

# of *Preservation* *Historic Winchester, Inc.*



Winter 2015

Volume 38, No. 1

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*Phone*  
(540) 667-3577

*E-mail*  
phwi@verizon.net

*Website*  
www.phwi.org



## HOLIDAY HOUSE TOUR 2014 FEEDBACK AND NEXT STEPS

PHW conducted a follow up survey on the Holiday House Tour "Potato Hill Promenade" with a few specific goals in mind: find out where visitors learned about the tour, if the advertising had been successful, and gather feedback for improvements. Although by no means scientifically rigorous, the testing helped us pinpoint some areas we suspected were problems and confirmed our feelings of what was well done.

### THE GOOD NEWS:

Praise was unanimous for the Saturday evening Preview Party at the home of Joe and Sharon Collette. Eleven respondents – 100% of those who answered the question – indicated they were "very satisfied" with the Preview Party. Feedback comments indicated the food by A Matter of Taste and the homebrew beer by Jeff Rudy were the stars of the evening, and the Collettes were praised for creating a friendly atmosphere as hosts.

The Sunday Daylight tours also had high satisfaction rates (90% very satisfied, 5% somewhat satisfied). In a feedback quote that reflects how many of us at PHW felt going into the Potato Hill Promenade: "I was not particularly excited to go on the tours this year, but I am SO glad I went! It was one of the best ever! The insides of those sites were truly amazing." Also praised were the before and after slideshows that were available in most homes this year. A number of guests expressed their gratitude to the homeowners who allowed us to open their homes for the tour. Many visitors seemed to understand the difficulties of finding "new" historic homes to visit in a neighborhood close enough to walk between the sites. The ability to showcase the history of the houses over furnishings was praised – a natural advantage to having older homes open.

### THE NOT SO GOOD NEWS:

One of the common "complaints" was the wish for more houses to have been on the tour! Another repeated criticism was that lines formed outside and that there were crowds. A few mentions were made of docents having difficulty presenting the scripts. Opinions were mixed on live musicians, as well as whether newer construction or commercial/public buildings were good tour sites. Advertising and the newspaper preview (**Cont. page 3**)

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# UPDATES ON THE WLT RESTORATION CAMPAIGN

Greetings and, even though it's a little late, Happy New Year to the wonderful PHW membership from all the volunteers, your friends and neighbors, who are Winchester Little Theatre.

We had a grand time hosting the Bough & Dough Shop in December, and it looks like our biggest problem is finding room for more vendors, greens and displays next year!

The Shop was beautifully decorated by a team led by our Shan Kilby, and the PHW team of Mary, Nancy, Jackie, and the incredible Debra did themselves proud, working hard to make everyone feel welcome and festive. Our docents led mini and unofficial tours of the theatre, a very popular feature of the B&D.

The two groups of carolers this year were just wonderful. The owner of the Final Yard told us she absolutely loved the House Tour, and was especially taken by the carolers - she showed me the pictures she had taken of them in their Victorian costumes and it looked like a picture postcard!

We are also so glad to report our Restoration, and our Restoration Campaign, continues apace. During the winter David Logan and his team of expert carpenters are milling the wood needed to replace the rotted boards under the eaves. They will also be working inside the building upstairs, strengthening and girding the catwalks that are an essential component of the roof structure. If you come visit, or to see a show (and we surely hope you do!), be sure and check out

two of the doors David's team has created. They are displayed in the deck-side hall, and they are truly works of art. David's written explanation of the work, and the careful research that went into the recreation of the originals, is fascinating reading.

Thank you to each and everyone of you who has individually contributed to our Restoration Campaign, and thank you for supporting your Board's decision to support and encourage and contribute to our endeavors. We are passionately dedicated to preserving and restoring our Freight Station home, and it means the world to us that you are there cheering us on, guiding our efforts with wise advice, kind encouragement, and sending in your generous donations. We could not do it without you, and we are ever so grateful.

