



Tales from the Tavern

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

Spring 2020

Message From the Historical Society President

This has been a most unusual time for all, with so much of our daily lives disrupted. Due to the State's continuing COVID-19 restrictions, the Museum continues to be closed and quarterly Historical Society programs have been cancelled - and may be for the foreseeable future. As discussed elsewhere in this newsletter, celebrations related to the founding of the Courthouse Tavern Museum twenty years ago will be postponed to 2021.

As you read this newsletter, it should also become clear that work continues on many fronts by your Museum and Historical Society volunteers to support and promote the history of King and Queen County. Understanding the county's rich history and residents' lives at different turning points helps us understand who we are, the context in which people led their daily lives, their trials and challenges, and who we have become. Despite having its doors closed, the Museum continues to field research requests and work on archiving new artifacts. Your annual dues also help pay for web service, postage and printing, as well as new or updated Museum exhibits. The downtime has enabled some needed cleaning, painting, and archiving. Members receive Historical Society communications such as this newsletter and the "Bulletin". Annual scholarships have again been awarded to King and Queen County students bound for college.

Soon you will receive a new issue of the "Bulletin" and your annual dues reminder. Annual dues, which remain at modest levels, and any additional gift that you may generously provide, is used to support Historical Society and Museum activities to educate, inform, and record King and Queen County history. Amidst the tumult of current events, understanding our history becomes even more important to provide context and perspective. Since before the American Revolution, county residents in their different circumstances have lived through many challenges and turbulence, be it economic, political, health, or security. A sampling of these is included in this newsletter. Stay safe and well.

Cynthia Carter, King and Queen County Historical Society President

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THE KING & QUEEN COURTHOUSE TAVERN MUSEUM REMAINS CLOSED

The continuing health crisis and public safety guidelines makes it imperative that the Museum remain closed until further notice. When the time comes to welcome visitors again, a notice will be placed on the website, in social media and in the newspaper.

Historical Society Awards 2020 Scholarships

by Biddy Walker



Ms. Dayshelay Evans



Ms. Mihaughany Redd

The King & Queen County Historical Society annually offers a \$2000 scholarship to each of two new graduates of King & Queen Central High School for the first year in a college, university, or technical school. The 2020 recipients are Ms. Dayshelay Evans and Ms. Mihaughany Redd. Dayshelay is valedictorian of her class and will attend William & Mary. She received a William & Mary Scholars Award. Mihaughany had an outstanding academic record and plans to attend the University of Mary Washington. These students along with all the seniors at Central High School are to be congratulated for overcoming the unprecedented issues that disrupted the final months of their senior year. A modified commencement ceremony will be held outside on the Central High School football field on Friday, July 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. It will be structured to ensure that the latest CDC and state guidelines for safety will be followed. We wish these students success as they move into the next stage of their lives!

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More about the 1918 Pandemic in King & Queen County

by Biddie Shelor

More on the experience of King & Queen County residents during the 1918 Pandemic has been found. *Land and Heritage in the Virginia Tidewater: A History of King and Queen County* by Barbara Beigun Kaplan, Ph.D. states “King and Queen and the surrounding counties all suffered too. Edith Robinson remembered that the black doctor Fred Brown came down with the flu right along with his patients and that her father had to walk to Dr. Brown’s house to get the needed medicine for her own family. William Todd Henley recalled that schools in the county were closed during the height of the epidemic. He remembered many deaths occurred in the neighborhood at that time. Elvira (Sutton) Henley, then a very young child remembered that her ill sister had been moved into her mother’s bedroom down stairs so that she could be more closely watched. Louise Eubank Gray attested that the local doctors worked to near exhaustion trying to minister to the sick. When everyone in the Eubank household, including Louise’s parents, fell ill with the flu, her cousin Martha came in to nurse the family.” The Museum would appreciate more on experiences of county residents during this time.



Tavern Museum Before Renovation

The Courthouse Tavern Museum Turns 20

At the very beginning of the twenty-first century The King & Queen Courthouse Tavern Museum opened. Its founders were a small group of determined and dedicated King & Queen County Historical Society members who took a concept and a building that needed serious renovation and within 2 years developed

it into a state of the art museum featuring the history of King & Queen County. A newspaper reporter noted that it was a “hidden gem” within the rural countryside. The founders collaborated with King & Queen County and Commonwealth of Virginia representatives regarding funding and resources. Designating the area on which the museum was to be located as the Courthouse Green Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places was key. Individuals from all backgrounds in the county participated in the development of the museum. They went to school (conferences) to learn how to create and maintain an effective and inviting museum. They connected with foundations to seek grants, patrons to obtain funds for certain renovations or exhibits, contractors for building renovations, consultants to create exhibits, and other museums to learn how to create exhibits and manage a museum, including establishing and managing a docent team. They reached out to county residents using an “Antiques Road Show - King & Queen Style” approach, seeking ideas and artifacts for exhibits. When the museum was opened, the building housed three floors of exhibits, a library, an office, a kitchen, a special changing exhibit room and storage rooms. The signature exhibit was

“Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness” - nine panels depicting the history of the county. A description of the Court House Green Historic District and a display of the tavern building history were also included. In keeping with the tavern theme, four rooms were decorated to represent various tavern activities: a tavern style dining room where visitors met and ate, a parlor where the owner met guests, a bedroom where travelers stayed pre-electricity, and a bedroom with early electrical appliances.

