



## Frazier Associates Closes After Thirty-Nine Years of Leadership in Historic Preservation



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STAUNTON, VA — Frazier Associates, a nationally recognized architecture and planning firm, closed in June 2025 after thirty-nine years of practice. Since its inception, the firm operated out of the historic Trotter Tavern on North Augusta Street—a ca. 1802 log structure it restored in 1988 and thoughtfully expanded in 2003.

Frazier Associates completed approximately 3,500 projects across more than 100 Virginia communities and in over twenty states. The firm played a critical role in advancing historic preservation through its leadership in downtown revitalization, the development of design guidelines for historic districts, and the use of tax credits to rehabilitate historic structures.

Founded in 1986 by Kathy Frazier, FAIA, and Bill Frazier, FAICP, a historic architect and an architectural historian and planner respectively, Frazier Associates offered services ranging from residential design to large-scale complex adaptive-use projects of historic structures. The firm served as the official architectural partner for the Virginia Main Street Program, providing façade design services to fifty communities across the state, along with streetscape plans and public space designs. The firm also became a national leader in community-wide wayfinding sign systems, with projects spanning the southeastern United States to the west coast.

In the early 2000s, Frazier Associates introduced photogrammetry services, a pioneering digital method for documenting historic buildings. Major projects included the U. S. Supreme Court, the Virginia State Capital, the University of Virginia's Rotunda, Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest, and James Madison's Montpelier.



Frazier Associates Office, Trotter Tavern



Bill and Kathy Frazier on the porch of Trotter Tavern in 1988 after the recent rehabilitation of the property.



William Frazier, FAICP



Kathleen O. Frazier, FAIA

## **AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

Over the years, Frazier Associates received more than 100 design and preservation awards, including the 2017 T. David Fitz-Gibbon Architecture Firm Award, the American Institute of Architects highest honor in Virginia.

Other notable awards include a National Palladio Award, Outstanding Contributions for Historic Preservation Throughout Virginia by the Garden Club of America, the Mary Mason Williams Award for Contributions to Historic Preservation in Virginia by APVA Preservation Virginia, and a Presidential Citation for Achievements in Downtown Staunton by the Preservation Alliance of Virginia and a letter of appreciation from the City Council of Staunton.

Its work was widely featured in publications such as Traditional Building, Southern Living, Virginia Living, Urban Land, Architectural Record, and Preservation Magazine of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

## **LOCAL INITIATIVES**

In Staunton and the Shenandoah Valley, the firm completed numerous projects that contributed to the preservation and revitalization of the region's architectural character. Most recently, this included the adaptive reuse of the Staunton Innovation Hub, a coworking space recognized with a Historic Staunton Foundation Commercial Rehabilitation Award.

Other local projects include the award-winning New Street Parking Garage; the restoration and adaptive use of R. R. Smith Center for History & Art; the Old Y Lofts, and the American Hotel project.

The firm also donated services to a range of community initiatives—creating historic design guidelines, a downtown streetscape plan, visitor maps, and interpretative signage throughout the city. It developed a historic architecture exhibit at the Smith Center and the design of the new Field House at the Staunton High School Football Field.

Frazier Associates also led the creation of a downtown service district that provides funding for the Staunton Downtown Development Association, and the principals initiated a campaign to halt the demolition of nine downtown historic properties for a new courthouse building.



## ARCHIVE

Though Frazier Associates has formally closed, a significant portion of the firm's archive will be preserved by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in Richmond, where it will remain accessible to the public, researchers, and preservation professionals. The firm's influence continues in preserved buildings, revitalized main streets, and the enduring design values it brought to Virginia and communities across the country.

## QUOTES

Kathy Frazier speaking about her years at the firm stated, "Throughout the office's long history, we have had an amazing mix of talented individuals working with us, and without them none of our accomplishments would have been possible."

Bill Frazier said, "It has been an honor for all of us at Frazier Associates to have been a small part of the movement to strengthen and grow the preservation ethic state-and-nationwide from the last quarter of the twentieth and first quarter of the twenty-first centuries."

