

The Messenger

OF THE CHESTERFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA

MISSION: TO COLLECT, PRESERVE, INTERPRET AND PROMOTE THE COUNTY'S PAST FOR THE EDUCATION AND ENJOYMENT OF PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

Number 151

October 2024

A Letter From President Jerry Netherland

“I appreciate the membership’s vote of confidence in me and allowing me to serve as President of the Society. I would be remiss if I didn’t indicate I have some trepidation for the role as there have been so many wonderful presidents who have served the Society in the furtherance of our Mission to collect, preserve, interpret and promote the County’s past for the education and enjoyment of present and future generations. This is a charge that I will give my all to because if we don’t, the fabric of our nation will forever be changed. We can’t let the treasures of Chesterfield County, from the historic homes, farms, historic sites, battlefields, antiques, collections, and documents pass into oblivion.

Growing up here in central Virginia, I developed a passion for history early in life. In the fourth grade I remember checking out and reading books from the school library on great Virginians like Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Henry, Lewis, Tyler, Lee and Jackson. I remember reading a book on Sam Houston in a day when I had the flu and had to miss school. Some of my favorite memories growing up are of my parents taking me to the museums, sites, battlefields and exhibits of Virginia.

I grew up in Dinwiddie County before moving over to another County, named after another great British Statesman, Lord Chesterfield, in 1987. Spending most of my life here and serving the County for over 30 years, I have gotten to immerse myself in history. Chesterfield County

has a lot to offer regarding its history, and I am proud to serve alongside so many dedicated Society volunteers. I look forward to serving as the President of the Society for the next two years, following in the footsteps of Scott and so many other great officers of the Society.

I urge every Society member to show your support and take advantage of our upcoming events such as the Antiques Evaluation, our Quarterly Meeting, and celebration of the 275th Anniversary of Chesterfield County. I look forward to seeing you there!”

IN THIS ISSUE

| | |
|---|----|
| President’s Letter | 1 |
| Executive Director’s Message | 2 |
| Welcome!..... | 3 |
| Donors and Donations | 3 |
| Membership Reminders | 4 |
| Board News | 5 |
| Calendar of Events..... | 6 |
| Special Events..... | 8 |
| Out on a Limb | 11 |
| Hear ye, Hear ye, Citizens | 11 |
| After the Battle..... | 12 |
| Exploring Local History at the Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia..... | 13 |
| A Revolutionary War Soldier and His Family..... | 14 |
| The Elliott House and Free-Black History of Swansboro | 15 |
| Antebellum Free-Black Property Owners in the Swansboro Development..... | 17 |
| A Note about The Messenger | 19 |

A Message from Dianne Mallory, Executive Director

“Time flies when you are having fun.” I cannot get this saying out of my head because of its simplicity and truth. September 1st marked six months as your Executive Director, and yes, – the time flew by, I had fun, and I continue to have fun as I move into the “doing” stage of the work.

As I said in my first message to you, I will remain on my “L&L Tour” – listening and learning. At the same time, I welcome the excitement and, at times, the risk, of making the changes in and for CHSV that make our mission doable for our members and our stakeholder community.

Some of the “doing” items now and to come are: 1. “The Messenger” will be reformatted so that it leads with CHSV news and events; 2. the CHSV website will undergo changes that are in direct response to feedback from you, volunteers, and the community-at-large; and 3. there will be a focus on CHSV as a member-based organization supported by committed volunteers.

I believe it is critical that we always keep our mission “front of mind” so that we don’t lose sight of our purpose “To collect, preserve, interpret and promote the county’s past for the education and enjoyment of present and future generations.” This mission is as relevant – maybe even more so – today as it was when CHSV was formed. I need and welcome you – our members and our community-at-large – to help me to keep CHSV a healthy and strong social corporation that will live out this mission in the many decades to come.

And, on a more personal note – to Diane Hewett and Lex Krauchunas –

Diane:

On behalf of the Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia, I thank you for your many years of volunteer service. Your service as the editor of The Messenger has been greatly appreciated by too many readers to count.

We wish you the best as you and your husband do some traveling and, the most exciting news, in your travels to Canada to welcome your first grandchild.

Thank you, thank you – a million times – thank you.

Lex:

How fortunate we were to have you as our Summer History Intern at CHSV. You made many contributions, especially your research work and presentation in response to a County request for historical information. The work you started to kick off a new special event continues. The event, named Spirit Chesterfield, will go ‘live’ in late October. Thank you for work with Angela Bullock, our other Intern, to create what promises to be a fun-filled, family-friendly, seasonal event.

Dianne

Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia
Trinity Church
10111 Iron Bridge Road
P. O. Box 40
Chesterfield, VA 23832

10 AM to 4 PM, Monday to Friday
804-796-7121

www.chesterfieldhistory.com
admin@chesterfieldhistory.com



Executive Director - Dianne Mallory

Board Members:

President - Jerry Netherland

Vice-President - Bob Talbot

Recording Secretary - Crystal Monroe

Treasurer - John Longnaker

Directors: Ann Brandon, Henry Coalter, George Cranford,
Karen Dailey, David Limmer, Bill Lipsett, Lilian B.
Mullane, Terry Wells, C. Robert Wilson

Past President - Scott Williams

Committees and Committee Chairs:

African-American History - Charlotte Wood

Archaeology - open

Cemetery - Rachel Lipowicz

Collections - David Limmer

Events - open

Finance - John Longnaker

Genealogy - Angie Wilderman

Governance - Scott Williams

Library - Liess van der Linden-Brusse

Membership - Pat Barron

Military History - Scott Williams

Museum - open

Society Office

Gina Stith, Administrative Assistant

County Museum and Old Jail

Pat Roble

Magnolia Grange House

Martha Atkinson

NOTE: Due to upcoming holiday schedules, the deadline for submitting *all* items for the January issue of The Messenger is December 1st. Please submit your items formatted in Times New Roman 12 point. Thank you!

WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS!

Thank you for joining the Historical Society!

Stuart and Georgeann Broth
Mattie Coli
Karen Dailey
The Shin-Yong Kang Family

Lex Krauchunas
Kathleen McDonald
Doria Tomlin
David and Jennifer Williams

THANK YOU, DONORS!

Up to \$99
C. Robert Wilson
The Kroger Company
Dr. Stuart & Georgeann Broth

\$100 to \$499
Thomas & Jeanne Elliott
Gloria Thysell
Midlothian Ruritan Club

\$500 to \$2500
John V. & Janet Cogbill, III
More than \$2500
Havens Charitable Foundation

LIBRARY DONATIONS AND ACQUISITIONS

Liess van der Linden-Brusse

Old photos, yearbooks, programs, flyers and brochures, as well as old maps, manuscripts, magazine and newspaper articles on Chesterfield people, places and events are always welcome additions to our research library in historic Trinity Church. We are open to the public Monday-Friday, 10-4. Please keep us in mind as you clear out your attics and basements! Thank you.

The following items were recently added to our Library Collection:

Genealogy

Received from the estate of the late Shirley 'Ley' Diller: Virginia Migrations, Hanover County, Vol I (1723-1850) & Vol II (1743-1871) – Wills, Deeds, Depositions & Other Documents of Historical & Genealogical Interest, by Eugenie & Preston Glazebrook

Edmund Thomas WYNNE & Martha Frances CURTIS and their Family, by Frederik Wills Boelt & Jean Marshall von Schilling

BISHOP Family Notes, compiled by Nancy Boyd Woolridge; gift of the author

Family History, Living in Virginia's Piedmont & Southside Regions in the 1600s & 1700s – includes BOLLINGS, COCKES, ROBERTSONS, and others, by Richard Torian, gift of the author

MANN Family Notes, compiled by Nancy Boyd Woolridge; gift of the author

Petersburg, VA, Marriage Register, Hustings Court (1784-1854), by Thomas P. Hughes, received from CHSV Genealogy Committee

What We Remember About Our Village of Ettrick – Ettrick Cemetery, by Ettrick Cemetery Foundation; gift of Curtis Anderson

