing Washington St.
- The North End area along E. Piccadilly St. north to along ٠ Liberty and Virginia Avenues, and along N. Kent St. east to Highland Ave.; and along National Avenue east to the National Cemetery and Fairview Avenue.

expanded district is 1752-1964. The historical consultants The new information database increases our awareness made an approximate determination that there are about and appreciation of Winchester's extensive and diverse 320 resources of which 292 are contributing and only 28 inventory of historic, architectural, and cultural were non-contributing. The architectural styles are Georgian, Modern Movement, American Four Square, Ranch, and The updated information is entered in the DHR V-CRIS Colonial Revival. Again Mr. Youmans stated that the database of historic resource inventory and photographs consultants were impressed by the extent and integrity of and makes this research tool available to subscribers in the historical fabric and the unusually small number of noncontributing properties.

property status should aid the Board of Architectural PHW is very gratified to report that this program was by far The appropriateness, particularly for major alterations and presentation video is available for view on YouTube at PHWInc. Please contact the City of Winchester Department The revised period of significance to 1964 increases the of Planning for viewing of larger, more legible versions of the

THE CONRAD HOUSE AND THE FORMATION OF PHW

PART OF THE ONGOING "HISTORY OF PHW" BLOG SERIES. NEW INSTALLMENTS POSTED EVERY FRIDAY IN 2014.



HISTORY OF THE CONRAD HOUSE

What's the second oldest building in town? Although there is no clear answer today, in the 1960s, the answer would likely have been the northern portion to the rear of the Conrad House with an estimated construction date of early 1750s, making it a contemporary of Abrams Delight and George Washington's Headquarters.

The property, originally consisting of four lots for a total of two and a half acres, has a somewhat complicated deed trail. Frederick Conrad, the progenitor of the Conrad line in Winchester, allegedly acquired the property from his father-inlaw, Dr. Stephen Ley. The chain of title is unclear, and possession of the property was disputed several times, but ultimately stayed in the Conrad family's control. Frederick Conrad's will from 1794 left instructions for another house to be built on the property.

This task fell to Frederick's son, Dr. Daniel Conrad. The familiar front façade was constructed reportedly from plans obtained in Scotland, where Daniel Conrad received his medical training. The interior, also, boasted at least three mantels and two doorways hand-carved from Adams Brothers designs and imported from England. The house remained in the Conrad family until 1928, when the heirs decided to sell the property. In 1959, the City purchased the house.

By 1962, the pressure to raze the Conrad House was mounting, with the Winchester Retail Merchants Association urging City Council to clear and level the lot for parking. The Association

even offered to pay half of the expected costs of demolition and construction if the City would match the amount. The plan to raze the house for parking was officially endorsed by Winchester -Frederick County Chamber of Commerce in October of 1962.

On the other side, proponents of history, both individuals and organizations, were offering alternative sites for a parking lot and other potential uses for the historic building. Petitions and letter campaigns to save the house were circulating, council members were polled in the newspaper on their sentiments, garden clubs and individuals were speaking at public hearings or writing in to City Council. The unrest culminated with the Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society asking City Council for the Conrad House to be put to the voters in a referendum.

The issue reached a spirited climax in the January 1963 City Council meeting with two important items on the agenda. The vote to match the Winchester Retail Merchants Association funds to raze the house was tied at 6-6, with the 13th tiebreaking member of Council out of town and unavailable to cast a vote. It seemed that with the passing of the second important item, a 90 day grace period for preservationists to submit alternative plans for the Conrad House, that the prospects to retain the building were improving.

The reprieve was to be short-lived. In 1964, City Council created the Winchester Parking Authority (WPA) with the directive to increase off-street parking facilities downtown. One of the Cityowned properties leased to the WPA was the Conrad House. The WPA continued to operate the Conrad House as apartments until announcing plans in January 1969 to demolish the Conrad House and create two parking lots on the site.

FORMATION OF PHW

In this period, the nucleus of what would become PHW was formed from two concurrent strains of activity concerned about demolitions around the downtown. In February 1963, Winchester City Council appointed a citizen committee on historic preservation consisting of "Mr. Henkel, Mr. Scully, Mr. Stratton, Irvin O'Connell, and Lewis Barton" to report on what criteria should be used to determine whether a building was worthy of retention. The group returned recommended to retain all structures that were built prior to 1860 within the original town as laid out by James Wood.