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New Street Parking Garage, left and downtown Staunton location maps, right.

## **BIO BACKGROUND FOR KATHLEEN (“KATHY”) O. FRAZIER, FAIA EMERITA**

Kathleen O. Frazier, FAIA Emerita, received her Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Virginia in 1978. She began her career at the Staunton architectural firm, T. J. Collins and Son. She then joined Historic Staunton Foundation as the designer for the newly created Façade Improvement Program before becoming the Foundation's second executive director.

During that time at HSF, she designed over 60 downtown Staunton building façade projects, which transformed the image of the entire district. In 1982, Bill and Kathy were married. They relocated to San Francisco, where Kathy worked for Architectural Resources Group, a large west coast firm with a strong emphasis in historic preservation.

After returning to Virginia in 1986, she and Bill opened Frazier Associates. Their first project was providing design services for the Virginia Main Street Program. Kathy served as the program's official architect for the duration of her career. For this role, she received a variety of awards for her accomplishments from the Preservation Alliance of Virginia, the Virginia Downtown Development Association, and the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.

She was appointed to the Virginia Art & Architecture Review Board for two four-year terms by both Governor Tim Kaine and by Governor Robert McDonnell. In 2021, she was made a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and named Emerita upon her retirement. She also received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Virginia Main Street Program earlier this year, among many other recognitions.

## **BIO BACKGROUND FOR WILLIAM (“BILL”) T. FRAZIER, FIACP**

William T. Frazier, FIACP, received his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, Master of Planning, and Master of Architectural History degrees, all from the University of Virginia. He served as the first executive director of Historic Staunton Foundation (HSF) in 1977. While there, he worked with the National Trust for Historic Preservation's pilot program of Main Street revitalization to begin downtown Staunton's renewal. He surveyed over 1,000 of Staunton's historic buildings, and he and his staff created four historic districts designated at the national, state, and local level. He oversaw the creation of HSF's Façade Improvement Program.

After a brief stint in real estate development, Bill was appointed Director of the West Coast Region of the National Trust for Historic Preservation where he coordinated the Trust's preservation programs and services over a nine-state region including initiating Main Street programs in California and Hawaii. Later, he also taught courses in historic preservation at Mary Baldwin University and at the University of Virginia's School of Architecture graduate programs.

In 2005, he received Society Honors from The Virginia Society of the American Institute of Architects for achievements in historic preservation in Virginia and nationally. In 2016, he was inducted into the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Certified Planners and was commended for his contributions in historic preservation to Virginia by a joint resolution of the Commonwealth of Virginia General Assembly in the same year.

## **VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES**

Other volunteer activities of the Frazier's included both principals being Presidents of Historic Staunton Foundation as well as receiving lifetime achievement awards from that organization. Bill Frazier also served on the Staunton Planning Commission, on various City of Staunton committees studying the future of downtown, and on the boards of the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library and Museum, the Staunton Augusta Art Center, the Downtown Staunton Development Association, and the Staunton Creative Community Fund.

He also founded the Staunton Augusta Farmers Market, was chair of the Friends of the Sears Hill Bridge Committee to save that historic structure and was co-chair of the Gypsy Hill Park Gateway Enhancement Committee. He also was on the boards of Preservation Action (Washington D.C.) and the Virginia Downtown Development Association and was appointed by Governor Tim Kaine to the Preservation Advisory Committee for Fort Monroe.

Kathy Frazier' local volunteer activities included being on the Design Committee of the Staunton Downtown Development Association and on the boards of the Historic Thornrose Cemetery, The Augusta Garden Club, and Hunter McGuire School. She was also a member of the Vestry of Trinity Episcopal Church and an Advisory Board Member of Mary Baldwin University. At the state level, she was on the board of the Virginia Downtown Development Association, the Preservation Alliance of Virginia, and the Restoration Committee of the Garden Club of Virginia.