General Interest

Received from the estate of the late Shirley 'Ley' Diller: The Citie of Henricus and the Lawes Written in Blood, by Dennis A. J. Morey
Colonists in Bondage, White Servitude & Convict Labor, by Abbot Emerson Smith
John Rolfe, America's First Entrepreneur, by Dennis A. J. Morey
Midlothian, an American Village 1776-1976, by Maude Kerby
Midlothian, Highlights of its History, by Bettie Woodson Weaver
Chester Community Telephone Directory 1984-1985; gift of Dr. Joe Hillier

Continued on page 4

Hickory Hill County Training School, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (2023), prepared by Monica Esparza; gift of Charles Pool

Route 10 (Bermuda Hundred Triangle Road to Meadowville Road) Widening Project, Phase I Architectural Identification Survey (2013), by McCormick Taylor, Inc.; gift of Scott Williams

Route 10 (Bermuda Hundred Triangle Road to Meadowville Road) Phase II Archaeological Evaluation Survey (2013), by McCormick Taylor, Inc.; gift of Scott Williams

Grove Shaft Oral History – Tour led by Tom Garner & Peppy Jones (1998), DVD; gift of the estate of the late Peter Lipowicz

‘Chesterfield Live’ – TV Interviews (2007) by Don Kapel, Director of Public Affairs, of (a) Budget Director Allan Carmody, and (b) CHSV President Peter Lipowicz, DVD; gift of the estate of the late Peter Lipowicz

The Story of Lucky Strike, New York World’s Fair Edition (1939), by Roy C. Flannagan; gift of Henry Coalter

Maps

Chesterfield County, VA, (1906) Soil Map, U.S. Department of Agriculture, surveyed by Bennett, Winston, Geib & Mann; gift of Scott Williams

Chesterfield County, VA, General Highway Map (1985), including Supplements ‘C’ (Pocahontas State Park), and ‘D’ (Swift Creek Reservoir & Brandermill), by VA Dept of Highways & Transportation; gift of Henry Coalter

Military History

WWII Veterans, Chesterfield County, VA, Interviews for Museum Exhibit: ‘Chesterfield Remembers – Service at Home & Abroad’ (2010), DVD compiled by CHSV; gift of the estate of the late Peter Lipowicz

Ironmaker to the Confederacy, Joseph R. Anderson & the Tredegar Iron Works, by Charles B. Dew; gift of Carol Farmer

Scrapbooks

BOYD Family, created by Lou Ann Woolridge Krudewig for her grandmother, Mabel Estelle Mann Boyd, on her 90th birthday in 2000; gift of Nancy Boyd Woolridge

Yearbooks

Clover Hill High School ‘*Dulcemus*’ – 1974, 1979 & 1997; gift of Ed Faulkner

Manchester High School ‘*Memoir*’ – 1955; gift of Ed Faulkner

Meadowbrook High School ‘*Sceptre*’ – 1959, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1970; gift of Ed Faulkner

MEMBERSHIP REMINDERS

Membership renewals for the 2025 calendar year are due by December 31st. Look for the 2025 Membership Renewal Form and a return envelope in a separate mailing in November. If you prefer, you may renew online at: www.chesterfieldhistory.com/membership.html. *Thank you for your continuing support!*

The end of the year is fast approaching! Start planning your gift giving now.

Each year the goal of the Society is to grow the membership and to increase donations both to sustain the current work of the Society and to fund future projects, such as expanding the Society’s social media presence.

Here are some opportunities for you to “move the needle” towards our goal:

1. Give the gift of membership to the Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia to a family member, a friend, a co-worker/associate, or all of them.
2. Consider donating to the national campaign, *GivingTuesday*. The campaign always falls on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving, December 3rd this year. *GivingTuesday* is a great way to balance the season of spending with a season of giving.
3. Renew and upgrade your current membership for 2025.
4. Never pay annual dues again by becoming an “Individual Life” or a “Benefactor” member for 2025.

Continued on page 5

CHSV is asking for your assistance in updating the **Veterans of Chesterfield County** database of all county veterans from the Colonial Wars to the present. Intended as a memorial to those who served their country, this database will be made available to researchers who visit the Society library, and in time, provided online. If you have information that can help, please email admin@chesterfieldhistory.com (please put “County Veteran” in the subject line), or call the Society’s office at 804-796-7121.

BOARD NEWS

The Annual Meeting was held on July 28, 2024. Twenty-seven members attended the meeting.

There were three nominations for the board: Karen S. Dailey, Lilian B. Mullane and Robert (Bob) Wilson. All were unanimously elected.

The officers for the 2024-2026 Board of Directors are:

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| President | Jerry Netherland |
| Vice President | Bob Talbot |
| Treasurer | John Longnaker |
| Secretary | Crystal Monroe |

The featured speaker was Richard (Dragonfly) Groover, a retired National Park Service Ranger, author and filmmaker, who gave a presentation on the film, “The Forgotten Fourteen.”

The next **Quarterly Membership** meeting will be held on **Sunday, October 27th** at 2 p.m. Please check the website for the location: www.chesterfieldhistory.com.

The next **Regular Board** meeting will be held on **Tuesday, November 12th** at 5:30 p.m. Please check the website for the location: www.chesterfieldhistory.com.

Regular Board Meetings are held on Mondays
except in November

Time: 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Location: please check the website:
www.chesterfieldhistory.com

Dates: November 12, 2024, Tuesday*
January 13, 2025
March 10, 2025
May 12, 2025
July 14, 2025

Quarterly Membership Meetings are held on Sundays

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: please check the website
www.chesterfieldhistory.com

Dates: October 27, 2024
January 26, 2025
April 27, 2025

*Monday, November 11 is a holiday.

CALENDAR of EVENTS

Unless otherwise noted, all events are free. Events with a *course number* require registration with County Parks and Recreation. To register, call 804-748-1623 or visit <https://www.chesterfield.gov/150/Parks-and-Recreation>. Events with a registration requirement may be canceled if there are not enough registrants.

LOCATIONS OF EVENTS

Trinity Church
10111 Iron Bridge Road
Chester, VA 23832
(804) 796-7121

Magnolia Grange House Museum
10020 Iron Bridge Road
Chesterfield, VA 23832
(804) 748-1498

Chesterfield County Museum*
6813 Mimms Loop
Chesterfield, VA 23832
(804) 768-731

FIRST SATURDAY of the MONTH

Genealogy Roundtable from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
Bring your pedigree chart or come and talk about how to solve your genealogical “brick wall.”
Trinity Church

OCTOBER

A MONTH-LONG CELEBRATION OF CHESTERFIELD’S 275TH BIRTHDAY!

Look for details on the CHSV website:
<https://www.chesterfieldhistory.com>

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2ND – 10 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.
Hispanic Heritage Month – Dance Performance
This event includes a dance performance by Danza de los Viejitos de Michoacan and a Plena Dance from Puerto Rico. This program is sponsored by Anthem HealthKeepers Plus.
Stonebridge Recreation Center
230 Karl Lynn Drive
N. Chesterfield, VA 23225
Course Number: 45556

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12TH – Noon
“Victorian Spiritualism”
Due to Queen Victoria’s loss of her beloved husband Prince Albert, Victorians had a very unique relationship with death and the departed. This PowerPoint presentation by Louisa Michie will explore ways late 19th century people tried to communicate with their departed loved ones.
Magnolia Grange House Museum
Course Number: 45378
Space is limited to 20 people.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26TH – 11 a.m.*
Railroading in the United States, Virginia, and Chesterfield County
Bill Scanlon, a docent from the Richmond Railroad Museum, will discuss railroading around the country and locally. He will cover some of the basics of trains, railroading’s influence on the country and the world, and will speak on both historic and modern railroading.
Chesterfield County Museum
Course Number: 45389

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26TH – 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Haunted Lantern Tours
Spend the evening discovering the haunting history of Chesterfield. Take a guided tour of historic Magnolia Grange and

experience some of the more documented ghost stories. This program will be fun for the entire family with children's take-home crafts, pumpkin decorating, tattoo and caricature artists. Concessions will be available for purchase.
Magnolia Grange House Museum
Course Number: 45353

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 30TH – 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Haunted Chesterfield Van Tour
This driving tour will share the history of some of the most historic sites and homes throughout Chesterfield County while exploring some of the most documented ghost stories associated with these structures. Discover the stories behind some of these most treasured sites.
Trinity Church
Course Number: 45350
Cost: \$8 per person

NOVEMBER

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1ST – 10 a.m. to Noon
Homeschool History – Geocaching
Learn some of the basics of navigation and how to use a hand-held GPS receiver while searching for clues on a scavenger hunt and looking for caches or hidden treasure. Learn how to use a compass, understand basic uses of topographic maps and why these functions are important.
Trinity Church
Course Number: 45323
Cost: \$5

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2ND – Noon
The Early History of Tobacco in Petersburg
Petersburg, Virginia was a central hub of the tobacco industry for over 200 hundred years. Tobacco weigh stations, warehouses, manufacturing and shipping were centered in the city while surrounding counties, such as Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, and Prince George provided the actual tobacco product. Join local citizen Jack Crocker as he tells of the labor-intensive process from plantings to packaging.
Magnolia Grange House Museum
Course Number: 45371
Space is limited to 20 people.