As stewards of the Pennsylvania Railway Station, we are especially proud that The Preservation of Historic Winchester, in its golden anniversary year, took the lead in our City supporting the restoration of this gem of a building. We share with you the same historic corridor as the Hexagon House and Glen Burnie, we share with you the goal of cherishing Winchester's historic legacy, and we celebrate with you the ongoing restoration of Winchester's excellent community theatre, WLT.

See you at the theatre!  
Dolly Vachon,  
WLT Board of Directors, Development ♦

## WLT RESTORATION CAMPAIGN PLEDGE

As a supporter of Preservation of Historic Winchester, I pledge \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- As a single payment  
 In installments of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ over a period of 3 years  
 Monthly  Quarterly  Annually

To the Winchester Little Theatre Restoration Campaign

### Donor Information:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Acknowledgement Information:

Please use the following name(s) in all acknowledgements:

- We/I wish to have our gift remain anonymous.

**Please make checks, corporate matches, or other gifts payable to: WLT Restoration Fund**

## Return this form to:

WINCHESTER LITTLE THEATRE  
RESTORATION FUND  
Winchester Little Theatre  
315 West Boscawen Street  
Winchester, VA 22601

## More information on the WLT Restoration Campaign may be found online at:

[http://www.wltonline.org/winchester/Restoration\\_Campaign.html](http://www.wltonline.org/winchester/Restoration_Campaign.html)

*Winchester Little Theatre is a 501 (c)3 nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.*

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## HOLIDAY HOUSE TOUR 2014 (CONT.)

article in particular was cited as insufficient.

### WHAT ABOUT THE BOUGH AND DOUGH SHOP?

Much of the feedback this year centered on the Shop. This is the first time we have gathered a sufficient amount of data on the Shop, so this feedback will form the basis on how to improve going forward. The satisfaction spread was a bit more varied, with 73% being very satisfied, 13% being somewhat satisfied, 7% neutral, and 7% very dissatisfied. On a more positive note, 84% of respondents were aware the Shop proceeds would be donated to the WLT Restoration campaign and feedback indicated visitors were happy to see this partnership.

Suggestions to improve the Shop included: opening on Friday, finding a larger venue or utilizing more space in the Winchester Little Theatre, having the WLT docent take the tours outside and around the building, hosting the wreath-making lessons again, and desiring more unusual greenery or different items from the vendors.

### HOW ABOUT THAT ADVERTISING?

One of the main goals for this feedback survey was to learn where people heard about the Holiday House Tour. It had been several years since we had gathered in-depth data on this topic, and in that time a whole new slew of communications options opened to us.

The majority of respondents indicated they received a mailed event notice from PHW. The second most popular choice was that they had previously attended and planned to attend again in 2014.

The third most frequent option selected was seeing the Winchester Star preview article, followed closely by receiving an email notice from PHW. (We anticipate the email notification number will rise with the roll out of MailChimp as our new email handler; see the block for details on how to get weekly emails from us if you aren't!) Seeing the Winchester Star ad, followed by seeing the Holiday House Tour signage or being notified through WLT were mid-range options.

At the bottom of the notifications were hearing it on the radio, seeing it on Facebook, or seeing it on another website. The "other" websites recorded were PHW's site and [oldtownwinchesterva.com](http://oldtownwinchesterva.com). There were several word of mouth write-ins, and one from the Winchester Book Gallery, a ticket sale location.

### SO WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

The PHW board met on January 19th and discussed some of this information. The advertising and Bough and Dough Shop will likely be the topics addressed the most for this upcoming year – expect some changes in 2015 based on your feedback! We have several options for the 2015 tour, all of which present their own challenges and potential rewards. Although we have always done our best to minimize wait times, it's unlikely much can be done about lines and crowds – they happen regardless of the size of the houses. Six sites are the limit for our manpower staffing during the event – if you are available to be a docent the first weekend of December we are always in need and we encourage you to have your contact information added to our volunteer list.

