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OLD TOWN WINCHESTER

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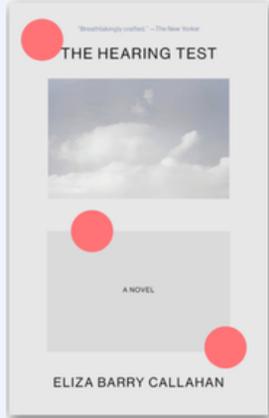
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PHOTO BY
KATIE JORDAN

Winchester Book Gallery Recommends:



When the narrator of *The Hearing Test*, an artist in her late twenties, awakens one morning to a deep drone in her right ear, she is diagnosed with Sudden Deafness, but is offered no explanation for its cause. As the specter of total deafness looms, she keeps a record of her year—a score of estrangement and enchantment, of luck and loneliness, of the chance occurrences to which she

becomes attuned—while living alone in a New York City studio apartment with her dog.

Through a series of fleeting and often humorous encounters—with neighbors, an ex-lover, doctors, strangers, family members, faraway friends, and with the lives and works of artists, filmmakers, musicians, and philosophers—making meaning becomes a form of consolation and curiosity, a form of survival.

WinchesterBookGallery.com | 7 N. Loudoun St

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

January always feels like a reset—fresh calendars, big plans, and a few slow mornings to think about what really matters.

Family Promise is showing how powerful it is when a community rallies around families on the brink of homelessness. The YDC is reinventing itself with new leadership, big dreams, and a downtown space that's already buzzing with energy and purpose. Over on Loudoun Street, The Brass Button is blending retail and mission in a way that feels both thoughtful and grounded. And the *History of Us* project is reminding us that the stories behind our buildings matter just as much as the ones unfolding today.

New restaurants, new programs, old buildings with new life—it all adds up to something we love: a Winchester that keeps getting better by staying connected to who we are.

We'll see you in Old Town!



*Misty Weaver
& Katie Jordan*
**WE ARE
WINCHESTER**

THE BRASS BUTTON

The Brass Button is a new boutique-style store located at 224 S Loudoun St, Winchester that brings together home décor, furniture, and locally made goods in a thoughtfully curated, welcoming space. Designed as a shared storefront for makers and creatives, the shop features a mix of custom wooden bowls, small handcrafted accents, flipped furniture, and unique decorative pieces, all arranged together rather than separated into individual vendor booths. The result is a cohesive, lived-in feel that encourages browsing and discovery.

The store highlights the work of artisans, including locally crafted wood pieces and refinished furniture, as well as European Daisy pottery from Poland, known for its colorful patterns and everyday durability. Shoppers will also find custom textiles and fabric remnants from interior decorator Karen Kelley, who specializes in pillows, curtains, and reupholstery. A partially installed kitchen by local contractor Future Design and Build adds to the showroom atmosphere, offering inspiration for how the pieces might come together in a home setting.

The Brass Button's name reflects its deeper purpose. Inspired by the brass buttons on military uniforms, the shop was created with the intention of eventually donating a portion of sales to She Served, a future nonprofit supporting women who have served in the military.



HISTORY OF US: NEW STORIES IN OLD TOWN

There's something comforting about walking through Old Town Winchester—the brick sidewalks, the slate roofs, the way certain corners seem to hum with stories. But lately, those stories are getting louder. That's thanks to a new initiative quietly unfolding: the History of Us project.

Created by Friends of Old Town (FOOT) under the direction of Brady Cloven, and led by a small team of volunteer researchers and writers, History of Us is an evolving local history effort that digs deep into the layers of everyday buildings, businesses, and homes in Old Town. The goal? To piece together a richer, more personal understanding of Winchester—not just through major historic events, but through the people who lived and worked here, the families who ran shops, the quiet buildings that were anything but.

While warm-weather events often bring crowds to the Old Town Mall, History of Us offers something uniquely suited for colder months: a reason to bundle up, slow down, and take in your surroundings with fresh eyes. Brady says "It's meant to be approachable, walkable, and something you can experience at your own pace. Winchester has such a deep, rich history, and so much of it lives right in the buildings themselves. Every block has a story if you take a second to slow down and really look around."

Whether you're a lifelong local or a recent arrival, there's something grounding in learning not just the famous names but the forgotten ones too. It reminds us that Winchester didn't just *happen*—it was built, lived in, fought over, celebrated, and reimagined, block by block, by people not all that different from us.

From ghost stories to typewriters, the project has already uncovered some truly fascinating gems:

- The spot where Sheridan slept before his legendary ride to rally Union troops at Cedar Creek that later became an Episcopal finishing school.
- The building that may have been purchased by Daniel Morgan for his mistress and their illegitimate son, Willoughby Morgan.
- Where the Willis family operated a bicycle shop for over 40 years that was later home to an arcade and party supply store before its culinary revival.
- A shoe shop that served Winchester for 60 years and the owner's wife who made history as the first woman to practice law in Winchester.
- Where a human skeleton was discovered when building an addition!