***Registration is required.** Register at [chesterfield.gov/parks](https://www.chesterfield.gov/parks) or call 804-748-1623. For details, call the County Museum at 804-768-7311.

Continued on page 7

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9th – 11 a.m.*

Apples to Appleseed: How Cider and John Chapman Shaped the Early Frontier

Explore the origins of the apple and apple cider, its unique contribution to English North American culture and development, and the history of how Johnny Applesseed, also known as John Chapman, sprouted from the roots of a modest New England family to grow into one of the greatest legends our country has ever known.

Chesterfield County Museum

Course Number: 45390

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10th – 11 a.m.

Veterans Motorcycle Biker Rally

Chesterfield County Fairgrounds

Course Number: 44786; see page 9 for details.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11th – 2 p.m.

Veterans Day Ceremony

Chesterfield County Fairgrounds

Course Number: 45354; see page 9 for details.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15th – 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.*

Pleasant View School Tour

Take a guided tour of Pleasant View School, one of the last preserved African American schools from the segregated era in Chesterfield County. An excellent example of early 20th century construction, the school retains the original architecture of patterns typical of Rosenwald school construction of the era. Learn the history of the structure and similar schools of the era.

Pleasant View School

18431 River Road

Chesterfield, VA 23832

Course Number: 45349

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16th – Noon

Gourds: A Native American Staple

November is National Native American Heritage Month. To celebrate this culture and history, Yvonne Goad of “Gourds 4 All” will present a program centered around Native American cultivation and use of the humble gourd.

Magnolia Grange House Museum

Course Number: 45375

Space is limited to 20 people.

DECEMBER

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7th – 1 to 4 p.m.

Christmas Open House: Celebrating 275 Years

Get an early start to the holiday season and join the crowd for fun, refreshments, crafts, music by the Door Way Singers and of course, Santa Claus. In celebration of the 275th anniversary of the founding of Chesterfield, families may test their local history knowledge by participating in the “County Fun Facts Treasure Hunt” which will take place throughout the house. Complete the treasure hunt and win a prize.

Magnolia Grange House Museum

Course Number: 45367

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11th – 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Holiday Tea with Lord Chesterfield

In celebration of the county’s 275th anniversary, the Holiday Tea will have a very special guest. The Right Honourable Phillip Dormer Stanhope, 4th Earl of Chesterfield, will join guests for the afternoon. As a British statesman, and diplomat of the 18th century, he also was known for his wit. Sweet and savory treats provided by the Baking and Pastry Arts students at the Career and Technical Center will be served with English tea.

Magnolia Grange House Museum

Course Number: 45379

Cost: \$30

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14th – 11 a.m.*

Gentlemen or Rogues? The True Stories of Early Colonial Virginia Leaders

You may know their names from street signs, movies, or universities, but do you know the real stories behind the early leaders of the Virginia Colony or their native counterparts? Judge for yourself. Were they gentlemen of the highest breeding? Or were they scandalous rogues?

Chesterfield County Museum

Course Number: 45393

***Registration is required.** Register at [chesterfield.gov/parks](https://www.chesterfield.gov/parks) or call 804-748-1623. For details, call the County Museum at 804-768-7311.

CHSV will continue its **Winter Lecture Series** in 2025. The scheduled dates are January 10, January 24, February 7, February 21, March 7 and March 21. All programs will begin at 6 p.m. The locations will be announced in the January issue of The Messenger and online at <https://www.chesterfieldhistory.com>.

EXHIBITS

On October 26, the Chesterfield County Museum will open an exhibit, ***Chesterfield County Railroads: From Mule Power to Steam Power***. Discover the history of Chesterfield County’s railroads in the 19th century. This temporary exhibit will include displays of railroad artifacts, photographs, and stories from the heyday of Chesterfield railroads.

Be sure to visit the County’s Parks and Recreation website to learn of other programming and events: www.chesterfield.gov.

Remember to visit Chesterfield County's 275th Celebration webpage at www.chesterfield.gov/Cfield275 for up-to-date information on programming for this milestone year of commemorations.

SPECIAL EVENTS

ANTIQUES EVALUATION

ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

Saturday, October 12th

10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Chesterfield County Fairgrounds – Exhibit Hall

10300 Courthouse Road

Chesterfield, VA 23832

Bring your treasures! Your appraisal could be the surprise of a lifetime!
Fees for a verbal and professional appraisal: \$15 for the first item; \$5 for each additional item

Spirit of Chesterfield

Friday, October 18th and Saturday, October 19th

Friday, October 25th and Saturday, October 26th

6 to 9 p.m.

Castlewood

10201 Iron Bridge Road

Chesterfield, VA 23832

A night of family fun from the Chesterfield Historical Society.

Treats, carnival games, haunted house, arts & crafts!

Adults - \$10

Kids 12 & under - \$5

TRUNK OR TREAT

Tuesday, October 22nd

6 to 8 p.m.

Chesterfield County Fairgrounds

10300 Courthouse Road

Chesterfield, VA 23832

Candy, food vendors, music, bounce house and other surprises!

Wear your best Halloween costume to this free, family-friendly event! Parking at school lots adjacent to the Fairgrounds. No alcohol, pets, glass bottles, and/or illegal weapons.

Sponsored by Chesterfield County Parks and Recreation and the Virginia Credit Union.

Veterans Motorcycle Biker Rally

Sunday, November 10th
Chesterfield County Fairgrounds - All Facilities
10300 Courthouse Road
Chesterfield, VA 23832
11 a.m.

Help us honor our veterans at the 5th Annual Veterans Day Motorcycle Rally.

Participants will ride from the Chesterfield County Fairgrounds to the Virginia War Memorial, where there will be a special program. The ride will be supported with a full police escort provided by the Chesterfield County and City of Richmond police departments. Lunch will be served at the Fairgrounds prior to the ride. All participants will receive an event t-shirt. There will be prizes, vendors and more.

Check-in/registration will be at 11 a.m. Lunch will be served from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
The ride will depart at 1 p.m.
Rain date will be Sunday, November 17th.

Please register at <https://www.chesterfield.gov/150/Parks-and-Recreation>.
Use course number 44786.

VETERANS DAY CEREMONY

Monday, November 11th
Chesterfield County Fairgrounds - Vietnam Veterans Building
10300 Courthouse Road
Chesterfield, VA 23832
2 to 3 p.m.

Honor our county's veterans at the annual ceremony held at the Chesterfield County Fairgrounds. This program will include a keynote address, dignitaries, living history displays, musical performances, presentation of banners and a salute to our veterans of all military branches.

Please register at <https://www.chesterfield.gov/150/Parks-and-Recreation>.
Use course number 45354.

**THANK
★ YOU ★
FOR YOUR
SERVICE**

CHSV is pleased to share this notice from the Historic Petersburg Foundation, Inc. of events to be held as part of its VA250 celebration. Thank you, Justin Serafin, Executive Director.

Revolutionary Petersburg and the Marquis de Lafayette, America's Favorite Fighting Frenchman

The kickoff to Petersburg's America 250 celebration and a commemoration of the bicentennial of Lafayette's Farewell Tour visit in 1824 as "The Nation's Guest."

