

# King William County Historical Society Newsletter

October 2015

## From Our President

Greetings to all of you and well wishes that you've survived our recent deluge (for those of you local). A week of being inside certainly has me thinking about getting out of my house and doing something (anything) outside, at least before winter creeps closer. And while I know it's still indoors, I want to bring attention to our new computers and wonderful research space at the old jail in the courthouse complex, where our historical society is a welcoming place for genealogists, researchers, and families to discover their own history. Through our website, people are reaching out to us to answer those questions that simply cannot be "googled." As our museum chairwoman Rebecca Townsend recently put it, **"The value of local research is priceless."**

Rebecca recently had a couple of Littlepage descendents from Maryland looking for verification of someone they knew was an ancestor but could not find in print records. They had looked through all of the conventional records including the "burned records" thumb drive, Dr. Harris' books and the Library of Virginia. Rebecca, of course, found the information they were seeking in a family tree that had been submitted to our historical society. She also sent them to Jerusalem to see the gravesites.

Another researcher from northern Virginia located information about one of his ancestors through "Find a Grave." He contacted our historical society to find out to what "The Grove" referred. Gene Campbell was able to give him quite a bit of information

regarding their family member, including pictures.

These are just two of the many examples of the impact of our historical society. There are many opportunities to help in the fall and winter, especially in the comfort of our renovated office space in the jail. And the museum always benefits from new docents. It counts as getting "out of the house" and, more important, this fantastic resource is dependent on great people like you to help out - so please consider visiting and, if you would like to get involved, contact Rebecca Townsend at 804-769-2318.

Again, welcome to all of you and thank you for your efforts on behalf of our historical society.

Dr. David A. Brown, President

[dabro3@email.wm.edu](mailto:dabro3@email.wm.edu)

## Treasurer's Report

We recently sent out letters to members whose membership had lapsed and we encouraged them to renew. We have had a very successful response. Thank you to all who have renewed your membership for another year. We appreciate your support.

Welcome and thank you to new members:  
Melanie and Tim Beale of Seaford  
Don Fox of Tallahassee  
Mr and Mrs Richard Gresham of Norfolk

And thank you to new Lifetime Members:  
Sally and John Hart of Hanover  
Overton Edwards of Waynesboro  
Charles Edwards of King William

## **Music At Historic St. John's Church**

### **2015-2016 Season**

Sunday, October 18, 4 PM  
Cheryl Van Ornam, organist

Sunday, November 15, 4 PM  
Kristi Reynolds, pianist

Sunday, December 13, 4 PM  
Mei-Li Beane and Matthew Spencer, Celtic  
Duo

Sunday, January 17, 4PM  
Bob Blagg Jazz Trio

Sunday, February 21, 4PM  
Jay BeVille, baritone and Kristi Reynolds,  
pianist

Sunday, March 20, 4PM  
Strings and Things, string quartet

Free admission with offering collected at  
intermission.

## **Museum News**

Flash drives of the "burned records of King William" and the Wendenburg/Garber maps are now available at the museum for purchase.

The Women's History Exhibit committee is seeking nominations of women who should be recognized for their contributions to King William County. As this committee begins to develop the exhibit, they are counting on you to make suggestions of women of note. Please contact Audrey Mitchell (804) 836-3565, with any suggestions or questions about this upcoming project.

One name submitted by Steve Colvin was Caroline Bradby Cook of the Pamunkey. The Library of Virginia recognized her several years ago in their Virginia Women in History exhibit.

**Caroline Bradby Cook (born ca. 1839)**, a resident of the Pamunkey Indian Reservation in King William County, was widowed in 1861, a few months after giving birth to her only child, George Major Cook. She and most of the other Pamunkey remained loyal to the United States during the Civil War, and her brothers and other relatives guided United States Army units in eastern Virginia and served as river pilots. When the Union army encamped at the Indian town, she cooked and washed for the soldiers even as they systematically dismantled her house and fences and burned the wood in their campfires.



After the war Cook went to the county court in order to take out letters of administration on the estate of her husband, Major Cook. Pamunkey Indians did not own the real estate on the reservation land, but as a widow she inherited the house and fence that the soldiers had destroyed. Cook filed a claim with the Southern Claims Commission for compensation from the United States government for her ruined property. In rebuilding her house and fence, she carefully counted the posts and pickets in order to apply for compensation for no more than she was entitled to. Cook received \$100 in 1879.

She was a founding member of the Pamunkey Baptist Church, organized in April 1865. Her son, whom she raised with the help of her

relatives, served as chief of the Pamunkey from 1902 until his death in 1930. He championed the rights of Virginia's Indians when their cultural heritage and even legal existence were being challenged. The last known reference to Caroline Bradby Cook in public records is the 1910 census, which recorded that she was then living in the house of her son the chief.

(This article, image, and original transcript of Caroline Bradby Cook's testimony are part of the online exhibit from the Library of Virginia. "Library of Virginia - Virginia Women in History 2009." *Library of Virginia - Virginia Women in History 2009.*)

### **Minutes of the July Meeting**

King William County Historical Society  
Membership Meeting, Sunday, July 19, 2015  
Minutes

The Membership Meeting of the King William Historical Society was called to order by President David Brown at 3:20 p.m. on Sunday, July 19, 2015 at the County Administration Building. There were 28 members and guests present.

#### Minutes

Approval of the Minutes of the April 19, 2015 membership meeting was tabled.

#### Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Ron Parker presented the Treasurer's Report showing the following balances as of July 19, 2015:

Checking	\$18,923.07
Museum Savings	\$23,725.42
Christadelphian Maintenance	\$25,003.02
Wells Fargo Investment Acct.	\$107,156.01
Total:	\$174,807.52

#### Museum Report

Rebecca Townsend presented the Museum Report noting that a committee is moving ahead with the women's project and that a

group of 38 children toured the museum. She urged all members to contact her about volunteering at the museum.

#### Unfinished Business

Aylett Graveyard: David Brown reported that the Society plans to continue to care for the graveyard using volunteers.

Acquinton Church: David Brown reported on a number of possible uses for the Church. The Board of Directors will bring a proposal to the membership about the use of Acquinton Church at a future meeting.

Lanesville Christadelphian Church: David Brown reported on a number of possible uses for the Church. The Board of Directors will bring a proposal to the membership about the use of Lanesville Christadelphian Church at a future meeting.

Other: David Brown reported that the rumor that there are remains of a building in the gulley behind the old jail has not been confirmed.

#### New Business

There was no new business.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m. and the members and guests enjoyed a picnic supper.

Respectfully Submitted:

John Freimarck, Acting Secretary