



## “All Under Heaven”

The Monroe County Historical Society is pleased to announce that it will sponsor “All Under Heaven”, a one-woman play about Nobel and Pulitzer prize winning author Pearl S. Buck. The play takes place a year prior to Ms. Buck’s death as she waits for a visa to arrive that will permit her to visit her beloved China once again.

The play was written by Valerie Harper (of Rhoda” fame) and Dyke Garrison. It will be performed by Cathey C. Sawyer who recently retired from a 30-year tenure as Producing Artistic Director of the Greenbrier Valley Theatre in Lewisburg. She is a recipient of the Governor’s Award for Artistic Excellence, and the Order of Arts & Historical Letters Recognition for Lifetime Achievement in the Arts. Cathey holds a Master of Arts degree in English and a Master of Fine Arts in the Theatre.

“All Under Heaven” will be presented August 28th, 2022 at 2:00 P.M. at Ames Clare Hall in Union, and admission is free.

Monroe County Historical Society

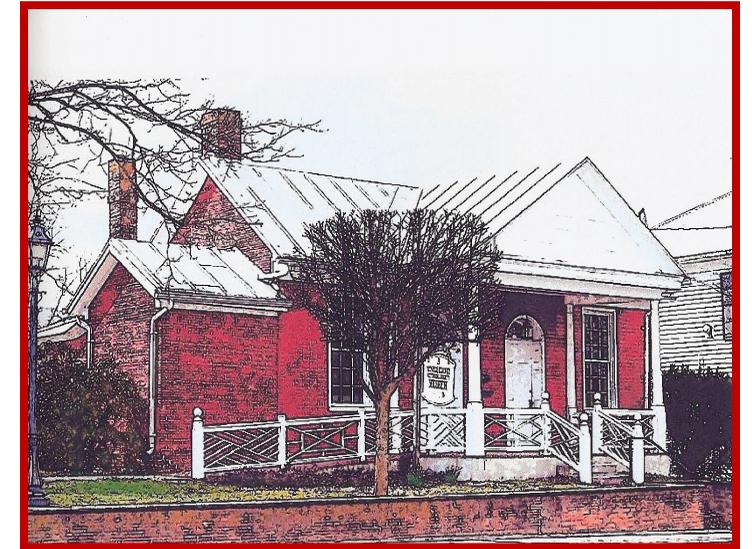
P.O. Box 465

Union, West Virginia 24983



# *Monroe County Historical Society*

July 2022    Newsletter



**P.O. Box 465  
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# Monroe County Historical Society



## Monroe County Historical Society July 2022 Meeting

The next quarterly meeting of the Monroe County Historical Society will be held Sunday, July 10, 2022, at Brynside Fort, near Union. This historic structure is being preserved and restored by the John Bryan family of Union and offers Historical Society members an exciting opportunity to tour and enjoy this unique building. The meeting will begin at 2:00 p.m. Brynside Fort is located approximately one mile from Union on Willow Bend Road, on the left and is the former Margaret Clark residence.

The house was originally built as a fort in 1770 by James Brynside and five other families. It served as a fort throughout the Revolutionary War period, with garrisoned militia through 1782. It is mentioned numerous times in local Revolutionary War pension narratives, indicating that it was one of the larger forts in the lower Greenbrier Valley.

Following the war, the structure was converted into a log plantation house, where the Brynside Family continued to operate a 1,000 acre plantation. They grew both corn and rye, which was distilled into whiskey via a mill located on the property.

The Brynsides remained in the home until the mid 19th century, when it was acquired by Christopher Bierne, who owned the plantation during the Civil War years. He likely performed extensive renovations on the home during the mid 1850s, including installing plaster over the interior log walls, and installing more formal woodwork and center entryway.

During the Civil War, Bierne was paid for housing Confederate artillery horses and cattle on the plantation. Following the war, Bierne sold the plantation to the Johnson family and moved to St. Louis, where he died shortly afterward. The Johnson family lived in the home until approximately 2016. when Margaret Clark, its last occupant, passed away.

John Bryan and his wife, Julie, acquired the home and began preservation in 2019. They uncovered the original fort walls underneath 19th century plaster, and found many treasures along the way. They believe this may be the only Revolutionary War era log frontier fort still standing in its original location at least anywhere in the Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky region.

## THE FOUNTAIN AT LINDSIDE

A few miles north of Peterstown, West Virginia, on Rt. 219 sits a stone pavilion that shelters a fountain from which weary travelers slaked their thirst for generations. The original fountain, with its hand carved basin and piped water, was built, in part, by Frederick Sebastian Thornton (a Master Stonemason) and his son, Robert C. Thornton. The F. S. Thornton family apparently lived in the Cashmere area. The senior Thornton died in 1917 and is buried at the Broyles Cemetery near Lindsie.

It is thought that the sheltering pavilion was built, along with several others throughout West Virginia, as part of the Civilian Conservation Corps or the Works Progress Administration sometime during the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration in the 1930's. The fountain is no longer operational; however, it is a landmark that has spawned a few namesakes: Fountain Springs Golf Course, Fountain Springs (housing addition) and Fountain Springs Industrial Park.

Earlier this spring, two brothers, Mark and Darren Francis, descendants of the Thorntons, drove from the Richmond area to meet with Lynn Cutter of the Monroe County Historical Society (MCHS) and Vernessa Pontius, our AmeriCorps Volunteer, as well as Sterl and Cynthia Morris with the Rotary Club of Peterstown. The purpose of the meeting was to establish contact with the various parties and discuss ways to make minor repairs and promote the fountain as an important historical landmark.

According to local lore, the fountain and associated horse trough were fed by a nearby spring and used to cool off travelers and their steeds. The basin for the fountain appears to be hand carved. Later, the water was used in automobiles to prevent overheating. If anyone can offer any documentation as to the history of this remarkable structure, please contact MCHS.