Presented by: Battersea Foundation, Historic Petersburg Foundation,
Petersburg Battlefields Foundation

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2024

10AM-1PM: All events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted. American Friends of Lafayette exhibit at the Petersburg Public Library. Pick up "Revolution Petersburg" driving tour brochure. Visit Petersburg-area Revolutionary War-era and 1824 sites for free, including:

- Battersea
- Blandford Church
- Centre Hill
- Farmers Bank
- McIlwaine House

1PM-2PM: Petersburg Public Library, Multi-purpose room, main floor. Elizabeth Reese presents: "Liberty Now Has a Country: The 1824-1825 Tour of the Marquis de Lafayette."

2PM-3PM: Dr. Gaila Sims presents: "The Marquis de Lafayette, a True Friend of the Cause."

3PM-4PM: Local cookbook author, Damon Lee Fowler, discusses historic foodways as a prelude to the evening's historically-themed dinner.

4PM-5PM: The Marquis de Lafayette (portrayed by Charles Wissinger) and James Armistead Lafayette (an enslaved African American who served the Continental Army during the American Revolutionary War under the Marquis de Lafayette and who later received a legislative emancipation, portrayed by Stephen Seals), historic interpreters, present their narratives to the audience in the first person. Library closes.

5PM-5:30PM: Marquis de Lafayette and James Armistead Lafayette impersonators are available for pictures outside on the terrace of the Petersburg Public Library.

5:30PM: Appomattox Event Center (9 W Old Street, Petersburg) doors open for historically-themed dinner with the Marquis de Lafayette, to include historical toasts and speeches.

*This event is ticketed separately with pre-registration and payment required; tickets will be available via Eventbrite.

8PM: Dinner concludes.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2024

12PM: Marker dedication ceremony with the American Friends of Lafayette and the Lafayette Trail in Poplar Lawn (Central) Park.

Out on a Limb

Angie Wilderman

Are you interested in learning more about DNA? The Genealogy Committee is trying to set up a DNA group to learn how to use DNA results in your research. If you are interested, please contact Angie Wilderman.

At our August roundtable we talked about different ways to write your family history. Come in and see a genealogist to discuss your brick wall. The Genealogy Library has books on the Civil and the Revolutionary Wars, Immigration, Passenger Lists, and various other states. Come in and check us out.

We received a request for information for someone who was said to have been born in Chesterfield County in 1745. It is believed that this ancestor moved on to a county in South Carolina after the Revolutionary War. It is important to work back from the information you have to look for clues as to from where your ancestor may have lived. Sometimes a deed will state a county of origin of the ancestor. One noticeable thing mentioned in the request is that he was born in 1745. Chesterfield County was created in 1749. Dates are not always recorded perfectly but perhaps an adjacent county might be worth investigating. Check online trees for clues. Don't take the information on the tree as true. Often trees have information taken from another tree, and there is no documentation. Prove it yourself.

Have you ever investigated and explored these sites? Come to the next roundtable and tell us about your discoveries.

National Archives and Records Administration:
<https://www.archives.gov/research>

Smithsonian Online Virtual Archives:
<https://sova.si.edu/>

Digital Public Library of America:
<https://dp.la/>

Hear ye, Hear ye, Citizens.....

Bill Lipsett

Almost two years to the day of the announcement of the Declaration of Independence, Chesterfield residents were assembled for a speech in the 1749 County courthouse by burgesses Archibald Cary and Daniel Watkins to voice their opposition to what became known as the Intolerable Acts. These led to what was called the Chesterfield Resolves, which were adopted on July 14, 1774.

History came alive once more in the Historic 1917 County Courthouse to those curious enough on July 14, 2024, due to the 275th Celebration of the County, to see this event re-created and partnered with the Chesterfield Historical Society and the Parks and Recreation Department. The main character Archibald Cary was portrayed by local historian Bill Rose, who gave the audience a vivid and engaging talk about that historical day in 1774 as they would've heard it 248 years ago.



Besides having a whimsical and entertaining assistant in Mike Steen, we even had a replica of what was called the Liberty Pole, which came with its own tar and feathers, that colonists used to show England that they wanted to be independent and free from being ruled by King George III.

Also during the event, about 20 persons chose to proclaim each and every Resolve at certain points of the lecture. It was noted that half of the people who spoke were members of our CHS. Thanks to all for coming.

In the future, Chesterfield County has a number of



events coming up that will coincide with the celebration of this nation's 250th anniversary of its

Independence. Many historical sites in the county will be featured that are of vital importance to our country's foundations and the road to independence. Please be watching for these and thank you all for supporting these events. God Save the King! I think not!

After the Battle

Jerry Netherland

Note: the following is another excerpt from the writings of William A. Day, a private serving in Company I of the 49th North Carolina Infantry Regiment during the Civil War. Private Day and the 49th returned to Chesterfield County in May of 1864.

After battle was over, and our flags waving over the captured works, our first duty was the sad task of caring for the wounded and burying the dead. The loss was heavy. I do not know how many was lost in the brigade. The casualties in the 49th was 160 killed and wounded and missing. The 49th lost heaviest as it led in the charge. Lieutenants Barnett of Company F, and Conley of Company A were killed, Captain Suttle of Company A, mortally wounded and Lieutenants Lattimore of G, and Dixon of K, severely, and Col. McAfee, as usual, slightly wounded. Of the privates I have never learned their names. The body of Capt. Ardrey who was killed in the volunteer charge they day before farther up on the right was recovered and brought in.

The casualties in Company I were as follows: Corporal Smith Lee, one of the color guard, and Thompson Brown were killed dead on the field. Frank Loftin and John Hill, mortally wounded, and died in a few hours. Among the others who were wounded were, Sergeant Billy Caldwell, Jack Litton, Sergeant Freeman Jones, Pink Setzer, Tate Powell and Frank Stewart. Jacob Brown and Frank Stewart were captured sent to Point Lookout prison. Total 4 killed, 7 wounded and two captured. Brown was exchanged and came back to the company, just before the close of the war was recaptured at the battle of Five Forks and sent back to the same prison. We never saw Stewart again until after the close of the war. Tate Powell had his throat cut by a bullet passing under his chin, cutting his wind pipe, which put him to breathing through his neck; it scared Tate badly, he thought his time had come for sure. When the surgeons took him in charge they soon stopped the neck breathing.

Frank Loftin after being wounded fell into the enemy's hands; we found him still alive under a plank shelter where they had placed him. He said they were very kind to him. He was shot through the bowels which at that time was considered a fatal wound; none were known to recover.

The dead were mostly buried in separate graves near where they fell and the wounded of both sides were gathered up and sent to hospitals at Richmond.

Late in the evening we moved out on the turnpike, stacked arms and lay there till next morning. We captured a number of overcoats, blankets, etc. left by the yankees, we also found a good many trinkets of one kind or another in the cast off knapsack, and some rich love letters from the yankee girls to their sweethearts, which we destroyed after reading them.

We were mostly in need of rations, which we found in large quantities. We carried them out to the bivouack on the road and had a good supper of crackers, boiled ham, potatoes and coffee. The coffee was ground and put up in packages with sugar and condensed cream, and when boiled had sugar and cream both in it.

President Davis passed over the field after the battle accompanied by Gen. Beauregard and all the general and staff officers in that part of the army, on foot, making quite a regiment in size. While passing the 49th on the turnpike, the retreating yankees opened a battery of 12 pounders on them, the shells passed heavily over their heads. We watched Mr. Davis to see what he would do. He never turned his head even to look in the direction the shells were coming, but passed on quietly talking to Gen. Beauregard who walked by his side. If anyone expected to see the president run they were badly deceived.

After washing our hands and faces which were very black from the powder smoke, we could have greatly enjoyed our good supper had it not been for the thought of our dead comrades lying out in the field in their newly made graves.

Forty five artillery horses were lying dead in the road a short distance below the bivouack. They belonged to a battery planted in the road by the yankees and when they commenced their retreat some of our men ran in and shot the horses, so they could not move the guns. The whole battery was captured.

The four days' battle of Drewry's Bluff were over, and Gen. Beauregard's tired soldiers were lying about trying to snatch a few hours rest. They had charged the yankee works from one end to the other, and had carried them at almost every point. The southern battle flags were waving over all the captured works, and the enemy was gone; but the victory was dearly bought. Long lines of corpses: bodies of the bright young men of the South, marked the route of the charging cohorts, and the yankees were gone, Gen. Whiting's blunder had let them. We had expected to capture them all.

