

AN INVITATION TO JOIN IN THE FOUNDING
OF A PROPOSED NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY BRANCH
OF THE
ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF VIRGINIA ANTIQUITIES
(APVA)

Dear Friends of Historic Preservation in Winchester, Warren, Frederick, and Clarke:

The group of individuals signing this letter will be hosting an organizational meeting of a proposed Northern Shenandoah Valley Branch (Clarke, Frederick, Warren, and Winchester) of the APVA on **Monday, June 30th, at 5:30 pm at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley in Winchester.**

The APVA is our primary state-wide, citizen volunteer, non-profit general preservation organization in Virginia. It was founded in 1889 and its first major activity was the rescue of the site of Jamestown, which it still owns and sponsors (all that fabulous new research), along with about thirty other of the some of the most historic sites in Virginia.

Its primary work since the beginning has been to enlist citizens state-wide in the cause of advocacy for historic preservation, and not just of “famous” or elite sites, but of all the places and landscapes that have been important to Virginians over the last 400 years. APVA and its members and local branches address not only decision-makers in state and local governments, but also private companies and individuals whose decisions affect the historic fabric and landscapes that have been and continue to be part of our lives.

It is also an important educational and research organization, with annual conferences, Preservation Trades weekends, periodicals, the annual “Most Threatened List”, programs of archeology, study, and interpretation at the many sites it owns or controls, and much more.

The impetus for the establishment of a local regional branch of APVA comes from two sources. The first is that, despite the plethora of historic sites and landscapes in Winchester, Warren, Frederick, and Clarke, and despite the large number of preservation professionals and dedicated volunteers, no local chapter of our primary state-wide preservation organization exists here, and there is no way for all of us to channel our thoughts and priorities to this state organization. A compact four jurisdiction branch (Clarke, Frederick, Warren, and Winchester) seemed like an efficient way to go about connecting to the state-wide organization.

Nor is there a way currently for us to use the prestige and platform of APVA in our multitude of local advocacy efforts, or to engage the state APVA on behalf of the local projects of our local preservation organizations and against the threats to sites in our area.

The second is that the organizers are proposing for this branch an initial coordinating activity (the branch will certainly engage in others down the road) around a site that is foundational to our entire region: the remains of Greenway Court, especially its land grant office building, and the archeological site of the home of Thomas Lord Fairfax, the center of the five million-acre Northern Neck Proprietary.

Some of you may already be state-wide members of APVA. In that case, there will be no change in your status or dues, except that APVA will list you as a member of this NSV Branch, and half of your dues will be returned to the Branch, where you will vote on what to do with them. If you

are new to APVA, dues as a single member are \$ 40 per year, and we will sign people up at the meeting. Dues and membership are handled by the state organization. Please take a look at the APVA website: <http://apva.org/>

At the organizational meeting on June 30 we will:

- introduce everyone
- hear more about APVA from a representative, who will answer questions
- hear from one or more of the organizing committee about the plans
- sign up new members (and list current APVA members)
- elect initial board and officers, and appoint any committees needed initially
- set a meeting schedule (quarterly is the usual for local branches of APVA, but it is up to us)

I hope you will consider joining us as a founding member of a Northern Shenandoah Valley Branch of APVA. Because of our limited access to mailing lists at this point, we are mailing largely to organizations and asking them to pass this on (electronically where possible) to their mailing lists. As the time is short, please pass this on as soon as possible – we truly appreciate your help with this.

The organizing committee believes that we need to extend formal local support for our state-wide preservation organization, APVA, and that in turn, we need a formal presence of APVA here in our region, so rich in important sites and landscapes, to support our local efforts and organizations. I look forward to seeing you on Monday, June 30, at 5:30 pm at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley.

I will be happy to answer any questions or to provide a digital copy of this letter (as a Pdf) at mkalbiam@verizon.net, or at 540-955-1231

Sincerely,

Maral S. Kalbian (Architectural Historian), Temporary Chair,
On behalf of the Organizing Committee:

H. Baker, Member of the Clarke County Historic Preservation Commission
John Bieschke, Chairman of the Clarke County Historic Preservation Commission
David Edwards, Director of the Northern Virginia Regional Office of DHR
Jennifer Esler, Executive Director of the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley
Marty Hiatt, Member of the Clarke County Historic Preservation Commission
Chuck Johnston, Director of the Clarke County Planning Department
Howard Kittell, Director of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation; former President of Preserve Historic Winchester, Inc.
Jennifer Lee, Executive Director of the Clarke County Historical Association
Winkie Mackay-Smith, Chairman of the Clarke County Easement Authority
Howard Means, Board Member of Clarke County Historical Association
Jane Radford, Member of Clarke County Easement Authority
Robert Stieg, CEO, The Clermont Trust