### CAN I STILL OFFER FEEDBACK?

Yes! Although we have met and discussed the feedback received in December and January, the online survey will stay active a while longer at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/5WFVPRQ>. A printed version is also on page 4, which can be returned to the PHW office anonymously. ♦

### ARE YOU ON PHW'S EMAIL LIST?

PHW switched to MailChimp in early 2015 for all our bulk emails. If your inbox has been quiet, your email may have been one of the few that failed to import. Reenter your email address on the [phwi.org](http://phwi.org) website, our Facebook page, the direct signup link <http://eepurl.com/-Q4X5> or via scanning the above QR code.



**Important note:** If you unsubscribe but later want to receive emails from us again, you'll need to do so through one of the above options to provide proof that you opted in to the email list. We will not be able to do it for you at the office. This is part of the strict anti-spam policies of MailChimp.

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# HOLIDAY HOUSE TOUR FEEDBACK SURVEY 2014

**Where did you learn about the 2014 Holiday House Tour? Check all that apply.**

- I heard it on the radio
- I saw it on Facebook
- I saw it on another website (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- I received a mailed event notice from PHW
- I received an email notice from PHW
- I saw the Winchester Star article
- I saw the Winchester Star advertisement
- I saw the Holiday House Tour signage at the houses
- I had attended previously and had planned to attend again in 2014
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Where did you learn about the Bough and Dough Shop? Check all that apply.**

- I heard it on the radio
- I saw it on Facebook
- I saw it on another website (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- I received a mailed event notice from PHW
- I received an email notice from PHW
- I saw the Winchester Star article
- I saw the Winchester Star advertisement
- I saw the Holiday House Tour signage at the houses
- I had attended previously and had planned to attend again in 2014
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**If you attended the 2014 Preview Party and Candlelight Tours, how satisfied were you?**

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neutral
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

**If you attended the 2014 Sunday Daylight Tours, how satisfied were you?**

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neutral
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

**If you attended the 2014 Bough and Dough Shop, how satisfied were you?**

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neutral
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

**Did you know that the 2014 proceeds for Bough and Dough Shop sales were going to be donated to the Winchester Little Theatre Restoration campaign?**

- Yes
- No

**Do you have any thoughts for improvement to the Holiday House Tour, Bough and Dough Shop, and/or Preview Party?**

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**Please return your survey to:**

PHW  
530 Amherst Street  
Winchester, VA 22601

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# PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC WINCHESTER AWARDS NOMINATION FORM

Nominations should encompass work completed or expected to be completed within the past calendar year (ending in May 2015). You may nominate an unlimited number of projects and nominate your own projects. See a list of past winners at [www.phwi.org/awards.php](http://www.phwi.org/awards.php). Nomination should be submitted **before May 10, 2015** for best consideration for a 2015 award. Return forms to PHW, 530 Amherst St., Winchester VA 22601.

Nominations may be submitted for the following categories:

- o Lucille Lozier Award: For the renovation of a significant structure retaining 75% of the historic architectural fabric.
- o Katherine G. Rockwood Revolving Fund Award: For outstanding renovation of a Jennings Revolving Fund property.
- o Elsie M. Rosenberger Award: For the unsung volunteer or volunteers who selflessly contributed to the activities of PHW.
- o Ben Belchic Award: For significant contribution to understanding Winchester's history.
- o Carroll M. Henkel Award: For outstanding leadership for historic preservation in the Winchester-Frederick County area.
- o Patron's Award: For that person or business who has been an outstanding supporter of the goals and programs of PHW.
- o Award of Merit: Houses or buildings whose renovation contribute to improving the character of their neighborhoods and maintaining the overall historic fabric of the city.

Nominee: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Briefly describe the project/activity for which the individual/organization is being nominated. Please include before and after pictures, if available, for rehabilitations.