We lay on the turnpike all night, and had a good night's sleep, the first we had in four nights, then followed the enemy to Bermuda Hundred.

CHAPTER XLVII. BERMUDA HUNDRED.

The James and Appomattox rivers run together some distance above City Point, and the point of land between them is known as Bermuda Hundred. The yankees made a stand there and fortified their line across from one river to the other, and with their gunboats and transports in the river below, were comparatively in a safe place, and could only be assailed from the front. Their camps were in the forks of the rivers. We left our bivouack at Drewry's Bluff early on the morning of May 17th, moved down and established our line as near the enemy's as possible, in some places the works were in sight of each other. We threw up good breastworks from one river to the other, and at the end next to the James, had a battery of heavy guns, known as Howlett's battery, from which we had a view for miles down the James River. Nearly all the troops were moved down from Drewry's Bluff and placed in position to defend either city.

In front of the position assigned the 49th, was a field two hundred yards wide, and back of the field was a piece of woods in which the yankee pickets were posted. A road ran along the edge of the field next to the woods, crossing another that ran through both lines, leading down by Ware Bottom church. The church was on the enemy's line and the graveyard on ours. The left of the 49th lay on the road leading by the church, and the right reaching out to the graveyard. The 56th regiment was posted on our right.

On the morning of the 18th we were set to work on the breastworks and by night had a good line thrown up. After we had quit work, I saw a place that needed a few more shovels full to level it up, and picked up a shovel and leveled it up. While I was at work Gen. Bushrod Johnson rode up the road, stopped his horse and said. "That's right, I know you were a good soldier, for you believe in having good breast works." These words of the general made me feel as proud as I did when I got my first uniform.

We lay in the works till late in the evening of the 19th, when we were relieved and sent back to a ravine in rear of Capt. Branch's battery, which stood on the main line. A hard rain came on and continued till late in the night. The most of us had small flags and oil cloths, captured at Drewry's Bluff, under which we sheltered

as best we could. The next day was bright and clear. We lay in the ravine till 12 o'clock next day (May 20th) the day the battle was fought, and were then moved up within easy supporting distance of Capt. Branch's battery and halted to await orders, up to 12 o'clock that day all had been quiet on both sides. Capt. Branch's battery was in good works at the edge of the field. Col. Rutledge commanded the brigade.

Exploring Local History at the Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia

The following is an excerpt from a review of Richmond written by Craig Silva, a travel expert at The Travel Pub. To read the full review, visit the website at: <https://thetravelpub.com/history-and-modern-day-fun-in-richmond-va/>. Thank you, Richmond Region Tourism and Carla Murray, Director of Marketing Communications!

To gain a deeper understanding of the region's history, a visit to the Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia is essential. Located in the historic 1879 Historic Trinity Church, the society's museum and archives offer a wealth of information about the county's past, from its colonial beginnings to its role in the Civil War and beyond.

Exhibits and Archives

The Chesterfield Historical Society is dedicated to preserving and sharing the history of Chesterfield County, which was one of the first English settlements in the New World. The museum features exhibits on various aspects of the county's history, including Native American culture, colonial life, and the impact of the Civil War on the community.

Key Exhibits

Early Settlers: An exhibit that explores the lives of the county's first European inhabitants, including their interactions with Native American tribes and their efforts to establish a foothold in the New World.

Civil War Relics: A collection of artifacts from the Civil War, including weapons, uniforms, and personal items belonging to soldiers from both sides.

Historic Buildings: The society manages several historic properties in the county, including the 1879 Historic Trinity Church, 1917 Chesterfield County Courthouse, the Magnolia Grange Plantation House, The Chesterfield County Museum, and the 1892 Historic Jail.

Educational Programs and Events

The Chesterfield Historical Society offers a variety of educational programs for visitors of all ages, including lectures, workshops, and guided tours. The society also hosts annual events, such as the Christmas Open House and the Magnolia Grange Antiques and Collectibles Fair, which draw history enthusiasts from across the region.

A Revolutionary War Soldier and His Family – Chesterfield County, VA

Buddy Cranford

In November 1775, Virginia's royal governor, Lord Dunmore, issued to Virginia's patriots, his infamous — emancipation proclamation. Dunmore offered freedom to the enslaved people who would escape from rebel owners and fight for the British. How many accepted Dunmore's offer is only a guess, but they were enough to strengthen his forces. Many died of smallpox. Lord Dunmore also antagonized the Virginia colonists by confiscating their gunpowder from the Williamsburg armory and fled to the British warship, *Flowry* in Norfolk with his family. He began harassing the colonists in that area. Virginia played an important part in the Revolutionary War. Militias all over the Commonwealth were formed to fight back. And in Chesterfield County, VA, many American patriots took up arms and served in both the Continental Army and the Chesterfield Militia. One such individual was *Ezekiel Dance*. The son of Henry and Mary Meary Dance, he was born in Chesterfield County on a plantation called "Chestnut Level" in 1755 where he grew up and was educated. The family was prominent in the county.

Ezekiel Dance married Asenatte Hatcher in Chesterfield County about 1788. She was the daughter of William Hatcher (1724–1788) and Lucy (Sadler) Hatcher (1729–1816). She died on 1 October 1822 in Chesterfield County. The Dances had five children: William Spencer Dance (1788–1858); John Willis Dance (1794–1846) who married Elizabeth Owen Winfree; Sarah Lawson Dance who married Peter Ivey; Asenatte Dance who married William Jackson; Lucy Hatcher Datcher Dance, who married Warren Moore.

As war clouds had been inevitable, the sons of the Chesterfield colonists had been taking up arms long before 1781. A Chesterfield and Virginia patriot, Ezekiel Dance did his part and served in the Chesterfield County Militia as an officer. (VIRGINIA MILITIA IN THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR PART III Virginia's Share in the Military Movements of the Revolution; Chesterfield County Court Order Book 6, Apr 16, 1781; Lt June 1787-Order Book 7, Captain 1st Battalion April 1793-Order Book 10).

His service began on April 6, 1781. He was appointed a 2nd Lieutenant in the Chesterfield Militia. (From the Chesterfield Order Book of the April Court, 1781, page 319). The militia was called out via a lottery

system. Lt. Ezekiel Dance was called out at Chesterfield Courthouse in Captain Benjamin Ward's Company of Militia, Colonel Robert Goode's Regiment. They marched to Smithfield and McKay's Mill in the Isle of Wight on Nansemond to a place called Sleepy Hole (near Suffolk, VA) in that part of Virginia. Ezekiel Dance was one of the subalterns of Ward's Company, Colonel Goode's Regiment for a short time during this tour under the command of Major General Muhlenberg.

On another tour after being called up, Lt. Ezekiel Dance went first to Broadway, VA where the troops with whom he acted were stationed for some time. He subsequently moved to Randolph's Mill, on Swift Creek between Petersburg and Richmond, and after occupying that position for a short time, then to Proctors Creek, near Osborne's town on the James River, where they remained about three months on this tour of duty. They were marched up to Manchester and released. Other militia tours would occur. At some point while being called up, Ezekiel Dance was promoted to Captain in Colonel Robert Goode's command. His militia unit was called up to serve on many tours at various times. After the war, he remained in Chesterfield County on his father's plantation and raised his family. Captain Ezekiel Dance died on November 5, 1819, in Chesterfield, Chesterfield County, Virginia. His burial location is unknown, but he and his wife may have been buried on his plantation property. His last will and testament divided his property among his widow and children and is recorded in the Chesterfield Deed Book No. 25, page 45.

His sons became prominent citizens in both Chesterfield and Powhatan Counties. John Willis Dance married Elizabeth Owen Winfree, the daughter of Valentine Winfree, Sr. He became a lawyer and moved to Powhatan County, VA in 1813 where he had a successful law practice. He died at "Erin Hill" in Powhatan County on February 2, 1846. His brother, William Spencer Dance had been the Deputy Clerk in the office of Parke Poindexter, Clerk of Chesterfield County. He married Lucy Hobson Winfree, the sister of Elizabeth Owen Winfree. Later William Dance relocated to Powhatan where Parke Poindexter's brother James was the Powhatan Clerk of the Court. When he died, William Dance was elected to fill the vacancy. He was exact and scrupulous of his duties, courteous and polite and a first-class lawyer. After he died on February 11, 1858, his son Dr. Powhatan Spencer Dance filled the last year of his father's term.

