

Buckingham

Beacon

November 6–December 3, 2020

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It's Open!



Come to the New Library!

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The Old Buckingham Library

The Friends of the Library purchased the former Davis Supermarket in 1984 to use as the first building to house the library. The members knew from the initial purchase that they would need to continue their work to have a bigger building. This library was 4,000 square feet; the new one is 8,000 square feet.



The front of the new library's building is connected to the Buckingham County Community Center. It is a welcoming beacon for all citizens of the county. Photo by Sue A. Miles

Cover designed by Marilyn Ellinger

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include S.A.S.E. if you would like items returned. Please keep Calendar submissions to fifty words or less, Letters to the Editor to 300 words or less and feature stories to 500 words or less. Mail submissions to: *The Buckingham Beacon*, P.O. Box 59, Palmyra, VA 22963 to the attention of applicable section. (Letters to the Editor, Community Calendar, etc.), or Email valleyeditor1@gmail.com

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Next advertising deadline: Wed., November 25, 2020

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Historic Buckingham Cancels Holiday Events

By Martha Louis
Correspondent

Historic Buckingham is sorry to announce that due to the pandemic, Historic Buckingham will not host its usual open houses or the Village Christmas Market in 2020.



Holiday Shopping Experience in 2020

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Buckingham Branch Manager, Amy White (left) and Library Assistant, Grace Barlow are shown at the reception desk of the new library. The surface of the desk is covered with Buckingham slate. Photo by Sue A. Miles

It's Open! Come to the New Library!

By Sue A. Miles
Correspondent

As you read this, the new, long awaited, Buckingham County Public Library is now open and ready for the public. With a modified or "soft" opening ceremony taking place on October 17 (due to COVID-19), the public library will be a shining star in the county as it offers all citizens a beautiful facility, full of books and a multitude of resources for everyone, including programs for children, computer and technical services, meeting spaces, research databases, electronic collections, audio books, movies, and inter-library loans. The 8,000 square foot library is connected to the Buckingham County Community Center, both part of what was once known as the Dillwyn Primary School.

As the public celebrates, it is only appropriate to acknowledge the hard work that has gone into this great achievement and to share a bit of the history that made it a reality. Too often we take for granted that good things like this just happen. The history and story of the library will show you that it was a long time coming with many dedicated and tenacious people involved.

The now defunct Woman's Club of Buckingham County started the initial library in the early 1980s. Women such as club members Charlene Snoddy, Barbara Dixon, Louise "Lou" Bryant, Marie Bates and the indomitable Thelma Robinson, knowing that every community needs a library, set up a small one in the basement of the current BB&T (now Truist) Bank on highway 15. The club found it difficult to maintain that site so they began looking for a different way to achieve their goal.

Along with the Women's Club, there were other citizens in the county who soon joined the project. "My wife, Lou, was used to a library," said Dr. Cary Bryant, one of the library's founders. "We had little children and knew that all children in the county would benefit. We held many meetings in my office, after hours, as there were few public meeting places at that time."

Other community leaders, such as Frank Harris, Charles White, Alan Gooden, John Morgan, and Cary Robinson (Thelma's husband) also joined the cause. "Initially we could not get state aid as our local government was not providing assistance. Not to be dissuaded, the Robinson's knew about a bookmobile for sale. "They put up the money to buy it in November, 1983," said Bryant. "I'm not sure if they ever got paid back."

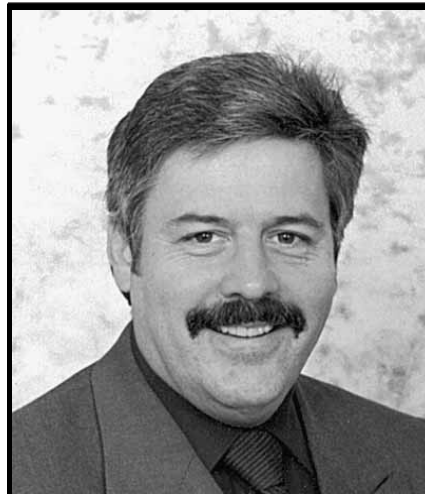
The new library on wheels was housed in the parking lot between Dr. Bryant's dentistry business and what once was Nicholas' Supermarket on highway 15. "We ran an extension cord from my building out to the bus," said Bryant. "Volunteers took turns running the library but Thelma Robinson, who was a former librarian, was the main person."

Meanwhile, the group began looking for a building and to also organize more officially. Thus the Buckingham County Friends of the Library, Inc. was established. Their goal was to raise money to purchase a building, furniture, books, and to run the building. Along with the above mentioned, we would be remiss if we did not mention other Buckingham citizens who were involved in the initial start to the library: Mary "Sunny" Lenz, Ruth Ayres, James Cottrell, Russell Hill, F. Acie Allen, William Hudnell, Carol Jones, Lorna Scott, and Linda Venable Paige.

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Savannah Kaye Yancey and father Winston Yancey Jr. enjoy the children's section of the new library. There is also a teen area, both with a wide range of books and computers. Photo by Sue A. Miles



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New Library from page 3

By 1984 the Friends of the Library, Inc. was able to purchase what was then known as the Dillwyn Supermarket (the building that is located next to Progressive Therapy in Dillwyn). It is significant to note that the Friends raised the \$10,000 down payment from public donations in just about a two month period.

Setting up the 4,000 square feet library required many hours of preparation, including cataloging the first books and the card catalog (remember, this was way before computers). Volunteers like Linda Venable Paige, Winnie Adams, and Margaret Webb Thomas were part of that task. Thomas was also solicited for other duties.

