



KING WILLIAM COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Winter, 2026 - Volume 18, Number 1

KING WILLIAM COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Join us for a presentation by well known genealogist,
Barbara Vines Little about conducting research in
counties where the courthouse was burned and how to
fill in the gaps

Date: January 18, 2026

Time: 2:30 p.m.

Location: 180 Horse
Landing Rd.

King William, VA 23086



Barbara Vines Little,
CG, FNGS, FUGA, FVGS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

I usually leave the “change” analogies to the spring newsletter, when the flowers are coming out and the bright colors replace the more subtle tones of winter. But it feels apropos to highlight a significant change here. I’ve been surrounded by amazing people serving on our society’s board of directors, some of them for over a decade. The time and energy they bring to each membership meeting, board meeting, and occasional activity are inspiring and worthy of note. While I know you understand that all-volunteer organizations like ours require significant behind-the-scenes work, I am remiss in acknowledging those who have gone above and beyond, helping our society succeed, fulfilling our organization’s mission and truly benefitting the membership (present and future).

One individual who clearly distinguished himself as both a “do-er” and a “talk-er” is Carl Fischer. He’s served on the board for over two decades, taken on many roles (including President), and played a prominent role in the creation of the museum that we all know and love. He also fundraised for, helped design, and swung both hammer and nail to restore the Old Jail as our society’s office. He served as the face of the society when working with Carol Lee Walker on both the Lanesville Christadelphian Church and Acquntion Church, which our society proudly operates for the benefit of our members and the community writ large. And Carl is legendary for the passion he has shown in support of the society’s broader mission – to preserve and interpret King William County’s history.

Carl is a leader. That does not mean everyone always agrees with him, but he has always put the welfare of our society front and center. I’m indebted to Carl for recruiting me to join the board, and I credit him for

many adventures, challenges, struggles, and lessons. I am grateful for him, as I am for every member, and I hope to make the kind of difference he’s made in the lives of so many.

Carl and his wife Lynn are at a transitional point in their lives and his time and efforts are required elsewhere. On behalf of the society, I want to thank him openly and prominently for all that he has done to make us successful and to wish him and his family the absolute best. While I will miss having him at our board meetings, I look forward to seeing him at upcoming membership meetings and events. Please wish him the best and thank him when you cross paths next.

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

Burned Records Transcription Project January 2026 Update

Books 1 through 4 & 6 are complete and available for purchase. \$20.00 for each transcribed book with a media charge of \$10 for orders under \$40.

Books 5, 7, 8 & 9 are currently being formatted.

Book 10 is currently being transcribed.

We anticipate completing the transcription of Book 10 and beginning Books 11 and 12 in 2026. We also plan to have Books 5, 7, 8, & 9 available for purchase by the early spring. With luck, we will have Book 10 available in late summer.

We encourage anyone interested in working with us on transcribing the books, and formatting them, to reach out to David Brown at dabro3@wm.edu. We also encourage members of the society to reach out if they want to help with the transcription committee.

MUSEUM REPORT

The KWCHS Museum closed for 2025 on November 16 and is currently scheduled to reopen on March 01, 2026. We were open on Sundays in November and December, along with being open during the Archeological Digs on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month by The Fairfield Foundation. The museum also opened by appointment. Total days open were 12, with 80 volunteer hours served; visitor total was 52. Volunteers worked to maintain the Museum and Old Jail Office, take inventory, and enter accession of artifacts. They have also assisted with guided tours of homes and cemeteries, answering questions posed to the King William Historical Society and helping with genealogy research.

Members of the Museum Council traveled to Shackleford, Virginia, to hear Dr. Augustine Lewis's presentation of the significance of the progenitor, John Lewis, of many prominent Virginians and the restoration of the Historical Burial site. It is the oldest known burial site in King and Queen County, Virginia, and with the help of the Historical

Society of King and Queen, it has been preserved. There is a historical marker on Poropotank Drive south of Buena Vista Road

On December 21st, Santa and Mrs. Claus (aka Bill and Shannon Gulasky) provided the young and old of King William County an opportunity to witness the magic and spirit of love and giving to others. Each visitor received a reindeer card whose nose lit up and a little rubber duck with a Santa Hat. All were welcomed in the Old Jail Office for snacks and crafts. Thank you to the public who helped support this event at the museum.



(Photo Courtesy of Gene Campbell)

Museum Volunteers: (left to right) Rebecca Townsend, Gene Campbell, Coleman Soti, Reginald Neal, Barbara Trimmer, Mrs. Claus (Shannon Gulasky), Debi Moren, Santa (Bill Gulasky), and Jessy Reed.