The Elliott House and Free-Black History of Swansboro

Thomas Elliott

Editor's Note: This article appeared in the July 2024 issue of *The Messenger*. Due to an error in copy marking, the figures that accompanied the article were incorrect. The article is reprinted here with the correct figures. Our apologies to Mr. Elliott and our readers.

I love old houses. Often the smallest houses have the biggest stories to tell. When I purchased the small house at 2718 Bainbridge Street in Richmond (formerly Chesterfield County) some 35 years ago, I was not aware that it would be the key to unlocking the history of a significant free-Black community of antebellum Chesterfield County. (Figure 1.) The early house is currently about 600 square feet in size but was probably originally constructed as a one-room dwelling.ⁱ (Figure 2.)



Figure 1. The author in front of 2718 Bainbridge Street

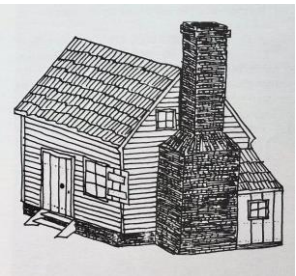


Figure 2. Sketch of probable appearance of original house

When renovating the gable-roofed house at 2718 Bainbridge, I found that the tongue-and-groove flooring was as thick as a two-by-four. When repairing the walls, I discovered that there was whitewashing on the inside of the exterior walls and ceiling joists, indicating that the house was originally constructed with no interior wall or ceiling sheathing. Excited by this discovery, I consulted the late architectural historian Jeffrey O'Dell of the Va. Department of Historic Resources and noted author of *Chesterfield County, Early Architecture and Historic Sites*.

According to Jeff O'Dell, who made a site visit in 1990, "... the Elliott House is a rare surviving example of tiny, one-room-plan exposed-frame dwelling... The Elliott House can be added to a short list of very small late 18th- and early 19th-century dwellings in Chesterfield County that originally lacked interior sheathing..." O'Dell described the original unit of the house measuring 16'-1" by 14'-3" inches deep with an early addition in probably around 1800-1840 with a second story added after the Civil War. O'Dell concluded that, "... the Elliott House is one of the

oldest houses in Richmond, and its original unit is probably the smallest house recorded in the city. It is a rare survival illustrating the hardscrabble living conditions of many of the area's early inhabitants." O'Dell also mentioned the possibility that it was a slave dwelling converted into a freeholder's dwelling.ⁱⁱ I believe that it possibly was built as a slave dwelling to the rear of what was later known as the Woolfolk House on nearby Clopton Street.ⁱⁱⁱ

Recently undertaking deed research, I discovered that the house was purchased in 1823 by two free-Black men named Peter and George Logan.^{iv} The property next door was purchased in 1822 by Walter Logan, a free-Black man who was a carpenter by trade.^v Walter Logan probably had a hand in enlarging the adjacent home of his kinsmen.

Peter, George and Walter Logan, along with Walter's mother, Mourning Logan, and many kinsmen were set free from slavery in the monumental *Pleasants v. Pleasants* court case.^{vi} Quaker Robert Pleasants, the president of the Virginia Abolition Society,^{vii} sued his own family to carry out the mandate of the wills of his father and brother, John and Johnathan Pleasants, for the manumission of the family's hundreds of slaves when it became legal in Virginia to do so.^{viii} (I found this information of particular interest because my earlier research indicated that the antebellum John Miller House in Oregon Hill was owned by a free-Black man whose family also was freed by the *Pleasants v. Pleasants* court case.)^{ix}

The laws of antebellum Virginia required that all free-Black citizens register with the county and carry their "free papers" at all times to prove that they were not escaped slaves. Peter, George, Walter and Mourning Logan were freed in Powhatan County where the Charles Logan plantation was located, and they settled in Chesterfield County. (Figures 3-6). Mourning Logan left an estate with 42 acres when she died in 1838, according to her Chesterfield County will.^x The recently freed Black residents overcame immense obstacles to become property owners.

In 1833, Peter Logan sold the property now known as 2718 Bainbridge Street to Ophelia Scott,^{xi} who was a free-Black woman.^{xii}

In part two of this report, we will explore other free-Black families who purchased lots in the adjacent original Chesterfield County Swansboro development.

Powhatan County, to wit.

I James Poindexter Clerk of the Court for the aforesaid County, do certify that the bearer hereof was this day registered in my office according to Law, and pursuant to an order of Court in the following manner, Viz by the name of Peter Logan, about five feet nine and a half inches high, thirty years of age, of a black complexion, has a small scar in his forehead; and was emancipated by a decree of the court of appeals by wills of John and Jonathan Pleasants given under my hand as Clerk aforesaid this 19th day of Dec^r 1810, in the 35th year of the commonwealth.

Jas. Poindexter C. p. 66

Figure 3. 1810 free papers of Peter Logan who purchased 2718 Bainbridge Street in 1853

George Logan. (No. 30 5 feet 10 1/2 inches) 1792. This is number. Emancipated by a decree of the court of appeals in virtue of the wills of John and Jonathan Pleasants.

Figure 4. 1817 free-Black registration of George Logan who, in 1823, purchased 2718 Bainbridge Street

April 5th 1806 - I do certify, that son of Mourning who was emancipated by the wills of John & Jonathan Pleasants, & a decree of the high court of chancery, will be thirty years of age in April in the year one thousand eight hundred and fourteen, at which time he is entitled to freedom. This I know being one of the commissioners appointed by the high court of chancery to ascertain the ages of the slaves of said John & Jonathan Pleasants, and to discharge from slavery or such of them as were thirty years old.

Frederick Woodson
14 JUL 1806
1806

Figure 5. 1806 free papers of Walter Logan who purchased property adjacent to 2718 Bainbridge property in 1822.

| | | | |
|----------------|----|-------------------------|--|
| Rachel Gray | 34 | Mulatto 5 feet 4 | Liberated by a decree of the court of appeals under the will of Pleasants dec'd. |
| Octo. 20. 1802 | | | |
| Plate # | 30 | Black 5 feet | D ^o |
| March 16. 1803 | | | |
| Mourning | 48 | D ^o 5 feet 2 | D ^o |
| March 16. 1803 | | | |

Figure 6. 1803 free-Black registration of Mourning Logan who acquired 42 acres of land in Chesterfield County

Sources

ⁱWeisiger, Benjamin B., *Old Manchester & Its Environs, 1769-1910*, William Byrd Press, Richmond, Va., 1993, P. 113

ⁱⁱO'Dell, Jeff, "Elliott House 2718 Bainbridge St., Richmond, VA, File 127-795, 3 March 1990

ⁱⁱⁱ*Chesterfield County Deed Book 21*, Page 393, 1817; John and Abigail Mayo, Grantors to David Weisiger, Grantee, for \$500, 5 acres including all houses, buildings. This property would later be called the Woolfolk estate, and the small building that today survives at 2718 Bainbridge Street would have been at the rear of this estate.

^{iv}*Chesterfield County Deed Book 26*, Page 93, 18 April 1823

^v*Chesterfield County Deed Book 24*, Page 307, 8 March 1822

^{vi}*Powhatan County (Va.) Register of Estrays, Free Negroes and Mulattoes, Marriages and Boats 1786-1832*, Library of Virginia. Mourning, age 48, registered in 1803; Peter Logan registered in 1811 at age 30; George Logan registered 1817 at age 30. The register notes that all three Logans were "emancipated by a decree of the court of Appeals in virtue of the wills of John and Jonathan Pleasants."

Free Negro Register, Chesterfield County, Untold: The African American Narrative, Library of Virginia.

Walter Logan, 5 April 1806, registration papers of Walt son of Mourning signed by Frederick Woodson who was "... one of the commissioners appointed by the high court of chancery to ascertain the ages of the slaves of said John and Jonathan Pleasants and to discharge from slavery such of them as were thirty years old." Walter Logan later received a replacement free registration having lost the original.

Free Negro Register, Powhatan County, Untold: The African American Narrative, Library of Virginia. Peter Logan registration December 19, 1810. "Peter Logan ... was emancipated by a decree of the court of appeals by virtue of John and Jonathan Pleasants wills."

