

WE ARE WINCHESTER

SEPTEMBER 2024

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Genesis Primitive Church

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You Are Cordially Invited to Walk the Religious Path Travelled By Winchester's Founders; That Path is Historic Christianity

Within Winchester's Central Blocks Stands 9 Historic Churches Serving as Monuments to Winchester's Early Faithful Christians

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Thank You, Pastor Dan Nicholson
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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

With absolutely no intention, I have suddenly realized this issue is filled with makers, and maker spaces. The connections we make continue to drive me in the pursuit of happiness, which seems to be everywhere in Winchester.

Directly outside my front door, my husband and I were lucky enough to accidentally/on purpose run into new transplants, who shared their story with us, highlighting many of the same reasons we continue to stay in Winchester.

As business owners when you are on the networking circuit you quickly identify which events have the best food. I kept running into the literal best cupcakes on earth so I was delighted to hear the chef would be opening up a space where I could fulfill all of my red velvet cupcakes needs, which I have done for months now. I thought it was time to share the secret! It's worth the drive!

We'll see you in Old Town!



Misty Weaver & Katie Jordan
WE ARE WINCHESTER

CIVIL WAR + P.T. BARNUM CONNECTION?



By Mike Robinson
Author of Winchester Tales book series

As the men of the 37th Virginia Cavalry mounted their horses, the distant crack of gunfire echoed near Spout Spring along the Opequon Creek on the Berryville Road. It was the early hours of September 19, 1864, around 2:30 a.m., and Stephen Bunker felt a surge of nervous energy. He had joined the 37th Virginia only a few months earlier, with his sole experience of combat being a skirmish near Moorefield where his brother, Christopher, was captured. Gripping the reins tightly, Stephen spurred his horse forward as the cavalry moved out along the pike.

Meanwhile, the 1st Connecticut Cavalry Regiment had left Berryville an hour before, securing Limestone Ridge, which overlooked the Spout Spring ford of Opequon Creek near the Millbank home (pictured). Two cavalry regiments, the 2nd and 5th New York, spearheaded the advance across the creek. When the opposing forces clashed, the 37th Virginia Cavalry was forced to retreat to the safety of the North Carolinian picket lines. Amid the chaos of the canyon, Stephen Bunker was gravely wounded, yet he remained in the saddle, persevering through the ferocity of the Third Battle of Winchester. He would remain active in military service until the Civil War's end.

What makes Stephen and Christopher Bunker unique figures in history is their Chinese heritage—they may be the only Asian-American Confederates to engage in active battle during the Civil War. Moreover, Stephen and his brother Christopher were the sons of Chang and Eng Bunker, the world-famous conjoined twins who once toured with P.T. Barnum.

In the photograph, Stephen Bunker appears on the right, while Christopher, captured at Moorefield, is seen on the left.

FROM KITCHEN TO CUPCAKE KINGDOM: CAKES BY ASHTON

For Ashton Simmers, life hasn't always been about cupcakes and frosting. Before she became the heart and soul of Cakes by Ashton LLC, she spent years working in banking and medical billing—jobs that never quite fit. But a journey that started in culinary school, paused for family, and was reignited by the challenges of raising a child with severe allergies, has led her to become a beacon for those in search of safe, allergen-free desserts.

Ashton's story isn't just about baking; it's about finding passion and purpose in the most unexpected places. "I was a stay-at-home mom while my ex-husband was in law school," she recalls. "I worked part-time, did medical billing, but it wasn't for me. It was a means to an end." But the culinary dream never left her. Armed with a culinary school education and a desire to create, she turned her focus to the one thing she knew she loved: baking.

But it wasn't until after her separation that Ashton truly found her calling. "My oldest son has a million and two allergies," she says with a mix of humor and seriousness. "He's allergic to milk, eggs, nuts, shellfish—you name it." The challenge of feeding her son made her realize how difficult it was to find safe, delicious treats for kids like him. So, she started baking for family and friends, experimenting with recipes that would not only be safe for her son but also delicious enough for anyone to enjoy.

