

King William Historical Society Newsletter

March 23, 2010

From Our President

Our current officers have only four more months to serve you in our current capacities. I will continue to press on with the projects that I've undertaken in the last year. I will continue to work toward completion of the Acquinton Church project, along with those projects related to the Church after completion. I can also be counted upon to continue to maintain and add content to our website.

My attention and focus will also shift to the museum, as chairman of the collections committee, and other museum duties. I believe we can present this wonderful place to our regional public by the use of the newspapers and collaboration with our sister county museums. We are very lucky to have this museum and I'm very proud of all the work done by the museum committee for the achievements to date.

So, as we come out of hibernation from this extraordinary winter, I'm hoping to see you all involved in some way with our activities. Which reminds me.....I will be calling together a work crew very soon for a three hour spruce-up of the Aylett cemetery.

We will also be counting on your support for the Spring Membership Fund Drive, which will be coming up in April and continuing through the summer. These donations will be used to cover expenses for upcoming projects such as the new county map of old homes, sites, ruins, mills and historic places, presented to us by Mr. Bibb Edwards. The funds will also be used to help position the KWHS to become an instrument in the repair of the old jail, pending county inclusion in the process. - *Lloyd Huckstep*

GRAVATT'S MILL

Our long time member, Mr. William Gravatt, passed in November of last year. His family was the owners and operators of Gravatt's Mill, which was located in western King William on Etna Mills's road. When the mill was demolished years ago, Mr. Gravatt acquired a section of the steel mill wheel. By way of his will and his daughter, Sandra Gravatt, they have presented this mill wheel section to our Historical Society, along with an 18 by 14 framed painting of the mill, and a 28 by 24 framed copy of the plat of the Gravatt tract showing the mill and mill pond in detail. We are very grateful for these gifts and to the Gravatt family for having shared their family history with the KWHS.

We must begin a study to record a history of the old mills throughout King William County. With the presentation of the Gravatt mill material, we have a wonderful starting point.

January Meeting Presentation



Our guest speaker was David Brown, co-owners of DATA Investigations; an archeological company dedicated to researching and managing excavation projects in Virginia. He presented their archeological findings at the **Chief Powhatan Capital Village** and the **Fairfield Manor Plantation Site**. The graphic presentation was excellent and the information was interesting and educational.

David recently gave this same lecture at the Virginia Historical Society as part of the "Banner Lecture Program."

King William Historical Museum

The King William Historical Museum will open on March 6 following a winter recess. There is now a new sign at the Old Court House complex to welcome visitors traveling down Route 30. We hope this addition and our plans for new exhibits this summer will bring more traffic to the museum.

The most complete book on King William County and its historic surroundings is the two-volume book by Dr. Malcolm Harris – “Old New Kent County”. The museum has been able to obtain a discount and is offering them to Society members at cost, which is \$115. You can obtain your copy by contacting Carl Fischer or Ruth Armatage.

We are in constant need of volunteers of all kinds and we also have openings on the Museum Council. If you feel like you want to be part of the organization that keeps King William County’s past alive, please contact Carl Fischer at 843-9194 or Pat Fitzgerald at 769-3919. - *Carl Fischer*

Project Status

• **Acquinton Church Stabilization**

Mr. Walker and his crews continue to forge ahead with the work to complete the project. Weather has hampered the progress and time frame, but all the outside brickwork is complete. All brick brought for the Marlmont site was used, and some brick has been reclaimed from the glebe ruins next door to the church to be used as interior fill.

Steel is due to arrive soon to be used to tie together the structure to support the roof. Mr. Walker says completion will be late spring.

• **Historical Map**

Mr. Bibb Edwards has done a great job with identifying many of our counties historic sites but we need volunteers to verify what he has and identify additional sites. Can you help?

• **Save the Old County Jail**

We continue to work with the county to encourage allocation of funds for repairing and renovating the historic jail located on the old county courtyard.

Time is taking its toll on the roof that has partially collapsed. Have a suggestion? Let us know !