\_\_\_\_\_

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# HISTORIC REHABILITATION TAX CREDIT UNDER ATTACK VIA PRESERVATION VIRGINIA

The 2015 General Assembly Session began on Wednesday, January 14th, and already two proposals to phase out the historic rehabilitation tax credit have been introduced. House Bill 2167 (Hugo) would eliminate 10 credits and exemptions, including the historic rehabilitation tax credit, effective January 1, 2017. House Bill 2109 (Futrell) would sunset all tax credits without a current expiration date, which includes the historic rehabilitation tax credit, on January 1, 2025 unless the legislature expressly extends them.

## **Take Action Now:**

If you are a constituent of Del. Hugo (40th) or Del. Futrell (2nd), call him today to express your concern about the negative impact that their bill would have on a proven job and revenue creator-historic rehabilitation tax credits.

### **Contact Del. Hugo at:**

Office: (804) 698-1040

Email Address: DelTHugo@house.virginia.gov

### **Contact Del. Futrell at:**

Office: (804) 698-1002

Email Address: DelMFutrell@house.virginia.gov

If you live outside of their districts, contact your delegate to express your concern about the impact of these bills on historic tax credits. For the Winchester area, it may be:

### **Delegate J. Randall Minchew, 10th District**

(804) 698-1010

DelRMinchew@house.virginia.gov

### **Delegate Mark J. Berg, 29th District**

(804) 698-1029

DelMBerg@house.virginia.gov

### **Delegate David A. LaRock, 33rd District**

(804) 698-1033

DelDLaRock@house.virginia.gov

## **Here Are the Key Points to Make:**

- Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits are a major factor in making projects financially viable throughout the Commonwealth.
- This tax credit is a proven job creator and revenue generator. See Study on the Economic Impact of Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Programs in Virginia.
- Every dollar invested returns \$3 in revenue to the Commonwealth and localities.
- Tell your story about how Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits have made a difference in your community.

Connect with Preservation Virginia online at [preservationvirginia.org](http://preservationvirginia.org) or [www.facebook.com/preservationvirginia](https://www.facebook.com/preservationvirginia). ♦

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## SHOP AND SUPPORT PHW

Do you shop through Amazon.com? If you do, PHW would be delighted if you chose us as your charity to support through their AmazonSmile program. Here's how it works:

Welcome to  
**amazon smile**

You shop. Amazon gives.



- Log in with your Amazon email and password at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com).
- Search for "Preservation of Historic Winchester" as your charity of choice.
- Shop for Amazon products like usual through [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com).
- Amazon donates 0.5% of your eligible purchases to PHW. ♦

## **KURTZ ALERT?**

A PHW informer has passed along a tidbit that there is a very nice Victorian bed for sale at the Strasburg Emporium that is reputed to have been in the Kurtz Building. The asking price is \$3500. The Emporium may be reached at (540) 465-3711 or <http://www.thestrasburgemporium.com/>. ♦

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# MAKE YARN BALL ORNAMENTS – NOT A PINTEREST FAIL!

## BY SANDRA BOSLEY

If you admired the tree at 612 South Loudoun Street during the Holiday House Tour, you may have seen some of the most deceptively simple-yet-impossible to make handmade ornaments, stiffened yarn balls. Here's how to do it yourself and get a yarn ball, not a Pinterest fail!

### You'll need:

- Round balloons with no printing or designs
- One large bowl for the glue mixture
- Water
- White flour
- Stove
- Saucepan
- Whisk
- Measuring cups
- A pin or needle
- Yarn, preferably a thicker weight with some natural fiber content for better glue retention
- Scissors
- A drying area with a rack to hang the balls and a drop cloth below to catch drips
- Clothespins for hanging the balls while they dry
- Spray paint (optional)
- White glue or fabric stiffener (optional)
- Patience!

**Step one:** Blow up your balloons. Don't inflate them completely to help them form a round shape. Fully inflated balloons produce egg-shaped balls (perfect for Easter, not so much for Christmas). **Make sure the balloons are tied off tightly enough to retain air for at least three to four days.**

**Step two:** Make your paste. Mix flour and water in your saucepan in a 1:4 ratio (ex. 1 cup flour to 4 cups water) and whisk thoroughly. Heat to a low boil, continuing to whisk to prevent clumping. The wheat paste will begin to firm up as it boils. You need the consistency to still be a bit runny.