This personal mission soon blossomed into a business. "I started out doing it from home, hopping from festival to festival, building my brand," Ashton explains. Her dedication paid off, and when the opportunity arose to open a storefront just 10 minutes from her home, she jumped on it. "I had no choice but to succeed," she says with a determined smile. And succeed she has.

Cakes by Ashton LLC quickly became a go-to spot for those with dietary restrictions. Ashton's bakery is the only one in the Shenandoah Valley that offers strictly dairy-free, egg-free, nut-free, and even gluten-free options. "People think this is a godsend because it's apparently hard to find dairy-free and gluten-free together," Ashton says. Her baked goods have become a lifeline for many in the community who struggle to find safe, delicious treats.

But it's not just the local community that benefits from Ashton's expertise. Thanks to apps like Gluten Dude and Happy Cow, her bakery has become a destination for out-of-towners seeking allergen-free options. "I get a lot of people from Luray and even city folks who come up here to unplug at an Airbnb," she shares. For them, Ashton's bakery is more than just a place to grab a cupcake—it's a place where they can enjoy food without worry.



Of course, running a bakery is not without its challenges. Transitioning from event-based sales to a brick-and-mortar shop has required Ashton to find a delicate work-life balance. "I'm married to my store at the moment," she admits. "Everything has to be done during the day when my kids are at school, so my evenings are free for them." Ashton is also deeply involved in every aspect of the business, from baking to customer service. "I'm the face of the brand, and I do all the baking," she says, though she's slowly teaching someone to help with the front of the house.

Despite the long hours and the pressures of running a small business, Ashton's passion remains unwavering. She's already thinking about the future—possibly getting that cupcake truck she once dreamed of—but for now, she's focused on growing her business and giving back to the community. Ashton frequently donates her time and resources to local causes, such as school supply drives and special events for children with disabilities.

And through it all, her sons are watching and learning. "My oldest is at that stage where he wants money but doesn't want to work for it," Ashton laughs. "But when he does work, he works hard." He's even started to help out in the shop, proudly sharing the story behind his mom's business with customers.

Ashton's journey from a stay-at-home mom to a successful business owner is a testament to her resilience and dedication. She's turned a personal challenge into a thriving business that not only brings joy to her customers but also provides a safe space for those with food allergies. In a world where finding allergen-free treats can be a challenge, Cakes by Ashton LLC is a sweet victory for all.

Visit CakesByAshton.com and the shop at 234 W King St, Strasburg - take Middle Rd for a beautiful drive!

DISCOVERING HOME ON THE MOVE: LINDA AND SEAN FOWLDS' JOURNEY TO WINCHESTER

Linda and Sean Fowlds are no strangers to starting over. Thirteen years ago, after a neighbor's large oak tree landed on their Central Florida dream home, the couple decided to sell everything and embark on a journey of minimalist adventure. Since then, they've called a lightkeeper's cottage in Maine, an antebellum mansion in Tennessee, and even the rugged shores of Nantucket their home. But now, of all the places they could be, they've chosen to settle in Winchester. So, what drew these nomads to our historic town?

It all began with the gradual adoption of a simpler lifestyle. "We'd started downsizing, then the tree fell, and we thought, maybe this is our sign to move," Sean recalls. They sold their house, packed their stuff into a single vehicle, and hit the road with an open mind and a deep curiosity. Their first big move took them to the shores of Nantucket, where they spent a season savoring the simple pleasures of island life. From there, the East Coast called them back again, pulling them to the rocky coastline of Maine after they lived outside of Nashville for a few years.

But their latest chapter in Winchester seems to be different. "We're southerners at heart, and after a whirlwind of moving, we felt like it was time to settle near family," Linda explains. Sean, who hails from Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, wanted to share his home state with Linda. After exploring nearby towns like Charlottesville and Williamsburg, Winchester emerged as the perfect blend of historic charm and modern convenience.

