



Courthouse Tavern Museum

Tales from the Tavern

For Friends of the King and Queen Courthouse Tavern Museum and Members of the King and Queen County Historical Society

Fall 2015

A Very Positive Partnership

The Tavern Museum was created through a cooperative partnership between the King and Queen Historical Society (HS) and King and Queen (K&Q) County. This partnership promotes preservation of County history and educational opportunities for county students and residents. The County and HS share expenses and the County provides maintenance for the two buildings utilized by the HS/Museum in the Historic District. The endowment and collections of historical artifacts are owned by the HS. The all-volunteer Museum enterprise is managed by the Tavern Museum Council that is responsible for staffing, exhibits, education, acquisitions, events and related activities. 2015 has been a year in which the Council has focused on strengthening its relationship with the County. In June major repairs to the Museum Archives Building, rebuilt after 1864, were begun by the County with partial funding from the HS/Museum. As this newsletter goes to press the project is almost completed and a report will follow in a future edition of *Tales From The Tavern*. As noted in the summer edition the Historical Society promoted and the County Board of Supervisors supported a resolution to honor the WWII veterans and those on the Home Front for their service during that extremely stressful time. On a beautiful fall day, the HS/Museum participated in the well-attended October 17th Community Pride Day held by the K&Q School System. On October 23rd, Central High School students participated in a tour sponsored by the Museum. In November, the Museum held its

annual dinners for the County School Board and the County Board of Supervisors respectively at the Museum to thank them for the partnership. The Museum is currently working with the County music teacher on a program for the annual Museum open house held in December.

Featuring the K&Q Map

Many visitors to the Museum are researching people and places in the county. Published in 1974, the 36-by-42-inch map of King and Queen County by Mrs. Elizabeth Henley Hutchinson, a life long resident of the County (1899-1988), is an invaluable tool in locating this information. Named home places, post offices, and churches from the history of the county are superimposed over a mid-Twentieth Century map. Mrs. Hutchinson notes "This map....is an outgrowth of the project begun by the Women's Club in 1937 of collecting items of local historical interest....Although many of the spots indicated in the map are today only sites of vanished houses, these sites as well as the houses still standing tell something about the history of K&Q." Mrs. Hutchinson's family has contributed the notes she made when creating the map and these provide further background on some places, including the families who lived there. They are available in the Museum library. The map also complements other histories and materials in the Museum library. It is on exhibit at the Museum, and can be purchased there and online for \$25.

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Editor: Biddie Shelor



The Museum now sells K&Q Decals.

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www.kingandqueenmuseum.com



Brownie Bevan's horse and carriage.



Students Visit historic Newington.

Students Experience History

On October 23rd, a beautiful fall day, approximately 25 Central High School juniors participated in a history tour arranged by Ms. Alice Sheley and Mr. Frank Hurst of the Museum Council in cooperation with Dr. Carol Carter, Superintendent of K&Q Schools, and Mr. Chuck Hudson, head of the history department. The tour began at historic Newington, the birthplace of Carter Braxton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Ms. Beverly (Bly) Straube, an archaeologist in the Virginia tidewater region, provided insights into the importance of the site and the discoveries made there. The group then traveled to the Tavern Museum for a tour and scavenger hunt constructed by Mr. Hudson to emphasize the County history exhibited. Mr. Frank Hurst informed the group of upcoming scholarship and archaeology opportunities.

Community Pride Day

This annual event, sponsored by the K&Q School System, is a "fun-for-the family" day at Central High School and encourages a sense of community in a county 65 miles long and 10 miles wide with two elementary schools and one high school. October 17th, the day of the event, was crisp and sunny. The many parade and vendor participants set a festive tone for the flood of visitors and those attending the homecoming football game. The Grand Marshalls of the parade, one of whom was HS member William Gwathmey, rode at the head of the parade in a horse and carriage promoting the HS and provided by member Brownie Bevan. The Museum (gift shop) vendor table was very successful.