^{vii}Worrall, Jay, Jr., *The Friendly Virginians, America's First Quakers*, Iberian Publishing, Athens, Georgia, 1994 p. 243

^{viii}*In the High Court of Chancery, March 16, 1798, between Robert Pleasants, son and heir of John Pleasants, dec'd. Pltf. and Mary Logan, widow and administratrix of Charles Logan, and devisee of John Pleasants and Jonathan Pleasants ... defendants*, (KfV2931.A8 P7) Special Collections, Library of Virginia

^{ix}Elliott, Thomas, *The John Miller House, 617 South Cherry Street: built, owned, and occupied free African-Americans in antebellum Richmond*, Oregon Hill Home Improvement Council, 1996 (F233.44.E58 1996) Library of Virginia

^x*Chesterfield County Will Book 14*, Page 397, 1838

^{xi}*Chesterfield County Deed Book 32*, Page 59, 11 February 1833

^{xii}*Free Negro Register, Chesterfield County, Untold: The African American Narrative*, Library of Virginia. Robert Scott registry. In this register document, Ophelia Scott, age 47, along with over a dozen of her relatives, registered as a free-Black woman as emancipated by the will document of their former owner, also named Scott.

Antebellum Free-Black Property Owners in the Swansboro Development of Chesterfield County

Thomas Elliott

In my previous article in this series, I discussed my discovery that the small antebellum house that I purchased at 2718 Bainbridge Street in the Swansboro neighborhood of Richmond (formerly Chesterfield County) was owned by free-Black residents. The owners, Peter and George Logan, were freed from slavery by the court action of Quaker Robert Pleasants in the monumental *Pleasants v Pleasants* case. When I recently undertook researching the deeds of neighboring lots, I discovered that a significant number of other Swansboro lots were purchased by free-Black families.

After intense lobbying by Quakers and other persons of conscience, the Virginia General Assembly passed the Manumission Act of 1782 that made it legal to free slaves in the state.ⁱ The children of free-Black women were also free. Quaker Robert Pleasants, who

successfully went to court to free over 400 slaves, including Charles, Peter, and Walter Logan, continued to lobby to abolish slavery in Virginia and in 1790 founded the Va. Abolition Society, originally called the Humane Society. (Figure 1.)

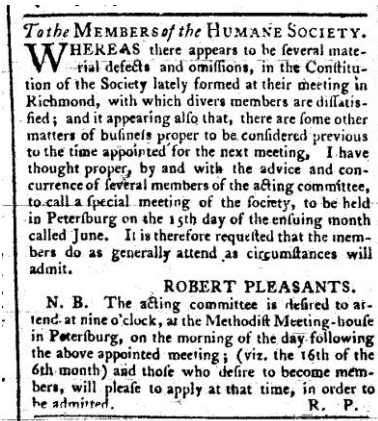


Figure 1. Va. Chronicle, 9 June 1790

By 1801, there were 20,000 free-Black persons in Virginia, and this was causing concern to slaveholders. A draconian law was passed in 1806 by the Virginia General Assembly that mandated that anyone freed from slavery after that date would be forced to leave the state.ⁱⁱ The free-Black persons manumitted before 1806 or who were born to free-Black women suffered great adversity but were able to buy property. In a careful review of the 1820 United States Census, I found 67 free-Black residents of Chesterfield who were listed as “head of household,” and some of these were property owners in Swansboro.

My research indicates a new finding, that the name of Swansborough (later simplified to Swansboro) was derived from the surname of Samuel Swan, who until his death in 1799 owned the Buck Hill estate adjacent

to the development.ⁱⁱⁱ Swansborough lots were sold at the late Swann’s Buck Hill estate on April 29, 1805.^{iv} (Figure 2.) This sale was a holdover of the rained out auction a month earlier, advertised as having 40 acres of land, “Lying on both sides of the Manchester

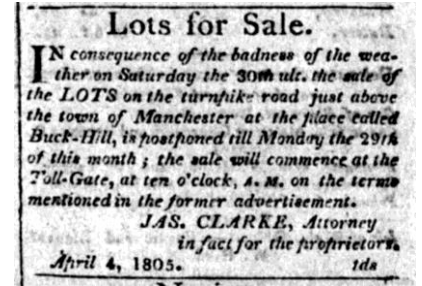


Figure 2. Va. Argus, 10 April 1805

Turnpike road, about 1200 yards above the town of Manchester, to be laid off into acre and half acre lots.^v These lots, eventually totaling 47 acres to the south of the Fonticello estate (now known as Fonticello Park), were laid off into a triangular shaped plat and sold “on behalf of the proprietors of the Town of Swansborough.”^{vi} (Figure 3.)

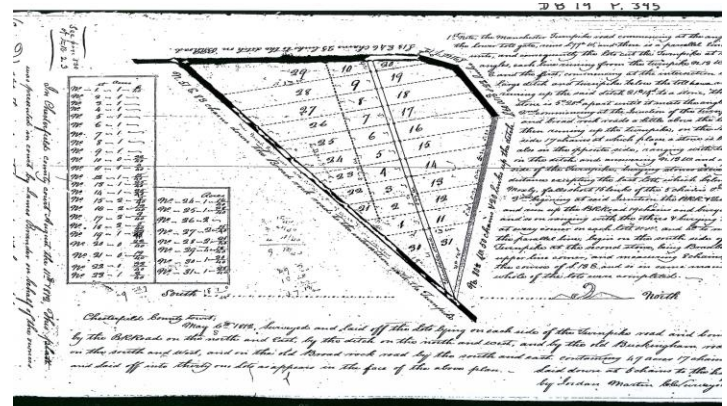


Figure 3. Chesterfield Deed Book

There was a close connection between the Town of Swansborough and the Manchester Turnpike, which began construction in 1804 and was the first paved road in Virginia.^{vii} The brick tollhouse was on Lot 1 in the Swansborough plat beside the tollgate of the

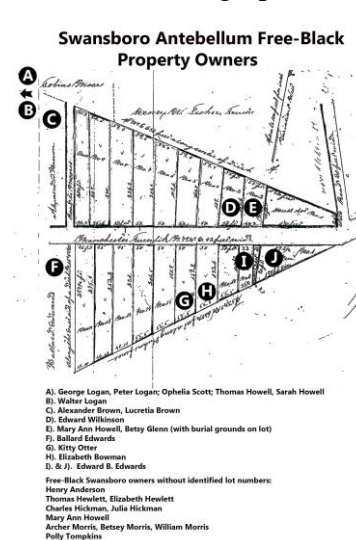


Figure 4. Chesterfield Deed Book with free-Black names added

Manchester Turnpike.^{viii} James Clarke, whose daughter married the son of Samuel Swann, was a principal with the Manchester Turnpike and also was an agent for the Town of Swansborough.^{ix} I was able to identify twenty-five free-Black property owners in the Swansboro area in the early to mid-19th century.^x (Figure 4.) Some, but not all, of the deeds of this period noted

if the Grantee was a person “of colour”. For example, Kitty Otter purchased two lots but it was noted in only one of the two deeds that she was “a woman of colour.” (Figure 5.) It is likely that there were more

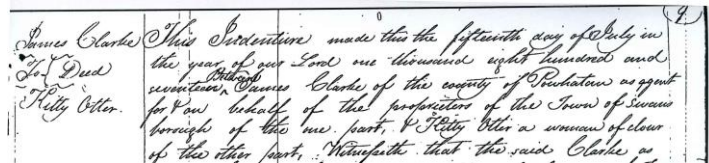


Figure 5. Kitty Otter Deed Book

free-Black lot owners in the Swansboro development that were not recorded as such in the deeds. Other than the Logans, who were freed by court action of the *Pleasants v Pleasants* case, most of the free-Black owners of Swansboro property were born free, as indicated by their mandatory registrations with Chesterfield County. (Figure 6.)