"Winchester has pleasantly surprised us," Linda says, smiling. "The walkability is huge for us. We love the pedestrian mall, the historic architecture, and of course, the library." They've been making the most of their time here, soaking in the small-town feel while enjoying the proximity to D.C. and the Shenandoah Valley's natural beauty.

For the Fowlds, every move is an opportunity to dive into a new community, make connections, and explore the hidden gems of each place. Yet, Winchester seems to offer something more—a potential for a longer stay. "We're still looking for our perfect little guest cottage, but we could see ourselves here long-term," Sean admits.

As much as they love the adventure of moving, it's clear that Linda and Sean value community just as much. "We've met some great people here already," Linda says. "And while it's fun to explore, there's something special about feeling at home."

In Winchester, they've found that perfect balance—a place rich in history, with all the modern amenities just a stone's throw away. As Sean puts it, "We live where other people visit, and that's how we know we've found someplace special."



So, what's next for this adventurous duo? They're keeping things open-ended, as always. But if Winchester continues to charm them as it has, we might just be lucky enough to call them neighbors for a good, long while.

Learn more about the Fowlds' minimalist journey at LivingLargeWithLess.net.



SEE AND BE SEEN *September events*

7 COMMUNITY SAFETY FAIR

Food drive, Touch-A-Truck & live demos, kid's zone & vendors, auctions and giveaways, bike safety obstacle course, and more!
[James Wood Middle School](#)

7-8 SHEN ARTS FEST

2-day, juried, fine art festival, showcasing the work of artists from all over our region. Discover handmade-in-the-USA, original works of art across every medium, along with music and see a special flash mob event. [Old Town](#)

14 FIDDLES & FIFTHS

Third annual Fiddles & Fifts Bluegrass and Bourbon Festival. Bright Box and The Monument will host this year's event to bring you some fantastic musical acts. [Facebook Details](#)

21 APPLE HARVEST FESTIVAL

Live entertainment, apple pie eating contest, baking contest, kidzone, crafts, classic car show and more! [Frederick County Fairgrounds](#)

21 CELEBRACION OF WINCHESTER

Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month at this festival featuring dancers, performers, food and vendors showcasing our diversity!
[Taylor Pavilion](#)



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A woman with blonde hair, wearing a white top and a dark blazer, is smiling and talking on a headset. She is standing behind a DJ booth with a laptop and a microphone. The DJ booth has the Summit Events logo on it. The background is white with the text 'Elevating your events so you can Celebrate Confidently' and the Summit Events logo.

VALLEY MAKERS ASSOCIATION

Ten years ago, Ryan Hall, a wooden sign-making enthusiast, faced a common dilemma: his townhouse couldn't accommodate the space and resources needed for his craft. Seeking a solution, Hall turned to Meetup.com, organizing an event for local crafters to swap tools. To his surprise, forty people attended. What began as a simple tool swap soon blossomed into the Valley Makers Association, a non-profit dedicated to providing the space and equipment needed for a wide range of creative endeavors.

Today, the Valley Makers Association offers community members the chance to collaborate and innovate in an educational environment. Whether you're interested in 3D printing, laser cutting, or woodworking, the association has the tools and space to bring your ideas to life.

Valley Makers Association offers one-day classes, catering to various interests and skill levels. Past classes have included fish printing, locksmithing, bookbinding, and welding. For those with ongoing projects, the association provides a monthly membership at just \$40. This membership grants 24/7 access to the well-equipped facility at 960 Baker Lane in Winchester, featuring a wood shop, laser cutter, 3D printer, and more. Volunteers can provide instruction for those unfamiliar with the equipment, ensuring that everyone from hobbyists to professional cabinetmakers and Etsy shop owners can make the most of the resources available.

The Valley Makers Association is deeply committed to community collaboration, regularly partnering with other local nonprofits to support various causes. The organization has constructed free little libraries for Literacy Volunteers Winchester Area, bat houses for Parks and Recreation, and even helps the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum with exhibit repairs. Additionally, Valley Makers plays a vital role in the annual Widget Cup, a high school competition where students in trade programs design and build solutions to real-world problems presented by local nonprofits. The association's volunteers assist by prototyping student ideas, helping them troubleshoot and refine their designs before the competition.