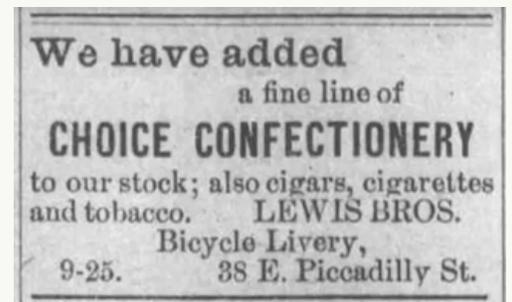
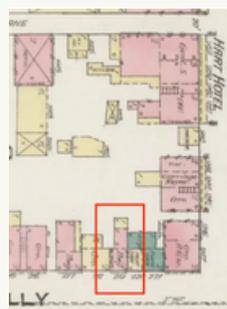
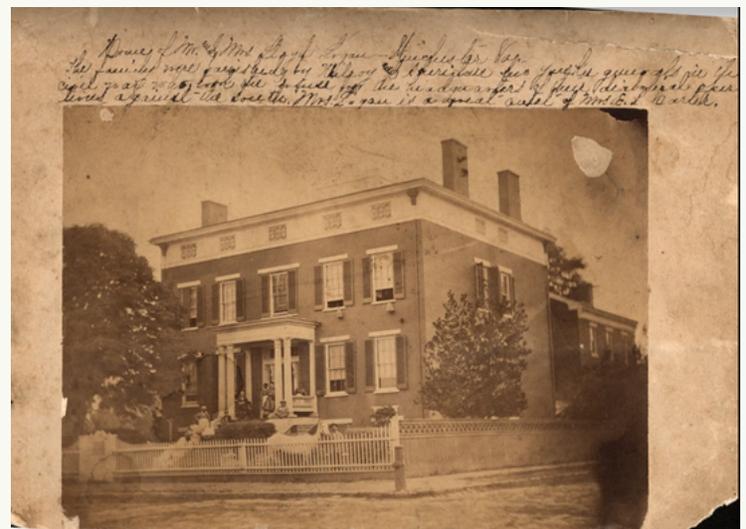
These stories—and dozens more—are being compiled into an easy-to-follow app. Each write-up includes the building's early use, notable tenants over time, and architectural details, all with historic photos, newspaper articles, and maps offering a snapshot that blends historical research with community storytelling.



How to Explore History of Us

Each participating building features a QR code sticker on the front of their building, no app download needed. Once you are connected you'll be able to open the map to see all of the other buildings that have been completed so far!

History isn't just dates and names on a plaque. It's where we've been. It's the story of this place. And it's still being written.



MANGIA



Mangia is an Italian-inspired spot that leans just as much into comfort and family as it does into craft and tradition. Brought to the community by Dan Kalber and Dy Sourisak, the owners behind Village Square and Water Street Kitchen, Mangia is designed to land squarely between those two well-known concepts: polished but not pretentious, welcoming without being overly casual. Even the name sets the tone. “Mangia” means “eat” in Italian, an invitation that feels less like a command and more like encouragement to settle in, relax, and enjoy a generous meal.

At the heart of the kitchen is head chef Gerald Cole, who has worked with Kalber for more than 13 years and was given the opportunity to help build Mangia from the ground up. The menu draws deeply from Cole’s own family history, particularly his Italian grandmother, Rose Marie, whose red sauce recipe became the foundation for much of what’s served. While the inspiration is personal, the execution is intentionally adapted for today’s diners. Cole tweaked the sauce to better suit the restaurant, dialing back sweetness and adding a bit of spice. Guests can choose between different red sauces, including a smooth, puréed Sunday sauce reminiscent of traditional “Sunday gravy,” and a more textured marinara with chopped and crushed tomatoes that offers more bite and mouthfeel.

Portions at Mangia are unapologetically large, the kind that make excellent leftovers, especially the house-made pasta, which reheats beautifully the next day. The meatballs are a standout—light, airy, and far from dense—while the Caesar salad stays true to tradition, anchovies included, a detail that will delight purists.

The restaurant itself reinforces the idea that Mangia is meant to feel like home. Brown paper covers the tables, intentionally lowering the formality and encouraging guests to get comfortable. It’s a small touch that makes a big difference, especially for families. The paper table covering doubles as entertainment, providing a perfect canvas for drawing while waiting for food. Cole was deliberate about that choice, wanting the space to feel inviting rather than uptight, a place where kids are welcome and adults can unwind.

