

August 29, 2018

P. Buckley Moss holds Hillsville signing

By David Broyles

HILLSVILLE - Area residents were thrilled to have world-renowned artist P. Buckley Moss in Hillsville, Virginia, Saturday, signing copies of her print "The Sidna Allen House" as a fundraiser for a group restoring the home.



Apparently, the feeling was mutual, with Moss proclaiming her enjoyment of not only the signing over the weekend, but an earlier trip she made to the town for a performance of "Thunder in the Hills," a play about the 1912 courthouse shooting.

"Everyone who participated in it (was wonderful), the dancing, the fiddle playing which is on the porch here (today) was wonderful. My daughter filmed it and posted it on her Facebook," Moss recalled. "Everybody loved it. Everybody said, 'Oh wow! Where was that?' They just loved it."

She said local dentist Marlon Goad encouraged here to do a piece on the home. Moss, who said architecture continues to be an inspiration for her and her work, used photos of the home from which to do her painting.

"I think there was a great response (to the print signing). I love talking to people and hearing different stories about the history and the family of the house. It's so interesting," said Moss. "One fellow came over and gave me a disc of music. One of the cuts was about the massacre. I'm going to listen to it on the way home. It's really interesting."

Historical Society Member Mark Harmon shared information on the status of renovations at the historic home including repairs to the roof, which will take place in stages.

"Eventually we are going to have to replace the whole roof and that's going to be expensive. The reason we will do the roof over the porch was because of the new columns and (decking) the porch. The original metal is still on the house. It needs to be replaced," said Harmon. "We have already ordered (roofing) for the front side and the front porch of the house. The last couple of weeks Ionian columns have been put along the front porch along with new flooring."

Harmon said the work matches the tongue-in-groove work originally done but will be more durable and last longer because it is a composite material. Although 19 columns have been installed there are still a few more to go. He said the columns feature a fleur-de-lis (lily) pattern which was on the original columns.

"The original fleur-de-lis were made of terra cotta. We still have some of the pieces. Some windows on the front have been restored but we have to remove the lead paint off the trim, which is a difficult process," Harmon said. "We hope to begin grading on a driveway at the back from the direction of Sky View (Baptist Church) through the courtesy of Roland and Virgil Hall."

He said the money from the benefit would be significant for restoration because any renovation costs money. He said if anyone has ever been involved in restoring a house they know there is always a "snag."

"The Sidna Allen House, because it is historic, has even more snags. It is 108 years old. We called three companies about getting guttering on the house. All three refused," said Harmon. "This is because it is historical with all the angles. It's hard to find workmen who are able to do it and are willing to do it. We all know if a workman is really good, they are always booked up."

He said Gary Cassell would begin work on roof of the front of the home and the porch as soon as the shingles arrive. The shingles will look like the original slate roofing but are made of a lighter, recycled material with a 50-year warranty. He estimated the shingles on the front half of the home would run more than \$6,000 (without factoring in the cost of other materials needed).