

KING WILLIAM COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Quarterly Newsletter
January 2023

IN THIS ISSUE

UPCOMING MEMBERSHIP MEETING

January 15, 2023, 2:30 PM
Sharon Indian School
13376 King William Road
King William, VA 23086

Please join us at the next meeting of the King William County Historical Society which will be held on Sunday, January 15th at 2:30. This will be an in-person meeting but will also be available via Zoom for those members unable to attend in person.

At this meeting a panel of former Sharon Indian School students will discuss what it was like to attend the school and their experiences attending other institutions after segregation ended in King William County. Before closing the school was the primary house of learning for Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe and Rappahannock Indian Tribe youth. Members are encouraged to come with any questions they have for the former students.

Sharon Indian School was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2007.

Refreshments will be available after the presentation and members will be able to tour the school.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Membership,

I'm excited at what we've accomplished as a society in 2022 and doubly so with our prospects for 2023. The end of year brought with it a great deal of positive energy among the board of directors, built up by a wonderful membership meeting with so many engaged members at Retreat. Since then it's been a lot of behind the scenes work by the board in developing some good governance procedures and building a stronger relationship with the Museum Council. At the end of 2022 we finalized a Conflict of Interest policy and established a Finance committee with the goal of developing budgets with the Museum Council and for the Society for 2023 that reflect a strong sense of fiscal discipline. Our most recent meeting included a detailed discussion of Standing Rules that clarified the responsibilities of committees and officers (complementing our by-laws). We also agreed on committee members for both standing and ad-hoc committees, ensuring that we maintain and expand our efforts in the new year.

One of the most important committees, in my opinion, is the membership committee. During my tenure over the next year-and-a-half I hope to both reduce attrition and increase new members within the Society. We have a great group of people and we do exciting things, so it makes sense that our membership would grow as more people learned about our actions and our goals for the years to come. We will work on better marketing our programs, encouraging memberships at our events, and developing new and interesting opportunities that show significant value to our current membership and encourage others to join. As we look towards a wonderful 2023 ahead of us, I encourage all of you to consider helping us make that a reality, whether through your support to our Society, involvement in our committees (you can be a part even without being on the board), and considering a gift membership for your friends who love history.

I appreciate all that you have done to help us in the years to date, and look forward to working with you in the year to come.

Sincerely,

Dr. David A. Brown, President, King William County Historical Society



Ice on the Mattaponi

MEMBER NEWS

KWCHS Requests for Information

Every month we receive requests for information about a particular person, family or place in King William County. Most of the requests are from folks who do not live in the county, but have ancestors they have traced back to King William County. The following are a few examples:

-I have read that George Dabney (b. abt 1669; d. aft 24 Oct 1729) served as Justice of the Peace on perhaps two occasions and may have been appointed as Sheriff. I'm attempting to prove this service for the purpose of joining Sons of Colonial Wars. Please let me know if I can provide other information that might help you with your research.

Doug Neff, St. Louis, MO

-I am a graduate student of History at Washington State University, working on a project involving the famous John Taylor "of Caroline, County" (1753-1824). I have lately discovered that for a short time, from about 1805 to 1811, Taylor owned close to 3000 acres of land around what is now West Point, Virginia, in your county. On October 1, 1811, Taylor apparent deeded this land to his son, William P. Taylor. This deed seems like the type of document that would be located in a county courthouse, or something similar. I am curious if any of the folks at the King William County Historical Society would know where I would need to go to obtain a copy of this record. Thank you for any assistance you can render to me, as well as for your stellar work in the historical preservation of an important area of Virginia.

James A. Cornelius

-I am a Historian and the reason for my email and inquiry is that I am hoping someone can put me in contact with the correct person or persons. I am currently authoring a book about the Declaration of Independence Signers. Part of my research, is trying to visit where these men lived and their final resting places. I have now visited 52 of 56 gravesites. Carter Braxton being 1 of the final, remaining Signers that I need to obtain for my research. I am well aware that the Chericoke, Carter Family Estate, in King William, Virginia, is a Private Residence. I know that the former home of Carter Braxton is occupied by residents. I believe the person who owns the home is Alice Horsley Siegel. I am hoping that someone from your Historical Society can put me in contact with the homeowners.

T.J. Fallon, New Jersey

-I am looking for any information about the old house on North Point Farm, which my wife and I purchased last year. We have not had an opportunity to visit the KW Museum yet but hope to soon. I am just curious though, why North Point Farm is not included in the list of historic landmarks, if, in fact, this house was built in 1740, as it was purported to have been. I look forward to your response.

