

## Department of Historic Resources

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### STATE HISTORICAL HIGHWAY MARKER "QUEENA STOVALL (1887-1980)" TO BE DEDICATED IN AMHERST COUNTY

*—New marker recalls "folk" artist Queena Stovall; a native of Amherst County, she took her first painting class at age 61; her depictions of rural life in Virginia in museums around the U.S. —*

*—The marker text is reproduced below—*

RICHMOND – A state historical marker issued by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources will be dedicated this month in Amherst County that commemorates "folk" artist "Queena" Stovall, whose paintings depicting rural life in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains have been featured in galleries, museums and other venues around the eastern United States.

The ceremony will begin at 4 p.m., Saturday, March 24, with the unveiling of the marker, which is located near the Elon Ruritan Club, 2120 Elon Road, Madison Heights. After the sign's unveiling, the dedication program will continue inside the Ruritan Club. The event is open to the public.

Speakers during the ceremony will include Dr. Kenneth R. Garran, president of Lynchburg College, and Dr. Barbara Rothermel, director of the college's Daura Gallery, where an exhibition on Queena Stovall is currently on display; Jimmy Ayers, vice-chairman of the Amherst County Board of Supervisors; family and friends of Queena Stovall including Sherry Stovall Flourney, Judy Stovall Bolland, Ray Snead, and Meg Stovall Laughon; and James Hare of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Musical contributions will be provided by the Lynchburg College Choir.

Emma Serena Dillard “Queena” Stovall was born outside of Lynchburg and for 35 years resided at a farm called Wigwam.

A mother of nine children, Stovall took her first painting class at age 61, according to the marker. “Her instructor, the acclaimed artist Pierre Daura, recognized her distinctive talent and refused to offer guidance for fear of changing her style,” the marker reads.

Stovall’s paintings portray a rural life of family scenes, farm chores, and community events involving African American and white neighbors.

“Her works,” the marker concludes, “have been displayed in galleries, museums, and traveling exhibitions across the eastern United States.”

The current Daura Gallery exhibition, titled “Inside Looking Out: The Art of Queena Stovall,” continues at the Lynchburg College gallery until April 13. The exhibition will then travel to the Virginia Museum of History & Culture (formerly Virginia Historical Society) where it will be on display from May 12 through October 14. An exhibition catalogue of the same name and priced at \$40 is available from the Daura Gallery.

The Queena Stovall marker was approved for manufacture and installation in 2017 by the Virginia Board of Historic Resources, which has the authority to designate new state historical markers. The manufacturing cost of the sign has been covered by its sponsor the Daura Gallery at Lynchburg College.

Virginia’s historical highway marker program, which began in 1927 with the installation of the first historical markers along U.S. Route 1, is considered the oldest such program in the nation. Currently there are more than 2,500 official state markers, most maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation, as well as by local partners in jurisdictions outside of VDOT’s authority.

Text of marker:

### **Queena Stovall (1887-1980)**

Emma Serena Dillard “Queena” Stovall, artist, was born outside Lynchburg and for 35 years lived near here on a farm called the Wigwam. A mother of nine, she took her first painting class at the age of 61. Her instructor, the acclaimed artist Pierre Daura, recognized her distinctive talent and refused to offer guidance for fear of changing her style. Stovall’s folk art paintings document rural life in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, depicting family scenes, farm chores, and community events involving African American and white neighbors. Her works have been displayed in galleries, museums, and traveling exhibitions across the eastern United States.

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