

## 2014 SESSION

ENROLLED

### HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 204

*Commending the Augusta County Historical Society.*

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 31, 2014

Agreed to by the Senate, February 6, 2014

WHEREAS, on May 7, 1964, the Augusta County Historical Society was formally organized with a constitution, bylaws, and the election of officers and a board; and

WHEREAS, the Augusta County Historical Society (Society) was formed in order to recognize, celebrate, study, and preserve the unparalleled history and heritage of Augusta County, its county seat of Staunton, the City of Waynesboro, and all the other villages and communities within Augusta County; and

WHEREAS, Augusta County, named after the then Princess of Wales and created in 1738 out of Orange County, once stretched west to the Mississippi River and north to the Great Lakes, encompassed all or parts of eight states besides Virginia, and included the future city of Pittsburgh; and

WHEREAS, in 1745, the population of Augusta had increased enough to be able to elect a sheriff and form its own government; and

WHEREAS, henceforth, the region has had significant influence in every period of American history, from the settling of the frontier to the 21st century; and

WHEREAS, it was in recognition of these facts, and faced with the possibility that such an extraordinary history might be lost, that a group of civic leaders, local historians, genealogists, and preservationists started meeting in February of 1964 to organize the Society; and

WHEREAS, that group subsequently elected Dr. Richard P. Bell III to lead the Society as its first president, Harry L. Nash, Jr., as vice president, William Huffman as treasurer, Elizabeth H. Perry as recording secretary, Mary Armistead as corresponding secretary, Dr. Howard M. Wilson as archivist, and Dr. Patricia Menk as associate archivist; they also elected founding board members Fitzhugh Elder, Jr., Beirne J. Kerr, Dr. Herbert S. Turner, Ann Loth, Dr. Samuel R. Spencer, Jr., and Dr. Marshall Brice; and

WHEREAS, since 1965, the Society has published a scholarly journal, first semiannually and now annually, highlighting various topics of area history; published approximately a dozen books; and produced a quarterly newsletter since 1994; and

WHEREAS, the Society also hosts a spring and fall meeting, an annual banquet, and various other events promoting area history; and

WHEREAS, since its inception, the Society has collected and preserved in perpetuity archival materials, photographs, and artifacts relating to the area's heritage, including a 1797 Augusta County surveyor's compass appropriately symbolizing Augusta's role in opening the American frontier; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, the Society moved into the R. R. Smith Center for History and Art, a 19th century railroad hotel that they helped restore and co-own with the Historic Staunton Foundation and the Staunton-Augusta Art Center; and

WHEREAS, the Society space in the Smith Center includes a research library, climate-controlled archival rooms, offices, and an exhibit gallery where visitors from all over the country come to research history and genealogy; and

WHEREAS, during the last 50 years, the Society has promoted the expansion of historical knowledge with the erection of at least a half dozen historic highway markers and began custodial care of the historic Glebe Cemetery in 1971; and

WHEREAS, the Society looks forward to spending another 50 years continuing its work of "Preserving the Past for the Future"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Augusta County Historical Society on the occasion of its 50th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Augusta County Historical Society Board of Directors as an expression of the General Assembly's respect and admiration for its years of dedicated service to the Commonwealth.

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