

- **General History**

- The town derives its name from the Buena Vista furnace which was operated by the Jordan's in the near vicinity, and which, as its name suggests, antedated the town some forty years. **Formerly was named Hart's Bottom, Green Forest or Green Valley**
 - Actually, according to Francis Lynn, BV was composed of Hart's Bottom, Green Forest and the Jordan Property
- The founding of Buena Vista was done primarily by one man, Benjamin C. Moomaw in the late 1800s.
- Buena Vista was granted its Charter as a town from the State in January 1890. The state granted a Charter for Buena Vista to become a city on February 15, 1892.
- Buena Vista, Virginia -- Historical Events (via public library fb page)
 - 1880 - Two railroads, forming a junction, are run through Buena Vista.
 - 1882 - Buena Vista's first industry open, the Tannery.
 - 1885 - The first public school is built. It is a one room log building.
 - December 1888 - B. C. Moomaw writes the historic Buena Vista Prospectus. The Buena Vista Company was formed and all shares were sold within 30 days.
 - 1889 -The major "boom" occurs in Buena Vista. Building begins at an amazing rate.
 - March 7, 1889 - The Town is named Buena Vista as opposed to Green Forest.
 - May 22, 1889 - The drawing of lots begins.
 - Jan. 24, 1890 - Town gets charter.
 - Jan. 26, 1890 - Epworth Hall Church, the first church in Buena Vista, is dedicated. It was located on the site of the existing Stone Church of the Brethren.
 - March 9, 1890 -The first Presbyterian Church dedicated (2nd church in Buena Vista). It was replaced on April 26, 1913 with the existing church on 23rd and Chestnut.
 - May 9, 1890 - The City begins building a new brick school that will host 240 children. It is opened on October 12, 1890. The Principal is Mr. McCluer.
 - May 1890 - The Buena Vista Company moved into it's new office. This is now known as the old courthouse. Presently housing the library!
 - Dec. 12, 1890 - The Buena Vista Iron Company opened. It ran until December 1924.
 - June 6, 1891 - The Buena Vista Opera House opens.
 - Oct. 1891 - The new Hotel Buena Vista is completed. It would later become Main Hall for Southern Seminary College.
 - Feb. 15, 1892 - The State issues Buena Vista a charter as a City.
 - 1892 - Mayor White is elected Buena Vista's first Mayor.
 - March 4, 1892 - The "boom" time comes to an end.
- Used to have street dances downtown -- when a fistfight started, everyone went home
 - 50s
 - Info from Marolyn Cash

- **Linric Building**

- Built 1940
- The two-story building has textured stretcher-bond brickwork on the front and lighter colored brick on the sides. The front-gable roof is hidden behind a stepped front parapet. In the second-story are 6/6 vinyl replacement windows with fake muntins. An early suspended metal awning shades a storefront with aluminum and plate glass display windows flanking double recessed entries.
- The present storefront, which dates to the third quarter of the twentieth century, replaces an original storefront with a tall translucent glass transom and a different configuration of entrances. There are mail boxes for the two first-story stores and two second-story apartments. To the rear is a two-story vinyl-sided section.
- A store and bowling alley occupied the building in 1945.
- Bibee's Super Market was in the building by 1949. In the 1950s a large neon sign depicting a female shopper projected from the façade.
- The Mack's Stores Inc. department store was located here in 1974.
- Tropical Sands Tanning (2067A) and Brown Deer Framing (2067B) in 2009.
- Used to be a beauty shop as well

- **Annex**

- Built in 1930
- Decker's Barber Shop was located at this address in 1974. Considering the building's small size, a barber shop may have been the original use.
- After the barber shop, briefly an insurance office
- The one-story cinder block building has a parapet roof, a recessed modernist façade with a stretcher and stack-bond brick veneer, a cantilevered bay window with vinyl sheathing and a large picture window, and an asphalt-shingled mansard awning.
- The Pence's owned both the Annex and Camelot, but did nothing with either

- **Camelot**

- Ca. 1950
- 1930 according to tax records
- The two-story building is constructed of cinder block with a random American bond veneer on the front. The parapet shed roof has a slightly raised section of parapet on the front. The 1/1 windows in the front second story are vinyl replacements. A suspended metal awning shelters the reworked storefront, which features Neo-Victorian wooden elements such as pilasters with Corinthian capitals, segmental window heads, and dentil moldings. The recessed plate glass and aluminum entry may date to original construction. A one-story cinder block and plywood addition extends to the rear.
- In 1974 the building was occupied by the Electronic Center Service and in recent years it housed Alexander's restaurant.