“Knowing that I was certified in library science and working part time at the library at New Dominion, John Morgan asked me to plan the layout and furnishings needed for the library,” said Thomas. “I planned the layout and ordered the carpet, book shelving, magazine shelving, circulation desk, card catalog, tables, chairs, and children’s furniture, and oversaw the delivery, placement, and installation of those items.”

Bryant also recalls how volunteers worked together to create the library. “The first book shelves came from the Scottsville library,” he said. “White, Gooden, Harris and I installed the

See New Library page 6

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shelves. We also borrowed a truck from Seay Milling and traveled to South Carolina to get some books. The first copy machine came from Kyanite Mining. The first phone from a man working for a phone company. There were a lot of used items.”

Even with the purchase of the building, the Friends members were still seeking a larger and more up-to-date building. “Because the building we purchased was old, maintenance was always a big issue,” said Bryant. “Plus we began to outgrow the building almost as soon as we opened. Our goal, even after purchasing the building, was always to build something bigger.” The group also created a Buckingham County Public Library Board of Directors in order to create more opportunities for state and local funding.

Along with seeking a better physical facility, Buckingham County Public Library joined forces with the Prince Edward Public Library, in 1993, to become the Central Virginia Regional Library. Doing so allowed both libraries the opportunity to acquire more state aid. The regional library system is currently administered by Rick Ewing with Amy White serving as Buckingham’s Branch Manager. Grace Barlow is the full-time library assistant. Former librarians throughout its history were: Thelma Robinson, Kay Ramsey, Chuck Koutnik, Nancy Williams, Sarah Parker, Sue Deobold, Melanie Barker, Joyce Nelson and Rick Ewing (who is now regional director).

And, finally, in 2020, “something bigger” has arrived but not without a tremendous amount of effort, fund raising, negotiation, and tenaciousness from both the Board and the Friends of the Library, the public, and dedicated governmental officials who recognized the value in having a public library for its citizens. “Over the years there have been a number of supervisors who did not think we needed a library,” said Bryant. “Over time the function of a library has changed but its a place to go for information that you may not be able to find otherwise. In my profession of health care, I’ve found that educated people have less health problems. If children don’t have any association with books until they go to school, they look at books as work. If they get exposed to reading early, they look at it as fun. A public library is another way to educate people. When we get society educated, we all benefit.”

The new library building now stands proudly on a slight hill just outside of the Town of Dillwyn. Its main entrance, as well as the community center entrance, is located on the backside of the building. When you enter the library you are greeted by the service desk, topped with beautiful Buckingham slate, where along with checking books in and out, the public will have access to a copy machine and fax.

The children and “tweens” area is to the right, complete with a small crawl through entrance for adventurous toddlers, along with books, comfortable seating, computers, toys, and a reading nook. To the left is the teen area that includes Brody desks; private workspaces that provide places to get away without going away, along with three dedicated computers. Both areas are connected to a meeting room for the public. Meghan Almond Newcomb is the library’s part-time Youth Services Specialist. Another part-time youth specialist will eventually be hired.

As you pass a study room tucked away to the left of the service desk you enter the adult area which has seating in front of a gas fireplace with a rock chimney. On one side of this area are newspapers and magazines for check-out; the other side is The Backwoods Collection containing a collection on hunting, fishing, trapping, homesteading, and self-reliance, inspired by local author, Donald Shumaker, who made the suggestion to Rick Ewing, Director of the Central Virginia Regional Library system. There is also a Seed Library that allows gardeners to check out heirloom seeds with the goal of sharing back seeds once the crop is harvested.

The center section consists of the adult area along with an area that houses computers for use by the patrons. To the right of the adult area is a room that houses local history and Board of Supervisor documents. As a sign of collaboration, the county will own the building while the library will own space and its contents.

The library’s weekly schedule will be Monday - Friday, 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. and Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Due to COVID-19, there will be a limit of 20 persons (plus staff) in the library as well as other limitations designed to dissuade people from staying for long periods of time - fewer computers, a one-hour time limit on computers, fewer chairs, and no toys for children.

So, make sure that you take the time to visit the new library and see what it has to offer. And if you have young children in your life, you’ll see that the library can offer much to enrich their lives. It is a true gift to the citizens of the county and there are many people to acknowledge. Special recognition should go to all the library board members and the members of the Friends of the Library (past and present) for their hard work and dedication over the past 40 years in making this a reality. Enjoy your new library!

Along with visiting the library, why not check out their resources by visiting their website at <https://cvrl.net/>. You can also reach them at 434-983-3848 during working hours.

Buckingham Middle School Students of the Month - September

Buckingham County Middle School teachers joined together to select Students of the Month for September. The teachers worked within their teams to identify students who demonstrated the amazing ability to be successful during virtual learning. Criteria for selection was a demonstration of engagement in Google Meets, interacting through Google classroom or emails, and producing quality work on their assignments. Congratulations to the following students for being selected as Students of the Month for September. 6th Grade: Mollie Walker (pictured) and Nahla Cook (not pictured). 7th grade: Mekyhi Maxey (pictured) and Wiljomar Ortiz-Ortiz (not pictured). 8th grade: Nadine Busch (pictured) and Wyatt Oliver (not pictured)

Photos provided by BMS



6th grade: Mollie Walker



7th grade: Mekyhi Maxey



8th grade: Nadine Busch

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Sales are through Bonfire.com and will be mailed out by December 4th. for more information: <https://www.bonfire.com/long-bay-fair-prospect-community>.

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