The focaccia that is brought to you when you arrive, along with desserts like panna cotta and plans for house-made sorbet, are all made in-house. The menu is intentionally flexible, encouraging diners to mix and match pastas and sauces rather than adhere to rigid rules, reinforcing the idea that Italian food should feel intuitive and personal.

It’s a restaurant rooted in family, memory, and generosity, aiming to make people feel at ease from the moment they sit down. Mangia delivers exactly what its name promises: an invitation to eat, linger, and feel at home.

Visit the restaurant at 242 Millwood Ave. Winchester, VA



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COMBATING CHILDHOOD HOMELESSNESS: FAMILY PROMISE

Family Promise of the Northern Shenandoah Valley has become a lifeline for families with children who are teetering on the edge of homelessness or already living without stable housing. Based in Winchester and serving the city along with Frederick, Clarke, and Warren counties, the nonprofit focuses exclusively on families with children.

From its outset three years ago, leaders recognized that families with children were falling through the cracks. Adult shelters existed, but parents with kids were often left with no option other than motels, campgrounds, cars, or doubling up with relatives. Today, Family Promise works with families living in all of those circumstances.

The organization's work centers on two primary goals: preventing eviction and helping homeless families move into permanent housing. Case management is intensive and holistic, addressing the real barriers families face while living in motels—transportation challenges, food insecurity, limited cooking facilities, and unstable employment. Something as simple as preparing a healthy meal becomes a challenge when a family of five is sharing two beds, a dorm-sized refrigerator, and a microwave.

To address those needs, Family Promise relies heavily on community partnerships. Churches prepare and deliver meals directly to motel rooms, food pantries coordinate deliveries for families without cars, and nonprofits across the region work together to ensure families don't have to navigate the system alone. Organizations like Highland Food Pantry, CCAP, Hope Heals Care Center, Connected Communities, and many others provide food, diapers, emergency assistance, and referrals. Employment barriers are tackled through partnerships with the Virginia Career Works Center and Horizon Goodwill, helping parents find or improve employment while balancing childcare and transportation challenges.

One of the organization's most critical roles is bridging the gap between families and landlords. Affordable housing is limited, but Family Promise has cultivated strong relationships with local property managers and developers who are willing to work with families that might otherwise be denied due to past evictions, poor credit, or criminal records. What makes the difference is accountability. Families receiving assistance sign an agreement to continue working with Family Promise for at least 90 days after moving in. Case managers check in regularly, provide

financial counseling, and even inspect apartments if needed to ensure rent is paid and housing is maintained. This follow-up has built trust with landlords and contributed to a remarkable success rate—out of roughly 80 permanent move-ins, only three families have lost housing, often due to crises that might have been prevented had the organization known sooner.

Financial education is a cornerstone of the program. Before any financial assistance is provided, families meet with staff to review income, spending, and budgeting. The goal is empowerment—helping families understand where money goes and how to prioritize stability.

When families do move into permanent housing, they often arrive with nothing. That's where another layer of community support comes in. Through partnerships with Mover Dudes and Patton's Movers and Storage, donated furniture is picked up, stored, and delivered directly into new homes. Beds, tables, dressers, and sofas turn empty apartments into livable homes on move-in day, ensuring families don't just have housing, but dignity.

Looking ahead, the organization's vision is expanding. Family Promise has secured land on Bruce Drive for a future family shelter that would house up to 22 families and 84 beds, a project expected to take two to three years and require significant community and state support. In the meantime, the organization has received a grant to launch an emergency motel assistance program, allowing short-term support for families facing sudden crises such as job loss or car breakdowns.

Family Promise is, at its heart, a community response to family homelessness. Faith-based and mission-driven, it operates on the belief that when a vision is shared and the story is told, the provision will follow. Through partnerships, accountability, and compassion, the organization continues to prove that homelessness for families with children is not inevitable—and that with the right support, stability is possible.



January events

3+

INDOOR CORNHOLE

Beat the weather and your friends at indoor cornhole each Saturday at Escutcheon Brewing! [Escutcheon](#)

11

NEEDLE FELTING CLASS

Learn the art of needle felting! Use wool fibers to create a little nature-inspired creation. Learn the tips and tricks for creating even forms and adding details. [Typewriter Studio](#)

24

APPLE BLOSSOM CASH PARTY

Bingo, 50/50 raffles, dinner, open bar, pull tabs, silent auction and more! VIP options as well! [SAB](#)

CONCERN HOTLINE

26+

RESTAURANT WEEK - FREDCO

Try new restaurants in Frederick County - featuring multi-courses at discount prices! [FredCoEats.com](#)

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PAGE COUNTY

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WARREN COUNTY

31 GRAVY COOKOFF

Our annual chili cook off has been such a success, we thought we'd throw a new one your way - this time with sausage gravy!!