Nominations Sought To Recognize Women

The Commonwealth of Virginia has established the Virginia Women's Commission to seek nominations for the first monument of its kind in the nation recognizing the full range of Virginia women's achievements throughout all eras. The Monument will be located on the Virginia state capital grounds. Significance will be assessed within the context of what was customary for a woman to have achieved or contributed in the context of the particular time, place and circumstances in which she lived and worked. Consideration will be given to representation from each century of Virginia history and each region of the state, and to the full range of backgrounds from which women came and the many of the fields of endeavor in which they were involved. Nominees must have been deceased for 10 years. The Museum Council is seeking nominees who were residents of K&Q. The deadline for submission is March 31, 2016. If you have a nominee, please contact the Museum by January 31, 2016. However, you may also submit a nomination directly to the Commission by calling (804) 786-1010 or online via <http://womensmonumentcom.virginia.gov/>.

The "Newington" Daylily, a hybrid developed by Dalton A. Parker, a Lumpkin descendant of historic Newington, is a rare lavender-orchid color with yellow highlighted throat and ruffled petals. Mr. Parker sells specimens for \$25 each and contributes the proceeds to the K&Q HS. Checks may be sent to Mr. Parker at 222 Willow Winds Dr., Columbia, SC. 29210

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Who Speaks For the River

On October 25th the King and Queen County Historical Society meeting was held on the banks of the Mattaponi River at historic Whitehall, a handsome brick mansion built before 1780. The group was welcomed by current owner Mrs. Margaret (Peg) Babyak. Ms. Dori Babyak Chappell and Mr. and Mrs. Randy Shank spoke about the importance of the Mattaponi River, noting ways to protect it. The presentation was in three parts. Randy Shank, retired from Virginia Polytechnic Institute with experience in water quality projects for the Chesapeake Bay, talked about the uniqueness of the Mattaponi River and its contribution to the ecology. He conveyed that it is a 100 mile long treasure with some wild life and vegetation that is not seen anywhere else in the state. Because of the rural nature of the surrounding counties, its banks are relatively undeveloped. It is one of the cleanest rivers on the east coast and deserves “watchmen” to protect against unfettered development and pollution. Dori Chappell told the “David and Goliath” story of the City of Newport News’ proposal to siphon water from the Mattaponi to a reservoir it would create in King William County. The battle to prevent this lasted 20 years, but through ingenuity, unity, determination, and persistence the “local residents” finally won. She summarized how the river has been used in the past and how it is used today. Through pictures and anecdotes she related how three generations of the Babyak family have used the river as an attraction for their boys camp and recreational venue, and for personal enjoyment. Dawn Shank, retired from the VA Department of Conservation and Recreation’s Public Communications Office, discussed how citizen involvement in resource management efforts, education, and conservation issues helps to protect the river. She covered the mission and activities of the Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers Association (MPRA), an organization dedicated to the protection of the Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers region’s natural resources. More detail can be found on their website <http://www.mpra.org/>



Whitehall from the Mattaponi River.

Then and Now: “Real” Butter

To me “real” butter, especially on hot homemade biscuits and yeast rolls is better than any sweets. In today’s supermarkets there are numerous varieties from many places, near and far. It can be mind boggling to make a selection. In the recent past butter has been much maligned as clogging your arteries, but with the “going organic” movement, opinions are changing. My mother made butter from milk fresh from the cow. The fun part was separating the cream from the milk using a manual separator inherited from my grandmother. The milk would be poured into a large bowl atop a contraption with many, many parts and a crank was turned forcing the milk to filter through them. The cream was extracted and flowed from one spout and the skim milk from another spout. The kids loved cranking that machine because the result was almost instant. On the other hand cranking the paddles in the glass circular churn of cream until butter appeared was extremely tedious. It seemed to take forever. After the butter formed, Mother would add some salt and use a butter mold to form the butter “blocks.” There was only one flavor, but everyone loved her butter. She even gave some to her “city” friends as Christmas presents.

A butter mold from Eastern View and displayed at the Museum is shown on its side to emphasize the pattern that was imprinted on the top of the butter “block.”



Welcome to Tales from the Tavern, a communication to friends of the King and Queen Courthouse Tavern Museum and members of the King and Queen Historical Society.

Picture Wanted

Do you have a photograph of Exol Church or know where one may be located? It was recently discovered that the picture given to the Historical Society and filed in the Museum archives is not that of Exol Church, one of the earliest Baptist churches (1775) in the county. A 1972 *Bulletin* article noted that photographs existed in the 1940s.

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Help us provide better, less expensive and more immediate communications by sharing your email address. Newsletters by email and online are in color.

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