The Museum would like to thank all visitors young and old, who came to visit Santa and Mrs. Claus. They enjoyed hot chocolate, apple cider, and cookies. Crafts included beaded, star and magic ornaments, and best of all, decorating gingerbread men and sugar cookies. We appreciate everyone who came to our event and hope to see you again next year.

- Debi Moren, Museum Council Chair

PROJECTS

Historic House Book – Status Update

The King William County Historic House Book continues to make steady progress. The project will document approximately 75 houses built before 1860 that are still standing and in fair condition.

Research has been completed for all houses, photography is about 90% complete, and writing of individual house histories is well underway. Design layouts—combining text and photographs—have been developed for roughly a dozen houses, and a consistent visual style is beginning to emerge. Each house is expected to be featured on two to three pages, with a mix of exterior and interior images, outbuildings where present, and historic photographs when available. See example to the right.

The final publication will also include period maps, an overview of architectural history, and illustrations highlighting historic building techniques. Houses are being organized into historic districts such as Mangohick and Acquinton, with each district forming a chapter that highlights distinctive characteristics of the area. Because these districts developed along the county’s two rivers, the narrative will emphasize water-based transportation as a defining influence on settlement and activity.

As writing continues, we welcome additional historical information or photographs from homeowners, descendants, and community members. Your contributions help ensure each home’s story is told accurately and respectfully.

The project has been active for approximately 18 months. The original six historical society committee members remain actively involved and are very pleased with the progress. Project expenditures to date total approximately \$19,000, with about \$10,000 remaining under approved contracts.



Julia Henley leads the house write-ups. She holds an advanced degree in Architectural History, has worked with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, and wrote her UVA master’s thesis on eighteenth-century dwellings in King William County. Her knowledge of the county’s historic houses and families is exceptional.

Photography and book design are led by Jen Shelor of King and Queen County. With 35 years of experience in advertising, commercial photography, and graphic design—including national accounts—Jen brings extensive expertise and currently operates her own creative business.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact any of the King William Count Book Committee members: Lisa Vawter, Debi Moren, John Breeden, Lee Ramsey, Bob Hubbard, Ron Parker, and

- Bob Hubbard

RESEARCH

THE VIRGINIA FORUM

We are pleased to announce that The Virginia Forum will hold its annual conference March 19-21, 2026, at Shenandoah University in Winchester, Virginia.

The main theme for the 2026 conference is “Revolutions and Resistance,” which is designed to welcome scholarship and conversation on the myriad ways greater Virginia and Virginians have been shaped by, and responded to, moments of upheaval, transformation, and dissent.

We are thrilled to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Virginia Forum by returning to Shenandoah University, home of the first annual conference in 2006. Nestled in the northern part of the Shenandoah Valley, the University provides a rich backdrop for which to consider layered revolutions and resistance in Virginia. The Virginia Forum is an interdisciplinary conference and welcomes work in a variety of disciplines including, but not limited to, anthropology, archaeology, economics, education, environmental studies, geography, history, law, literature, and politics.

Each year, the conference encourages proposals from and ultimately brings together undergraduate and graduate students, academics, applied and public historians, archivists, historic site interpreters, librarians, museum professionals, teachers, writers, independent scholars, and others engaged in the study and interpretation of the history and culture of greater Virginia.

Throughout the weekend, presenters and guests will share their knowledge, research, and experiences. The Virginia Forum welcomes a variety of presentation formats including individual papers, complete panel sessions, demonstrations, roundtables, workshops, posters, etc.

- Kate Egner, 2026 Program Committee

Editor’s Note: I have attended Virginia Forums around the state for 18 years, missing only the first. All who are interested in Virginia history are welcomed; all contribute to making the event enjoyable and inspiring.



This year our Katie [Gibson] Harlow and Ashley [Atkins] Spivey of the Pamunkey Indian Tribe have submitted a paper: *Virginian Indigenous Participation in the Revolutionary War*. I plan to be there - and would love to see you as well.

For Forum details visit: <https://virginia-forum.org/>

LETTERS

My name is Christie O’Neill. I am a resident of New Kent County and a member of the New Kent Historical Society.

Earlier this year I became a citizen archivist for the National Archives, which entails transcribing historical documents held by the Archives. While doing the transcription I noticed that most of the entries contained information pertaining to surrounding counties and that perhaps those county historical societies would be interested in the information. My goal has become fostering cooperation between the regional county historical societies as a means of information sharing.