The “Council” had just gotten started and over the years achieved much more. A company was engaged to produce videos displayed on kiosks throughout the museum to inform visitors as they toured. For background an overview of county history was also filmed using local residents as the actors. The next video project was that of producing a video history of 60 older county residents. Periodically, new (temporary) exhibits were created for the “Changing Exhibit Room”; such as quilts made in the county, vintage ladies clothes, western African art and artifacts, and the Ivor Noel Hume Bottle Collection. Additionally, new permanent exhibits were created as space became available. Three buildings were added to the museum campus: a 1870s log school house was moved over 20 miles to the campus, a “carriage house” was built to hold a carriage used in the county for over 100 years plus other exhibits, and the clerk’s office used for the Historical Society archives was renovated and exhibits displayed in new cabinets. Books were added to the library. A website, facebook page and quarterly newsletter were created. A holiday open house became an annual tradition. Development of a strong relationship with the county schools became a priority and now includes: special visits tailored to fit the visiting students, bringing certain exhibits into the classroom, introducing new teachers to the museum, and having dinner for the school board annually to share experiences. Custom tours were also tailored for groups.



Caption: l-r: Front row: Terry Ammons, Betty Gwathmey, T. Abigail Collins, Janet Averill & daughter, Caroline Jones; Second row: Nancy Hazzard, Nancy Herman-Thompson, Rev. Robert Brown; Top row: Minor Trevillion, Jack Spain, Ellen White, Nannie Taylor

The Museum Council wishes to acknowledge that the Museum would not exist except for the special efforts of the “founders” Jack Spain, Betty Gwathmey, Caroline Jones, Temple & Anne Ryland, and the original volunteers

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Minor Trevilion, Ellen White, T. Abigail Collins, Rev. Robert Brown, Nancy Herman-Thompson, Linda Barnes, Nannie Taylor, Nancy Hazzard, Janet Averill, Sally Walker, Allison Stoneham, Gwynn & David Litchfield, Chief Anne Richardson, Jo Ann Wright, Marge & Ted Clark, Kay Grahl, Rev. Fred Holmes, Jr., Mary Linton, John Jones and Sue Walter. In addition, the Council recognizes the contributions of Steve and David Norman who managed the construction for the renovation of the tavern building; Terry Ammons who was the architect for the tavern construction drawings and the design, development and installation of the initial permanent exhibits; Marian Minor who gave the log schoolhouse; Brownie and Chris Bevan who were instrumental in the move and placement of the log schoolhouse and the construction of the carriage house; James Kelly from the Virginia Historical Society who provided guidance on best practices for use of artifacts, the many generous patrons who funded the renovations and exhibits, and the many dedicated volunteers who have given their valuable time during these first 20 years.



Celebrating the Opening of the Museum

2020 was to be a year of celebration with multiple events. Unfortunately due to the health crisis these are being delayed. Future plans will be published as they are known.

Celebrating Emancipation

Information contributed by Nannie Taylor

On September 22, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring “that all persons held as slaves” within the rebellious states “are, and henceforward shall be free.” However, it applied only to states that had seceded from the United States, leaving slavery untouched in the loyal border states. It also expressly exempted parts of the Confederacy (the Southern secessionist states) that had already come under Northern control. Most important, the freedom it promised depended upon Union (United States) military victory. Therefore, the emancipation of the slaves was celebrated annually in many parts of the United States on varying dates - representing the time that the area was permanently under Union control. The last notification of freedom was in Galveston, Texas on June 19, 1865 and is the basis for the recent reference to Juneteenth as an official day of celebration.