Think your gravy has what it takes to take the grand prize?

[Winchester Brew Works](#)

NEW ERA OF THE YDC: BUILDING COMMUNITY

For generations of Winchester locals, mentioning the YDC brings back flashes of basketball games, dances, and childhood memories spent in the old building over the years. But the Youth Development Center (YDC) has been quietly transforming—both physically and philosophically—and is now writing a new chapter from its new home right in the heart of Old Town.

At the helm during this transformation is Executive Director Sarah Fishel, a Winchester native and James Wood grad who returned to her hometown after years away and a truly remarkable personal journey—including becoming a double living organ donor. “Once I finished up that chapter of my life, I knew I wanted to find a new way to serve,” she explains. “The YDC just felt right.”

Fishel joined the YDC board in early 2023 and shortly after stepped into the executive director role, right as the organization finalized its move into the former YHB building downtown. “The timing was wild,” she laughs. “My first board meeting was literally our walkthrough of the new building.”

Now, with a massive, multi-room facility—including two racquetball courts, classrooms, a rec room, art spaces, and a dream of building a full basketball court—the YDC is ready to expand its impact far beyond what it could previously imagine.

If you haven’t been by yet, now’s the time. The YDC is more than just a youth center—it’s becoming a full-fledged community hub, with programming designed for kids, teens, and adults.

For kids:

- WinterFest & SummerFest are cornerstone seasonal programs with literacy, sports, art, and guest speakers.
- Restart Literacy and free Saturday art classes (taught by adjunct professor and artist *Lindsey Browning*) are launching this winter and already filling fast.
- New STEM and math programs are on deck for early 2026.

For adults:

- The upcoming YDC Life Talks series will feature free workshops on resume building, navigating IEPs, communication skills, and other life tools often taken for granted.
- A First Friday Drop-Off Program launches in the spring—giving parents some much-needed time to explore downtown while their kids enjoy supervised activities at the YDC.
- Community partners like United Bank are joining in too, offering financial literacy programs for kids in the new year.

Fishel puts it simply: “Our goal is to put people—kids and adults alike—in rooms they wouldn’t otherwise be in. If we can build confidence, skills, and connection, we’re doing something right.”

And if you haven’t seen the building yet? Fishel promises, “We’re still moving in and being intentional with every space. But we’re here. And we want everyone to feel like they have a place at the YDC.”

From the outside, the YDC’s transformation might look fast. But it’s deeply rooted in decades of community trust—and a desire to evolve with the times. “People know the YDC, but they haven’t seen us in a while,” Fishel says. “This is our chance to reintroduce ourselves and show what’s possible.”

That includes dreams of restoring a full-size basketball court, expanding partnerships with local businesses and nonprofits, and reaching Fishel’s ambitious (but very doable) goal of serving 500 youth in 2026.

“Winchester is already a special place,” she says. “We just want to help raise the next generation who will keep it that way.”

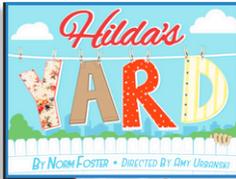
Learn more at myydc.org



PRESENTING THE



WINCHESTER LITTLE THEATRE



SEPT 5-20, 2025
Hilda and Sam Fluck are celebrating their Empty Nest. It's 1956 and they are getting their first TV... until their adult children, Gary and Jenny, are back and they are not alone. As Hilda's backyard fills with unexpected guests and the family careens into an afternoon of bumbling calamity, the stakes and the laughs grow in this heartwarming family comedy.



NOV 7-DEC 6, 2025
We are thrilled to once again present this musical adaptation of the beloved Christmas classic with its new twist in storytelling – and an original score you'll want to hear again and again! From "Bah, humbug!" to "God bless us every one!", if anyone knows how to keep Christmas, we do!



JAN 16-31, 2026
A menacing con man and two ex-convicts meet their match when they trace the location of a mysterious doll to the apartment of Sam Hendrix and his blind wife, Susy. Through clever lies and deceit, they convince Susy they are there to help her. But as their deception slowly unravels, Susy finds herself in an intense game of cat and mouse.



MAR 13-28, 2026
Virginia Hascall has left her home and fiancé to become a Women Airforce Service Pilot (WASP). Joining a varied group of other women doing their part to help defeat the Axis powers in World War II, these women form a sisterhood that travels through triumph and tragedy, exploring both the skies and themselves.



MAY 15-30, 2026
Best friends Chris and Annie are determined to raise money for the cancer wing of the local hospital. They decide to use their annual Women's Institute calendar but instead of bucolic country scenes, Chris hits upon the idea of featuring the Ladies doing typical Women's Institute endeavors – while nude. The calendar is wildly successful, but their friendship is put to the test as news of their venture spreads beyond their little town.



Summer 2026




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