In addition, the knowledge that I have gained as a transcriber of documents, primarily from the 1800s, could be valuable to others who may be interested in learning transcription methods. I offer my services, free of charge, to work with individuals who may wish to learn these methods and to help them get started in the National Archives system.

I believe that by working together, the regional county historical societies can increase their information holdings and create a more complete profile of the entire region and the events and individuals that shaped the region.

Editor’s Note: The work Christie is doing as a citizen archivist brings a smile to all of us who work with primary sources. But equally important is her support of cooperation among our sister historical societies. We hope to work with her and the NKHS in the future.

Christie can be reached at conell5169@gmail.com.

\$ TREASURER'S REPORT ¢

Account	Balance (12/10/2025)
Checking	\$9,861.76
Museum Savings CD	\$11,734.86
Wells Fargo Brokerage Account	\$202,981.00
Wells Fargo Coon Fund Money Market	\$95,567.00
PayPal Balance	\$509.97

~ DONATIONS ~

Please consider donating to the King William County Historical Society to help with our ongoing operational costs; for example, the cost of this newsletter.

You can do this easily online by visiting

<https://kingwilliamhistory.org/donate>

If you have a project in mind for the Society to undertake that you would like to financially support, let's talk.

Visit Us!

In Person: King William County Historical Museum
227 Horse Landing Road, King William, VA
Phone: (804) 769-9619

Online: <https://kingwilliamhistory.org>
<https://www.facebook.com/kingwillcoHS>

Email: kwhs@kingwilliamhistory.org

And Our Neighbors...

Pamunkey Indian Museum and Cultural Center
<https://pamunkey.org/museum-cultural-center>
Historical Society of West Point, Virginia
<https://hswpva.org>

King & Queen Historical Society / Tavern Museum
<https://www.kingandqueenmuseum.org>

New Kent Historical Society / Museum
<https://www.newkenthistoricalsoc.com>

Hanover County Historical Society
<https://hanoverhistorical.org>

Caroline County Historical Society
<https://www.facebook.com/CarolineHistoricalSociety>

MEMBERSHIP

DUES

Individual (Year).....\$20
Family Membership (Year).....\$30
Individual Lifetime.....\$250

Checks can be sent to:

King William Historical Society
PO Box 233
King William, VA 23086

We also accept dues through **PayPal**.
(A PayPal account is not necessary)

Scan our QRCode below

Membership Dues



Or visit

<https://kingwilliamhistory.org/dues>

Yearly memberships run for one year from the date
we receive your dues.

For membership questions please contact

Sally Pearson at

treasurer@kingwilliamhistory.org

If you are receiving this newsletter via the US Postal
Service but wish to receive an electronic copy
instead, please email us at

kwhs@kingwilliamhistory.org

If you are a member and are not receiving a
newsletter, let us know! If you do not wish to receive
this newsletter, let us know that too.

MINUTES & Other Business

Membership Meeting Minutes Sunday, October 19, 2025

The King William County Historical Society members met on Sunday, October 19, 2025, at the Lanesville Christadelphian Church in King William County, Virginia. Vice President Katie Gibson called the meeting to order at 2:35 pm. The minutes from the July 20th, 2024, membership meeting were approved.

Copies of the Treasurer's Report and membership applications were available at the meeting. Members are encouraged to contact Sally Pearson with any questions on the Treasurer's Report.

Old Business: Katie shared an update on the King William Historical Homes Book Project. Seventy-five homes that were built prior to 1860 have been identified and will be included in the project. The project committee has been working on collecting pictures of the homes and write-ups have begun.

Jessy Reed presented the **Museum Report**. From July through October the museum has been open to the public twenty-two days. Seven docents volunteered 162.5 hours. The Museum was open for the archaeological digs on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month, and most Sundays from 1–5 p.m. Docent training is in progress. The King William High School Class of 1975 toured the museum for their fiftieth anniversary. The museum is still selling the commemorative coin for the 300th Anniversary of the Courthouse. Santa and Mrs. Clause will be visiting the Museum on December 14, 2025. The museum will be closed for the season from November 17, 2025, through February 28, 2026.

New Business: The Society is working on an African American Oral History project. The project will build a collection of transcribed interviews focusing on African American history in King William County. Members are encouraged to notify a Board member if they want to be interviewed or suggest anyone to be interviewed.

The business portion of the meeting was adjourned.