The oldest recorded minutes in PHW's possession date from January 20, 1964 and set forth the first leaders: Carroll Henkel, President; Nancy Pennypacker, Vice President; Miss Robert "Bobbie" Y. Conrad, Secretary; and Emily Kuykendall, Treasurer. Others in attendance include Eve Kennedy, Eleanor Rodman, Mary Henkel, T.G. Scully, and absentee dues submitted by Dorothy Allen and Ben Belchic.

With the citizens approaching the problem from two angles, more exasperated. Many letters cited how the Council had both led by Carroll Henkel, they worked "to preserve the aspect refused to listen to their constituents on this matter and how of Winchester as a beautiful city by encouraging the the Council seemed to be driven by the wishes of the merchants conservation and restoration of such buildings as are historically for parking over the wishes of the citizens for preservation. The or architecturally significant."

priority to present to the City. Bobbie Conrad volunteered to and singled out for demolition for more parking on that site in survey the buildings predating 1860. The Winchester Board of the future. Architectural Review (BAR) was established in February 1966, shortly before the passage of the National Historic Preservation At the same time, efforts had been made for multiple years for Act in October 1966. Once again, Carroll Henkel was elected to PHW to receive authorization from the City or WPA to perform lead the first Board of Architectural Review.

In 1967, the name was changed to the now-familiar Preservation of Historic Winchester, Inc. in an effort to avoid confusion with the Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society. The first historic plaque designating a building for protection was erected that same year. The change in name also marked a change in fix the house's leaking roof and to hire engineers and architects strategy: mobilizing the town in peaceful protest of the impending destruction of the Conrad House.

THE SECOND ROUND FOR "THE HILL"

In February 1969, PHW led the charge against the demolition of and efforts were made to the Conrad House by the Winchester Parking Authority. The appeal committee, led by Julian Glass, Jr., focused on circulating Architectural Review being cut petitions and organizing letter-writing campaigns in favor of the out of the process for the "phone or personal contact" which had been previously utilized. Conrad House. As a final The steering committee included J.T. Kremer, Sr., Leonard attempt, shortly before the Sirbaugh, Mrs. J. Pinckney Arthur, Clyde "Chip" Johnson, Betsy Helm, Mrs. Wayne Hogbin, and Dr. Garland Quarles. Petition large advertisements in the drives were held in the George Washington Hotel. Reports Winchester indicate over 2,000 signatures were gathered and filled several full-page advertisements in the Winchester Star in March of 1969.

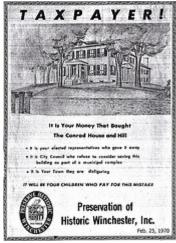
The letter writing campaigns included a piece from Dr. Quarles, funding this parking lot against explaining why the house was historically relevant, invoking public wishes. some of the activities and important people who had a connection to the house. Others echoed these sentiments, Although the City was not dissuaded from razing the Conrad including Lillian Majally, who may have influenced PHW's slogan House in March of 1970, the outpouring of support and with her heartfelt plea to save the best of the area's past for frustration via the letter campaign bore some fruit in the end. future generations to discover their visual heritage. PHW's On April 22, 1970, the City Council and a committee of PHW President Lucille Lozier spoke of the potential for tourists to appreciate Winchester's buildings and their palpable connection to early American history and culture. More often, the building was suggested as being incorporated into new government offices, used as a residence for visiting dignitaries to the city, or was granted permission to overhaul the ordinance and present operated as a museum. Alternative parking options were his ideas to Council. The meeting also proposed a strategy to discussed, such as constructing a double or triple decker parking foster cooperation and understanding between the City and garage on another site. In an idea which may seem scandalous PHW by installing PHW members on various boards and Council to propose today, PHW members even pitched the idea to members partaking in the historical programming of PHW and Council to level Rouss City Hall for the parking lot instead.