Leif G. Johnson

-My husband and I recently bought the Tanyard property on Smokey Rd that was owned/built by James Powell circa 1857. We plan on joining the historical society and hopefully learning

MEMBER NEWS

KWCHS Requests for Information, cont'd

more about our property and the County. We are currently doing a few renovations, and our contractor found a piece of paper in the wall that has a date of 1848. It appears to be an itemized list of something with prices. It also has a name of Ira Powell. I have a couple of questions I'm hoping you can help me out with.

Kelly Fahel

-I was referred to contact you for perhaps having birth records from 1783. I have a relative whose name is Benjamin Abrams, born in 1783 King William County native reservation. However, he was taken in as a slave by Mordecai Abrams/Benjamin Perkins. Please let me know if you have any records pertaining to him. Additionally, if you do not provide this service, could you direct me to someone who does?

Asha Venegas

These requests vary and it's difficult to find individuals who can answer any question. So, we are soliciting members who are willing to be on the email distribution to receive these emails and ask that you reply if you know anything about the subject. No obligation, just reply if you have information to share. If interested, please send an email to KWHS@kingwilliamhistory.org. We are also putting together a "reference list" that includes books, maps, websites and other documents that we could send to individuals interested in doing their own research.

- *Bob Hubbard*

King William County Museum News

After being closed during 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Museum reopened on March 6, 2022. The Museum Council spent a great deal of time and effort during the period of closure to install a new exhibit showcasing life at the Gregory Ordinary. The exhibit depicts Tavern life in King William County during the colonial era. While many worked on the exhibit, special thanks go to volunteers Anne Jackson, Rebecca Townsend, Martha Anne Hart and Jen Shelor for their dedication and research. The grand opening of the new exhibit was held on July 17, 2022 after the membership meeting of the Historical Society.

Volunteer docents opened the Museum for 70 days in 2022. In addition to Sunday afternoons March through November, the Museum was open to coincide with archaeology digs by the Fairfield Foundation. The Museum participated in Founders Day on April 11, 2022. The Edwards family held their family reunion on the grounds in August, and the Daughters of the American Revolution met in the courthouse in September.

The Museum is free to the public and operates on donations and interest from the Thomas Hill estate plus the generosity of King William County. The King is open most Sundays from March thru November and by appointment. Call 804.769.9619 or email kwhs@kingwilliamhistory.org to schedule a visit. March 5th will be the first Sunday we open for the 2023 season.

The museum will be open during the Archeological Dig Days at the Historic Courthouse site scheduled for January 12th and 26th, 2023 from 10:00am to 4:00pm. Come out for a visit and see our Gregory Tavern exhibit and artifacts found at earlier digs.

Transcription Project

We are proud to announce that we have contracted Mr. William Bynum for the transcription of King William County Record Book #4. Mr. Bynum finished a full transcription of Book 3 in 2022 and it was edited by Mr. Wes Pippenger. We hope to have Book 3 for sale soon, but you can currently purchase Books 1 and 2 for \$50, the funds going to support the wonderful work at the King William County Museum. We continue to look at an ambitious schedule of transcription and publication for 2023 with the hope of completing the transcription, editing, and publishing of Books, 3, 4, and 5. We have recently engaged several potential transcribers in the discussions regarding our transcription project and hope to have even more good news and good progress to report in our next issue. We also hope to share with you some of the initial highlights we've found in our researching the record books and hope you can share your own discoveries as more of you start to use these valuable documents of our county's history.

Archaeology Project Update: King William Tavern

Even though 2022 was a pretty remarkable year for our archaeological study of the tavern site, 2023 promises to be even more exciting. We will continue our dig days (and lab days when the weather is not quite suitable) on the second and fourth Thursday in January from 10 to 4. Check in on our social media and with The Fairfield Foundation's social media, to see updates on dig dates in February and March (the King William County website will have them, too). Our focus for the last several dig days has been providing tours for visitors young and old, complemented by Debi Moren's opening the museum on dig days to welcome both our dig teams, volunteers, and visitors. When not talking with those who stop by, we have focused on washing artifacts recovered from the site, documenting the distinct layers of soil (in plan view and profile), and backfilling the open five-foot-square test units (we swear there are fewer now than before). At the same time, we keep finding more interesting discoveries! We are very close to identifying the west gable of the tavern and learning more about how the one-brick-wide foundations we've found to the west fit with the massive tavern footprint.