You can learn more about Valley Makers Association, membership and classes on their website at ValleyMakers.com or on Facebook at Facebook.com/valleymakersassociation. The organization is always looking for instructors who would like to teach a class about a trade or specialized skill. They also are open to community collaboration ideas.



Winchester Book Gallery Recommends:



The master of the Providence plantation in Barbados gathers his slaves and announces the king has decreed an end to slavery. As of the following day, the Emancipation Act of 1834 will come into effect. The cries of joy fall silent when he announces that they are no longer his slaves; they are now his apprentices. No one can leave. They must work for him for another six years. Freedom is just another name for the life they have always

lived. So Rachel runs.

Away from Providence, she begins a desperate search to find her children—the five who survived birth and were sold. Are any of them still alive? Rachel has to know. The grueling, dangerous journey takes her from Barbados then, by river, deep into the forest of British Guiana and finally across the sea to Trinidad. She is driven on by the certainty that a mother cannot be truly free without knowing what has become of her children, even if the answer is more than she can bear. These are the stories of Mary Grace, Micah, Thomas Augustus, Cherry Jane and Mercy. But above all this is the story of Rachel and the extraordinary lengths to which a mother will go to find her children...and her freedom.

FACES OF WINCHESTER: JASON WILLIAMS

If you walk through Old Town Winchester on a weekday afternoon, you'll likely see Jason Williams, the new owner of Union Jack Restaurant, sitting at the outside dining area, enjoying the bustle of activity and people watching. He's doing much more than idling the time away, he's planning the future of this long-time downtown destination.

Williams joined the Union Jack crew many years ago, settling in behind the bar and forming lasting friendships with co-workers and patrons. Through the years since, he's had brief stints at other local restaurants and even moved out of the area at one point, but something kept calling him back to UJ, the place he now calls home.

"There's a learning curve for sure. I really want to be behind the bar, where I'm comfortable." But Williams is excited to handle the bigger picture dealings as well, such as ordering, scheduling maintenance, and making sure that this beloved establishment gets back to the basics.

"I am hoping to get some of the old faces back in here", behind the bar, in the dining area, as well as customers. He views a great team as essential to the current and future success of the business. This team will focus on creating quality offerings with friendly service and will eventually have new options available.

"The mom and pop businesses in Old Town are what set us apart. Together, business owners, staff and the community make Winchester a charming place that people can't wait to go to."

And so far, the community has certainly shown its support for Williams and the entire Union Jack family. It's not uncommon for downtown restaurants to run errands for each other, lend supplies when one place runs low on something, and refer back and forth to each other, like one big happy family. His new position has been well-received and the vibes have been great.

So, what is this future that Williams is planning for Union Jack? That's up to him to talk about and unveil when the timing is right.

Whatever the UJ family puts out there is sure to have the community in mind. Maybe you'll see offerings of an expanded menu, or a place you'll want to take a date where you can linger for hours, sipping a drink, enjoying a meal and talking with each other. It's something we are all looking forward to!

Amber Koehler has lived in Winchester for 22 years.

She owns Twice Is Nice Consignments in our downtown area and loves to support all things local.



Warm coffeehouse with an authentic selection of espressos plus light snacks, soups and sandwiches.

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**JUST LISTED - \$600K
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**JUST SOLD - \$535K
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- Close to beach 1
- Nature trails practically out your door
- Multi-generational living is possible



WATCH THE REEL



**JUST SOLD - \$335K
109 FENIMORE DR**

THANK YOU TO OUR CLIENTS AND SUPPORTERS!

We appreciate your trust in us! It was a clean sweep in the Winchester Star awards, with Katie taking 1st place and Misty taking 2nd!



**MISTY WEAVER
KATIE JORDAN**

VOTED #1 AGENT 2023 & 2024

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