Even within the Commonwealth of Virginia the date of the emancipation celebration varied. The book *Uprooted and Transplanted: From Africa to American, Focus on African-*

Americans in Essex County, Virginia, Oppressions--Achievements--Contributions, The 1600s-1900s by Essex educator Lillian H. McGuire and published in 1999, provides some local insight to celebration. “The Third of April”, six days before the surrender of the Confederacy to the Union, became the date for celebration in Essex County as it represented the capture of Richmond by the Union army, signifying that the emancipation proclamation was really in effect. For at least 75 years and more, starting in approximately 1877, ex-slaves and their descendents held an emancipation celebration in Tappahannock, VA, attended not only by Essex County residents but those from surrounding counties, including King & Queen. Between 1939 and the late 1950s the event was planned and organized by the “Celebration Club” which had a twofold purpose: (1) to celebrate the emancipation of the Negro, and (2) to foster the educational and civic advancement of Negro people in Essex County. Ms. McGuire states, “the fete included floats and marching bands (some from as far away as Richmond and Harrisonburg). Drill teams performed and flags waved. Horses, mounted by skillful riders, pranced down Prince Street, which was lined with hundreds of celebrants who had come to celebrate the occasion of being ‘set free.’ Some years, Essex County’s schools were closed, local merchants closed their shop doors for the day, and town officials extended a welcome to the celebrants. They came in the early years by horse drawn buggies, wagons or by foot. Then as years passed, they came by busses and cars. To sustain the physical needs of the celebrants, tables or stands with food and soft drinks of many varieties lined the streets, set up by various groups or organizations. Water barrels were placed in various locations, and portable restrooms were appropriately stationed. Order was kept via the empowerment for the day of certain Negro citizens to act with the authority of policemen. The highlight of the day was an address by a notable black personality, which was delivered at the courthouse.”

Recollections by Dr. B.B. Bagby provides an additional description: “On this day (during the late 19th century) the Negroes from all over Essex assembled to celebrate the fall of Richmond, or “Emancipation Day.” They were dressed in their best clothes and walked up and down the street for several hours in the morning, following a band and also a company of soldiers. After the parade, all assembled in the Court House, where the leading citizens, white and colored, addressed the crowd. At night there was a play at one or both of the colored churches.”

Public School Artifacts Sought

The King & Queen public school system began in 1870 with one or two room school houses for grades 1-7 located throughout the county, usually within walking distance of a community. Records indicate that over the history of the school system there have been at least 52 schools. Some schools were merged with others. Buildings were expanded or new larger buildings constructed. In the second and third decades of the twentieth century high schools were added. Today there are three schools, two elementary and one high school. The Museum is creating an exhibit on the development of public schools in King

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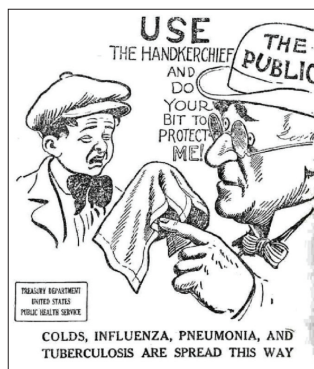
& Queen County. If you or your family has pictures (buildings, student groups, activities, etc.), papers (notices, report cards, certificates, diplomas, programs, etc), or items (such as lunch boxes, awards, trophies, memory books/yearbooks, sports equipment/apparel, books, etc) for any of the schools in the county prior to 1965 that you will share, please contact the museum at history@kingandqueenmuseum.org. We will make digital copies of pictures and paper items and discuss temporary use of other artifacts. We are excited about this exhibit and welcome interest from all about the history of the county.

HOW DID WE LIVE WITHOUT IT?

The Forgotten Handkerchief

by Nancy Herman-Thompson

Not too many years ago, everyone carried a cloth handkerchief. Men carried a white handkerchief in their pocket for coughs, sneezes, blowing their nose, or a bandanna was used to wipe a brow or face. Ladies kept hankies in their apron pocket or up their sleeve while at home, but a starched fancy hankie was usually found in a pocketbook. Children had their own bandanna that could be used for tying up treasures or securing lunch hobo-style. The disposable alternative is a facial tissue known simply as a 'tissue' or by the trademark name of "Kleenex"



which popularized the invention and its use. In 1924, facial tissues were first introduced by Kimberly-Clark as "Kleenex." It was invented as a means to remove cold cream. Early advertisements linked Kleenex to Hollywood makeup departments and sometimes included endorsements from movie stars such as Helen Hayes and Jean Harlow who used Kleenex to remove their theatrical makeup with cold cream. It was the customers that started to use Kleenex as a disposable handkerchief.

A few years after the introduction of "Kleenex", the company's head researcher (with hay fever) tried to persuade the director of advertising to market the tissue for colds and hay fever. The director declined the idea but then committed a small amount of ad space to mention of using Kleenex tissue as a handkerchief. By the 1930's, Kleenex was being marketed with the slogan "Don't Carry a Cold in Your Pocket," and "The Handkerchief you can Throw Away," and its use as a disposable handkerchief replacement grew. Sales doubled in the 1930's. Other companies entered the disposable facial tissue market like Puffs, Scotties, and Angel Soft but the name Kleenex became synonymous with facial tissue.

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