As the very public efforts to block the demolition of the Conrad House wore on through 1969, the timbre of the letters became

existing lots were cited as rarely being at full capacity, so the issue was not the pressing need it was made out to be. Some A historic preservation ordinance was considered the top letters even correctly cited the Kurtz Building would be bought

> studies on the Conrad House to determine possible future uses for the building. Even though the City refused these offers, PHW still reached out to representatives from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Virginia Landmarks Commission, and other architecture experts for their input on the value of the Conrad House. Offers were made for PHW to raise the funds to for the project. Attempts were made to list the building on the National Register of Historic Places to block the use of Federal funds in the construction of the parking lot. Injunctions were sought for the illegal tree-cutting on the Conrad Hill property,

the Board of demolition PHW ran a series of Star alerting taxpayers as to how their money had been used to purchase the Conrad House, and how their money was



members met and took some of the first steps toward meaningful preservation efforts. The major concession was the acknowledgement that a Board of Architectural Review with purview over only 16 properties was ineffective, and Tom Scully the Historical Society. Although it took close to a decade, preservation was gaining acceptance in Winchester. ♦

THE 2013 HOLIDAY HOUSE TOUR SUPPORTERS

It takes a village to make a Holiday House Tour happen. Thanks to those who contributed to the tour; we may miss a few names, and if so, please let us know so we can recognize you in the next newsletter.

Program Booklet Advertisers:

Bank of Clarke County BB&T The Cake Boutique Davenport Insulation El Centro Magic Lantern Theater MooreBeavers, LLC Nancy Murphy OakCrest Companies Scott and Dr. Shyama Rosenfeld Summit Community Bank Union First Market Bank

Bough and Dough Shop:

Debra L. Johnson, Shop Co-Chair Jackie Tobin, Shop Co-Chair Nancy Murphy, Greens and Wreaths Mary Turner Lin Hausknecht Karen Cartlidge Sharon T. Music Nina Burke Caroline Ott Avery Snyder Becky Parish Narelle Jackson Shauna Lupton Alma Dove Jose & Mary Montero-Maderia

Advance Ticket Sale Locations: Kimberly's Winchester Book Gallery The Final Yard

OakCrest Companies Wilkin's Shoe Center Winchester-Frederick County Convention and Visitors Center

Homeowners:

Tim and Barbara Bandyke Susu Bearov George and Kim Craft Bruce and Donna Downing Joe and Amy Ressa Wilborn and Martha Roberson Gina Sullivan and Steve Surber

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The Preview Party Crew:

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Writers and Researchers:

Larry Belkin Sandra Bosley Karen Clay

Musicians:

Deidre Cochran Sandy Lore Dave Prince

Winchester Little Theatre Caroling Leaders:

Kendra Getaz, Caroling Leader Marian Cerwensky, Costumer

In-Kind Supporters:

Mr. and Mrs. Richard DeBergh Winchester Little Theatre Winchester Medical Center Mount Hebron Cemetery Mr. and Mrs. James R. Wilkins Jr.

And approximately 60 volunteer docents.

Thank you all!

CONGRATS TO TOM AND DEANNA STOUFFER

As you may remember, PHW held another fall membership drive contest in 2013. approximately 60 members joined or renewed their dues during this time. Tom and Deanna Stouffer were the lucky winners this year, having signed up four new members for PHW. As a thank you, they received a \$200 gift certificate to Eugene B. Smith's Gallery. Keep an eye out for similar opportunities in the future for your chance to win! ◆



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UPCOMING EVENTS

March 25: Lunch and Learn Lecture

The next edition of PHW's Lunch and Learn series continues with a presentation of "Vanished Winchester" by Sandra Bosley.

May 7: What's New at These Old Houses

Mark your calendars for a joint program effort between PHW and the Friends of the Handley Regional Library to learn what's changing at three area house museums. ♦

> "Anyone who has traveled in this country must be painfully aware of the crudity to too many of our communities; too aware of the sacrifice of our heritage, the beautiful buildings that represent our national growth and progress; too aware of the cluttering of open spaces with temporary structures from which some immediate, short-term monetary return may be expected. The greatest error committed in the name of progress is the failure to preserve the best of the past."

> > - Lillian Majally on the Conrad House, circa 1969

ARE YOU A PHW MEMBER?



Preservation of Historic Winchester, Inc., is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting Winchester's architectural heritage. PHW depends on income from membership and contributions to achieve its goals.

All contributions above membership are tax deductible.

Join today by completing this form and returning it to PHW, 530 Amherst St., Winchester, VA 22601.

Individual Corporate	+ -	Eamily/Business	\$45
Name:			
Address:			
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E-mail:			

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