- **Arts Council**

- Originally the Chamberlin Building
- The two-story building is constructed of mostly 1:5 American bond brick with a mid-twentieth century brick façade. The façade is featureless above the storefront, which has aluminum and plate glass display windows and a recessed entry. The parapet shed roof has a ceramic coping. On the north side, where the original ca. 1890 brickwork is most visible, there is a pattern of red and purple brickwork that may represent the use of different brick lots in construction, as well as bricked up segmental-arch windows. A ca. 1950 two-story cinder block rear addition has a suspended loading dock awning.
- C. A. Chamberlin Jr. opened his “fancy grocery store” Chamberlin and Company in the building on December 1, 1890, a date that presumably represents completion of the building. He had established his business on Factory Street in May 1890. A photo from the early 1890s shows the building with a bracketed pressed metal cornice that formed a peaked cresting at the middle flanked by urns.
- The Clothing House store was the early or original occupant of the north store space and the Chamberlin and Company occupied the south store space. The building is identified as a furniture store on the 1894 Sanborn map, although two of its three storefronts were vacant that year. Activity had picked up by 1899 when a stove store, hay and feed store, tailor, and warehouse are shown as occupants. R. A. DePriest, whose name may have appeared in the former cornice cresting, ran the stove store with sidelines in tin working, slate roofing, painting, plumbing, and the installation of home heating systems.
- In 1908 DePriest’s stove store remained but the other spaces were used by a plumbing shop and a Chinese laundry. A moving pictures theater occupied the south half in the 1920s. In 1945 the northernmost of the three store spaces was identified as selling wallpaper and paint, and a two-story storage addition had been made to the rear. The rear cinder block addition replaces a two-story frame addition of similar form that was in existence in the 1890s and may have been original.
- The Dollar General Store occupied the building in 1974.
- Tax records say this building was built in 1930 ??

- **Ramsey**

- The one-story building has a veneer of red and dark gray stretcher-bond brick over cinder block and a parapet flat roof with a ceramic coping. The storefront features aluminum and plate glass display windows flanking two recessed entries.
- The W. W. Mac Company variety store occupied the building in 1963 and the Family Dollar Store occupied the building in 1974.
- Built in 1959

- **Public Square**

- Downtown corner burned in the early to mid sixties and was never rebuilt
- Vacant lot until Frank's was built
 - Last people who owned Frank's still have a restaurant -- Foot of the Mountains -- which moved to Arcadia

- **From the Slack Post**

was warning, but critics disregarded it completely.

Today, rather than being eyesores, as so concerned the editor, the architecture is a commentary on the diverse nature of the people attracted to Buena Vista. These houses and buildings reflect the circumstances of the founding of the town, and they are some of the most beautiful gems in the "jewel box" referred to earlier. It is indeed unusual to find so many diverse styles in one location that were created in such a short period of time. Larger cities and towns usually arose over longer periods and the diversity of their architecture comes from that. Here we see that in two years, Buena Vista had over six hundred buildings constructed that ranged from the simplest to the most complex and reflected styles from all over America.

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- **Flood History**

- After the flood in the 60s, no one could get flood insurance
 - When the second flood came in '85, all of the businesses lost everything
 - Now there flood protection
 - This should NOT be an issue in the future

- **Individuals who contributed**

- Dan Pezzoni did research and wrote the report to classify downtown BV as historic
 - He lives in Lexington, VA
 - Historic architect
 - To Contact: (540) 464-5315 ; gilespezzoni@rockbridge.net
- Marolyn Cash
 - Works for Ramsey Real Estate
 - Contact: marolyncash@comcast.net
 - Lived in BV her whole life
- Francis Lynn
 - Official City Historian
 - Has 25 separate books/booklets in W&L's library
 - Contact: 540-261-2098
 - 91 years old
- Note: Mike Hamilton has physical history items / wants to create a museum
 - Contact: 540-460-1729
 - Will be at Mountain Festival