Our plan for 2023 will start off with completing the goals we put forth at the start of 2022. First, we will survey additional acreage in the forest, now that the foliage is dying down a bit. There is a lot in the woods that we don't understand. Our prior work found artifacts in the root balls of overturned trees, suggesting buildings further back, away from the tavern proper. Part of our excavation strategy is to look more closely at the artifact concentrations and tease apart the archaeological evidence to see what was going on: are there support buildings back there, such as smoke houses, dairies, or sheds? Quarters for enslaved Africans? Or perhaps an earlier building that predates the tavern? Only additional excavations will help us solve these mysteries. And you're invited to join us. We look forward to giving you a tour when you come out next - so when you see the cars, look for us near the picnic tables and, perhaps, back in the woods a bit.

Congratulations go out to Anne Jackson, a longstanding member, who obtained the Virginia Daughters of the American Revolution District IX's *Regent of the Year* Award for 2022.

MINUTES

King William County Historical Society Membership Meeting Minutes Sunday, October 16, 2022

The King William County Historical Society membership meeting was held on Sunday, October 16, 2022. President Dave Brown called the meeting to order at 2:56 pm. The minutes from the July 17, 2022 membership meeting were approved.

The meeting was held at Retreat, the home of Mead and Janie Rhoads. Dave noted that the Treasurer's Report is available and that members should see Sally Pearson for the report. Debi Moren noted that the Museum is now regularly open on Sunday afternoons. Dave thanked the Museum Council for opening the museum for archaeological dig days. He asked that members visit on dig days.

Dave thanked the Rhoads family for allowing us to tour and meet at their beautiful home. He thanked John Breeden for setting up the meeting and arranging for our picnic.

Mead Rhoads shared a brief history of the house, built by John Fox.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:20 p.m., and we enjoyed a picnic and tours of the house and grounds.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Vawter
Recording Secretary



Sharon Indian School

Historical Marker for Sharon Indian School

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Annual Membership expires twelve (12) months after your last dues payment.

Family \$30

Student \$10

Individual \$20

Lifetime \$250

Artifact Level \$150+

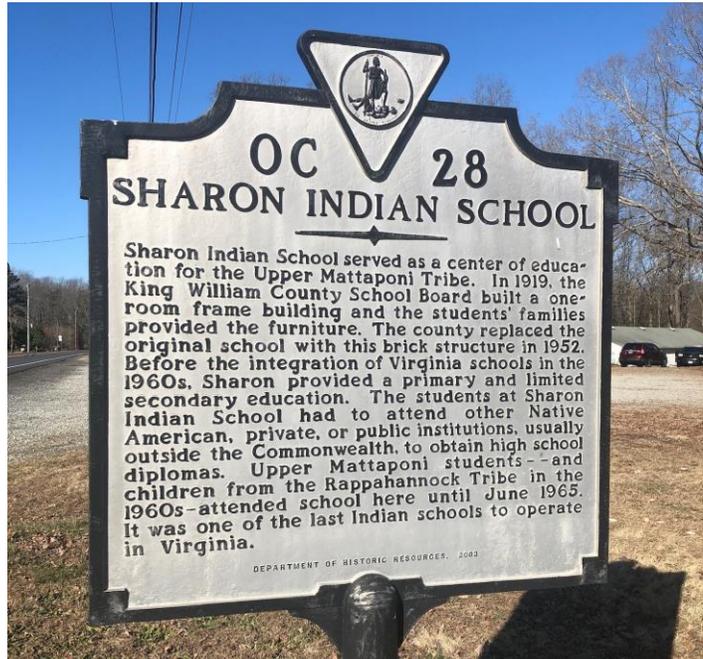
Pamunkey/Mattaponi Level \$300+

Thomas T. H. Hill Benefactor Level \$500+

Corporate Sponsorship \$500+

Mail to:

King William Historical Society
P.O. Box 233
King William, VA 23086



*The King William Museum is open by appointment.
Call 804.769.9619 or email
kwhs@kingwilliamhistory.org
Located at 227 Horse Landing Road,
King William, Virginia*

King William County Historical Society

The King William County Historical Society was formed in 1973 to preserve and promote the unique heritage and rich history of King William County, Virginia through education, research, and restoration of historically significant landmarks.

Our mission is to collect, interpret, and preserve those things relative to the history of the county while acting as caretaker of artifacts from the lives and traditions of the people who have gone before us.

To this end our efforts are wide ranging, including our publications, operating the county historical museum, and the stabilization and restoration of King William landmarks such as the Old Jail, Lanesville Christadelphian Church, and Acquinton Church.

Membership is open to all who share a passion for history, a reverence for the past, and an interest in preserving our common heritage for future generations.