Katie Gibson was the speaker for the meeting. She spoke on the life of Robert Mush. Mush was born on the

Pamunkey Indian Reservation circa 1758. He attended the Brafferton Indian School at the College of William and Mary from 1769 – 1774 fulfilling requirements of the 1677 Articles of Peace. In 1776 he enlisted in the Continental Army and participated in the Battle of Middlebrook, the Battle of Brandywine Creek, the Battle of Germantown, and the siege of Charleston where he was captured. Mush was released after fourteen months as part of a trade.

After re-enlisting and serving another eighteen months, Mush was discharged at the end of the war and returned to the Pamunkey Reservation. He and his wife converted to the Baptist faith, joining the congregation and remarrying at the Lower College Baptist Church in King William, which is now Colosse. Mush went on to become a Baptist minister and likely served as the Chief of the Pamunkey tribe before moving his family to South Carolina. Katie welcomed questions from the audience.

Visit <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/> to read an entry on Robert Mush authored by Katie and Ashley Spivey.

The meeting was adjourned. Conversations and refreshments provided by Elaine Ramsey followed the meeting. 32 people attended.

Respectfully submitted, Amanda Walker, Recording Secretary

It's That Time Again! Board & Officers, 2026-2028

Society board members and officers are elected at our July membership meeting on even numbered years. They serve two-year terms. Our current board and officers are listed on the next page. As usual, because of term limits, stepping away, and the desire to take on different roles, that list will change this summer. In other words, we have openings.

As usual, a Nominating Committee has been appointed to recommend a slate to fill these roles. If you would like to help guide the society for the next couple of years, or would like to recommend someone, please contact the committee, currently Bibb Edwards and John Breeden, via kwhs@kingwilliamhistory.org.

ABOUT

Volume 18, Number 1

As your latest *Newsletter* editor I would first like to thank my predecessors, especially Benjamin Shumaker. I have recently been studying almost 50 years of our society's *Bulletins* and *Newsletters*. That they remain valuable resources attests to the thoughtful work of our editors. They set a high standard I will strive to match.

That said, there are a few changes afoot. Unlike our old yearly *Bulletins*, we have not been numbering the quarterly *Newsletters*. Now we are. And it has been over seven years since our *Newsletter* has had a visual refresh. With all due respect to family and friends in North Carolina, that **Blue** was just not us. So our color palette has changed.

In 1702 our county was named for the King of England, formerly Prince William of Orange. That color is also associated with several Virginia universities, e.g. UVA, VT, Virginia State). Thus, our Page One banner now features the UVA **Orange** balanced by the VT **Maroon**. Because.

That maroon continues on subsequent pages with the exception of the Treasurer's Report and Membership info. **Green** and **Gold** are associated with both money and The College of William and Mary. As W&M has been associated with Pamunkey Neck & King William since 1693 - and today with a number of our society's members - this just seems right.

I may even rotate these colors just for fun.

Note that UVA **Rotunda Orange**, VT **Burnt Orange**, and VSU **Trojan Orange** are all a slightly different hue. The University's very dark **Jefferson Blue** is being used as an accent color. In the future I will also work in the **Black** and **Gold** of the King William High School Cavaliers (and VCU). The West Point High Pointers' colors are already orange and blue.

And, in an effort to please-more-of-the-people-some-of-the-time, for a modest donation - "in honor of" - to the KWCHS, I just may be able to figure a way to feature your favorite color(s) on these pages - even plaid. Ask.

Just don't ask for that old blue for a while.

- Bibb Edwards

King William County Historical Society, Inc.

a volunteer-driven,
tax-exempt 501 (c) (03) corporation

Founded in 1974, the King William County Historical Society was incorporated in 1997 to promote interest in the history of King William County, Virginia. The Society operates the King William County Museum adjacent to the Old Courthouse, 227 Horse Landing Road, King William, VA.

We also support member and public education, research projects, and the preservation of historically significant local landmarks and artifacts.

Our quarterly Membership Meetings, usually held 3rd Sundays in January, April, July and October, feature informative historically themed programs that are open to all. Board meetings are usually the previous month.

We welcome your support.

Current Board & Officers

David Brown: President
Katie [Gibson] Harlow: Vice President
Sally Pearson: Past President & Treasurer
Amanda Walker: Recording Secretary
Bibb Edwards: Corresponding Secretary
John Breeden: Parliamentarian
Debi Moren: Museum Council Chair*
Carl Fischer: At Large
Lee Ramsey: At Large

*is appointed by the Board