Middle Peninsula Garden Tour



This year The Garden Club of the Middle Peninsula will sponsor tours in King William County. The tours are Friday, April 23, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

THE TOUR: The successful development of any community depends on its resources and its accessibility to transportation. The Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers, which form the boundaries of King William County, played a large part in the development of the county. Histories of the houses on this tour are all intricately woven with the rivers. While most properties no longer serve in their original capacity, all stands as reminders of times gone by and hope for times to come.

- WINDSOR SHADES, circa 1745 on the Pamunkey River.
- CHERICKE, circa 1828 on the Pamunkey River
- WAKEMA, circa 1860 on the Mattaponi River
- HIGH BANK, built in 2005 on the Mattaponi River
- LESTER MANOR VILLAGE, recent reconstruction of a village to represent the old Lester Manor Railroad Station Village

OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST:

- KING WILLIAM COUNTY HISTORIC COURTHOUSE AND MUSEUM
- ST. JOHN'S CHURCH
- MATTAPONI AND PAMUNKEY INDIAN RESERVATIONS
- TOWN OF WEST POINT
- CHRIST CHURCH

TICKETS: \$30 includes four houses and gardens and the Lester Manor Village. Single-site admission is \$12. Advance tickets available for \$25 until **April 15** by mail from Group Tour and Ticket Chair or on-line at www.VaGardenweek.org.

Spring Fest 2010

The King William county Spring Fest 2010 will be held Saturday, April 24th, from 2pm -9pm, with a rain date of Sunday April 25th. The location will be the football field at Hamilton-Holmes middle school at Route 30 and Acquinton Church Rd. We have reserved a ten by ten booth to put up the cabana again as we did last year. The museum will be fully staffed and there will be a shuttle bus available to transport people hourly to the museum and back. This information will be presented in the newspapers and programs as well. The booth will be staffed and we will present information relative to our projects.

Walkerton Farmers Market

King and Queen Community Development Corp. (KQCD) are hosting, for the second year, a Farmers' Market in beautiful downtown Walkerton next to the Latane Trice Bridge. The Farmers' Market will be held the 1st and 3rd Saturday's beginning in April, 9am – 12 noon. You will find locally grown grass fed beef, chickens, rabbits and turkeys as well as pastured pork and lots of fresh vegetables, fruits, honey, eggs, soap, alpacas and alpaca goods. You are likely to find special treasures like a children's book illustrated by a local artist, handmade jewelry, note cards and baked goods as well as vegetables, plants, jewelry and comic books grown or created by local children and teens. For more information, call 769-9656 or send an email to info@kqcd.org

2009 Society Highlights

Our society this past year was very active and productive. Highlights are as follows:

- Membership up 25% (38 new members)
- Dues and donations were double forecast
- Expenses under Budget
- Website and E-mail Established
- Published 3 Newsletters and a Bulletin
- Four Meetings included 3 house tours
- Several Projects initiated

Calendar of Events

- Next Meeting April 18th, 2:00p.m., Sharon Church
- Virginia Historic Garden Tours April 17th through April 24th
- KWHS Museum open Friday, April 23rd 10 – 5? for Middle Peninsula Garden Tour
- Spring Fest Saturday, April 24, 2010

New Members

We have had 21 new members join the society since September: Patricia Davies, George Henley, Cleo Coleman, Robert Moran, Anne Jackson, Mollie and Henry Gregory, Clarissa Clarke, Carter Fox, Kelly and John Gwathmey, Betty Rose and Timothy Sexton, Lyn Hodnett, Elizabeth McAllister, Fran and John Freimarch, David Brown, Wilson Glasco, Marie and Grayson Jennings.

Dues Reminder

The King William Historical Society's year runs from July 1- June 30 so 2010 dues will be due by July 1st.

The new dues structure is:

Individual..... \$20 Family \$30
Student \$10 Lifetime \$250

Mail to: King William Historical Society
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Contacts

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Created by Bob Hubbard