Figure 6. Examples of Chesterfield County free-Black registrations

Interestingly, several of the property owners, including Elizabeth Bowman, Betsy Glenn, Betsy Harris, Mary Ann Howell, Kitty Otter, and Ophelia Scott, were free-Black women. Betsy Glenn reserved a burial plot for family members on her lot. (Figure 7.) Betsy Glenn’s

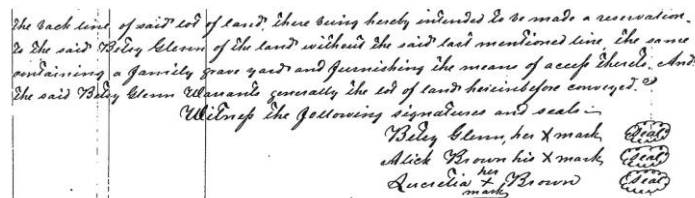


Figure 7. Excerpt of Deed Book

sister, Lucretia Brown, with her husband Alexander Brown, owned a lot directly across the turnpike from Ballard Edwards, who was the most prominent free-Black resident of Swansboro. During the Reconstruction era, Ballard Edwards was elected to a term of the Va. House of Delegates. Edward B. Edwards, the father of Ballard Edwards, also owned two lots in the Swansboro development.^{xi} (Figure 8.)

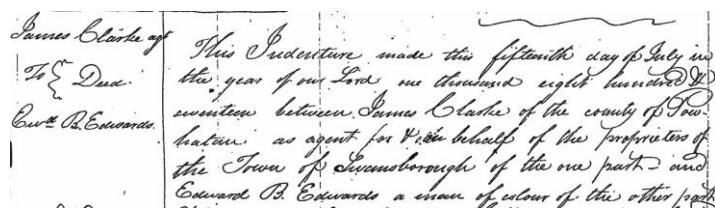


Figure 8. Edward B. Edwards Deed Book

Lucretia and Alexander Brown in 1854 sold a twelve foot wide portion of their land to their neighbor Tobias

Moore, allowing Moore access from Manchester Turnpike through the Brown property to his house.^{xii} Moore was a white sea-captain who tragically lost his life, falling overboard from a steamer off of Chincoteague Island in 1859.^{xiii}

The “Town of Swansborough” was a very significant early 19th century Chesterfield County development where both free-Black and white residents were purchasing lots. The 1856 plat of the development even identifies a well supplying water for all of the households on a lot to be held in common. By the late 19th century, during the Jim Crow era, such housing integration as found in the “Town of Swansborough” would be unacceptable. Much can be learned from the study of the Swansboro community where free-Black residents overcame tremendous hardship to become owners of property side-by-side with white residents just a few decades after it became legal to free slaves in Virginia.

Sources

- ⁱ General Assembly, *An act to authorize the manumission of slaves (1782)*, *Encyclopedia Virginia*, Virginia Humanities, 07 Dec 2020
- ⁱⁱ Worrall, Jay, Jr., *The Friendly Virginians*, Iberian Publishing, Atlanta Georgia, 1994, Page 287
- ⁱⁱⁱ *Enquirer*, 14 December 1805
- ^{iv} *Virginia Argus*, 10 April 1805, Page 4
- ^v *Virginia Argus*, 6 February 1805, Page 1
- ^{vi} Two plats for the Swansboro town development were included in *Chesterfield County Deed Book 19*, Page 345 and *Chesterfield County Deed Book 42*, Page 598
- ^{vii} Shepherd, Samuel, *The Statutes at Large of Virginia, From October Session 1792, to December Session 1806*, S. Shepherd, 1835, Page 374 (The legislation authorizing the Manchester Turnpike was passed on 20 January 1802, but construction was to begin in two years.)
- ^{viii} *Chesterfield County Deed Book 19*, Page 345; According to a note with this plat, the boundaries were described as commencing, “below the toll house ... at the junction of the turnpike and broad rock roads a little above the toll gate ...”
- ^{ix} *Legislative Petitions of the General Assembly*, Accession #36121, Box 54, Folder 112, 9 December 1803 (James Clarke is petitioning the legislature as one of the directors of the Manchester Turnpike); *Virginia Argus*, 10 April 1805 (James Clarke is listed as the “Attorney in fact for the proprietors” for the selling of the lots for the development); Swann-family-genealogy-research-dna.us (This web site provides extensive genealogy of the Swann family.)
- ^x *Chesterfield County Deed Book 22*, Page 9, 1817 (Grantee: Kitty Otter, “a woman of colour [sic]”); *Chesterfield County Deed Book 22*, Page 12, 1817 (Grantee: Edward B. Edwards, “a man of colour”); *Chesterfield County Deed Book 22*, Page 13, 1817 (Grantee: Henry Anderson, whose “free papers” are in the archives of the Library of Virginia)

Chesterfield County Deed Book 22, Page 15, 1817 (Grantee: Elizabeth Bowman, “a woman of colour”);
Chesterfield County Deed Book 22, Page 17, 1817 (Grantee: Edward Wilkinson, “a man of clour [sic]”);
Chesterfield County Deed Book 25, Page 653, 1824 (Grantee: Kitty Otter);
Chesterfield County Deed Book 26, Page 93, 1823 (Grantees: Peter and George Logan);
Chesterfield County Deed Book 28, Page 415, 1831 (Grantee: Walter Logan);
Chesterfield County Deed Book 28, Page 664, 1832 (Grantee: Mary Ann Howell)
Chesterfield County Deed Book 31, Page 16, 1837 (Grantees: Charles and Julia Hickman)
Chesterfield County Deed Book 32, Page 59, 1833 (Grantee: Ophelia Scott) including a plat;
Chesterfield County Deed Book 36, Page 458, 1845 (Grantees: Betsey Morris and son, William Morris; William and brother, Archer Morris, registered in Chesterfield County as free-black persons in registry on file at Library of Virginia)

Chesterfield County Deed Book 40, Page 589, 1853 (Grantors: Betsy Glenn, Aleck Brown and Lucretia Brown, “all free persons of color . . . Betsy Glenn and Lucretia Brown are the only children and heirs at law of Mary Ann Howel [sic]”; Grantee: Alpheus Hobbs) This deed references Mary Ann Howell’s deed of 1832 [Deed Book 28, Page 664 when Howell was the Grantee for Lot 11 in the Town of Swansborough.]
Chesterfield County Deed Book 41, Page 278, 1854 (Grantee: Betsy Harris, “a free woman of color”)
Chesterfield County Deed Book 43, Page 118, 1857 (Grantee: Thomas Howell, “a free man of colour”). The 1860 United States Census indicates that Thomas Howell was a blacksmith.
Chesterfield County Deed Book 45, Page 98 (Grantee: Thomas Hewlett, “a free man of color”)
^{xii} Tarter, Brent, and *Dictionary of Virginia Biography*, “Ballard T. Edwards (ca. 1828-1881)” *Encyclopedia Virginia, Virginia Humanities* (07 Dec. 2020), Web. 20 May 2024
^{xiii} *Chesterfield County Deed Book 41, page 552, 1854*
^{xiiii} *Daily Dispatch*, 20 August 1859; After the death of Capt. Tobias Moore, his wife, Frances A. Moore, advertised the sale of the house and acreage in Swansboro with garden and well with excellent water in the *Daily Dispatch*, 8 December 1859

A NOTE ABOUT “THE MESSENGER”

During my “Listen and Learn” tour, I gathered comments and suggestions on our quarterly newsletter. Everyone agreed it is a valuable resource for current members and an important tool for recruiting new members and volunteers to the Society and for communicating with our broader community.

There were quite a few suggestions for ways to improve The Messenger. Among them were “more readability;” “color;” “thinner.” A fair amount of discussion focused on the number and length of the articles that appear in The Messenger. For some, the question was one of purpose: “Are articles appropriate for a newsletter?”

Here is my answer – at this time.

We will continue to publish articles that shine a spotlight on the history of Chesterfield County.

One thing will be different about the publication of all articles. Beginning next year, submitted articles about the history of the county will be printed in a companion publication named, for now, The Messenger **Extra!** The Messenger **Extra!** will be published at the same time each quarter as The Messenger.

The purpose of The Messenger **Extra!** is to give you, the members and authors, the opportunity to share your knowledge in a single, informative and in-depth article with a higher word count. I encourage you to indulge your passion for our history and submit articles on the topics that interest you the most.

More details will be forthcoming in the next issue of The Messenger. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via email at dianne.mallory.chsv@gmail.com or by phone at 804-768-7727.

Dianne



Remember to set your clocks back on
Sunday, November 3.



The Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia
P.O. Box 40
Chesterfield, VA 23832

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #28
Chesterfield, VA 23832