

Lynchburg News  
12/2/17

# Opinion

How to contact the Opinion editor: Pho

## Checking Up ...



LATHAN COLLMAS / THE NEWS & ADVANCE

Doug Harvey, seen in this 2016 photo taken at Point of Honor, retired Nov. 1 as director of the Lynchburg Museum System.

# A museum director



**Thumbs up** to Doug Harvey, the long-serving director of the Lynchburg Museum System, who retired Nov. 1 from the post he had held since 2005.

Harvey taught history and English at Dunbar Middle School and earned a degree in historic preservation followed by an internship at the Smithsonian Museum of American History. Following the internship, he worked as a curator in the Manassas Museum System where he gained experience preserving and interpreting two Civil War sites and the Jennie Dean site, a school that Dean, a former slave, founded for African-Americans. His career later included management positions at the Pamplin Historical Park near Petersburg and the Museum of the Confederacy and the American Civil War Center, both in Richmond.

In 2005, Harvey assumed the top position in the Lynchburg Museum System and, over the course of a dozen years, took the system to new levels. One of his biggest achievements was the reopening of the Old Hastings Court on Court Street and home of the Lynchburg Museum. The Greek Revival structure was built in 1855 and renovated in 1976, reopening in 1979 as part of the city's observance of the American Bicentennial. In 2000, following the collapse of a portion of the second floor, engineers discovered the building needed a top-to-bottom renovation that wasn't fully completed until 2008.

After reopening, the biggest challenge Harvey and his colleagues faced was rebuilding the museum's visitor count. It was a challenge they blew away: Average yearly attendance has grown from 8,000 to almost 25,000. He's also designed a number of educational initiatives and a partnership with Lynchburg City Schools, connecting students with the history of the Hill City.

Thank you for all you've done for this city and for helping tell its story.