**Step three:** When the wheat paste has reached the proper consistency, remove from the heat and pour it into your large bowl. As the mixture cools, it will begin to firm up. You may need to adjust with water for a thinner consistency, or boil more to increase thickness.

**Step four:** While the wheat paste cools to a manageable

temperature, start cutting your yarn into workable lengths. About 3 feet (1 yard) is usually a manageable length, though you will need to join ends. Small yarn balls usually take between 9-12 feet of yarn to look full. For denser balls, plan on 15 feet.

**Step five:** Soak the cut yarn in the wheat paste. It is very important the glue seeps deeply into the fibers. If a test piece of yarn won't retain glue, it will be much harder to have it retain its shape later.

**Step six:** This is the messy part! Wrap a piece of glue-soaked yarn around one balloon, in any random pattern. Join ends to add more yarn lengths by wrapping the yarn ends together (when dried, these joins are nearly invisible). When satisfied, dip the entire balloon into the glue mixture one last time. Hang the balloon by the tied-off tail to the drying rack.

**Step seven:** Wait. The yarn balls take between 24-72 hours to dry completely, depending on how much glue they retained. Thicker, fuzzier yarn will take longer to dry, but also tends to retain its shape better. Thinner crochet yarn will dry faster but may not retain enough glue to hold its shape.

**Step eight:** When the balls feel dry, test their stiffness by poking your finger or a pencil eraser through the yarn to press on the balloon. Try to separate it from the yarn in several spots – as many different areas as you can reach. If the yarn retains its shape and feels resistant to crushing when the balloon is pushed away, congratulations! The balloon can be popped and the pieces removed from the interior.

**Step nine:** If the ball didn't set up firmly enough, you have a few options to try to salvage it. Dip and soak the balloon in wheat paste and let it dry again, or alternately paint a layer of white glue or fabric stiffener directly on the yarn and allow to dry. Repeat steps seven and eight until the ball sets up or you surrender.

**Step ten (optional):** If desired, the dried yarn balls can be spray painted or glittered. You may wish to do this as the wheat paste can dull or discolor the yarn slightly. I did not test this step on my wheat paste yarn balls, so always use caution when experimenting. Happy crafting! ♦

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# Preservation of Historic Winchester

Hexagon House ♦ 530 Amherst St. ♦ Winchester, VA 22601

## NEWS

Winter 2015

Nonprofit Org.  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 34  
Winchester, VA

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### February 6: WLT Check Presentation

PHW completes its pledge of \$25,000 and the proceeds of the 2014 Bough and Dough Shop. Join us for the presentation at 10 a.m. at the Winchester Little Theatre, 315 W. Boscawen St.

#### February 11: Rouss Day

Celebrate Charlie Rouss's birthday with a wreath laying at the Rouss Mausoleum and cake at Rouss City Hall. See the City website for more details.

#### March 21: Kaleidoscope Gala

Rotary's 14th such Gala will benefit the Winchester Little Theatre Restoration Campaign. Look for more information at [www.winchesterrotary.com](http://www.winchesterrotary.com).

#### May: National Preservation Month

Watch for upcoming events in celebration of Preservation Month. Activities will include a co-sponsored program with Friends of the Handley Library.

#### May 23 (tentative): Rouss Day Celebrations

Warmer weather Rouss Day activities will be held in late May. Check back for more details.

#### June: PHW's Annual Meeting and Awards

Join us for PHW's 51st Annual Meeting, planned to be held at the Winchester Little Theatre. Don't forget to nominate projects for the 2015 Awards! A nomination form is enclosed.♦

### 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 \$25      \_\_\_ Family/Business \$45  
\_\_\_ Corporate \$100      \_\_\_ Other

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**GET YOUR NEWS BETWEEN NEWSLETTERS;  
FIND PHW ON:**

