

Tales from the Tavern

For Friends of the King and Queen Courthouse Tavern Museum and Members of the King and Queen County Historical Society
 Winter 2012-2013



Leftwich Family Group Visits

In October 2012, 70 plus members of Ralph Leftwich's descendants came to King and Queen County to remember their forebears. Coming from all over the United States, they were celebrating their 21st Family Reunion in Williamsburg, VA. The Leftwich descendants belong to the Leftwich Historical Association which publishes an annual newsletter *The Leftwich Herald*. As part of their reunion festivities, they traveled to King and Queen Courthouse Tavern Museum. Their ancestor, Ralph Leftwich, had on August 10, 1658 patented (obtained title to) 300 acres in the part of New Kent County that is now in King and Queen County. King and Queen was created in 1691 from New Kent and Gloucester Counties. The patent was located on the Exoll Swamp. To get to his land, Ralph Leftwich would have traveled from the Chesapeake Bay up the Piankatank River to the Dragon Swamp and then to the Exoll Swamp.

The Leftwichs were provided copies of a map developed by researchers at the Museum showing the likely location of the original Leftwich patent on a modern U.S. Geological Survey map.

Legal Description for the Patent reads: *As described in Patent Book 4, Page 184 / 272, Dated 10 August, 1658, 300 Acres. Beginning at a marked corner tree on John Pigge's line,*

West-Northwest ¼ degrees, 170 Poles to two corner red oaks, North-Northeast, 320 poles, thence East-Southeast, 170 poles joining with John Pigge's land, South-Southwest ¼ degrees, 320 poles, ends at the place where it began. Land is located on branches of Peanketank (Swamp).

The two busloads of the Leftwich family arrived at King and Queen Courthouse Tavern Museum at 10 a.m. and were greeted by Page McLemore who provided tours of the Museum. The group also toured the other buildings in the King and Queen Courthouse Green Historic District. Susan Gresham, member of Immanuel Episcopal Church, discussed the history of the quaint, historical Church with the group.

The group traveled to Mattaponi Baptist Church where they had lunch and learned the significance of that site. Mattaponi Baptist Church occupies the building that once was the Lower Church of the Anglican St. Stephen's Parish during the colonial days. Roberta Jones, Courthouse Tavern Museum docent, was instrumental in arranging the lunch and visit at the Mattaponi Baptist Church.

The group then visited the approximate site of the original Leftwich patent, near the community of Crouch, VA, on Route 617 on the Exoll Swamp near Stevensville, before returning to Williamsburg. It was a full, informative, enjoyable day.

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Throw (48" x 68") with pictures of Early King and Queen Schools Available from Historical Society. Schools in black and white or green and white. \$25, plus postage of \$7, and sales tax of \$1.25 if mailed to VA. Send check to King and Queen Historical Society, P. O. Box 129, King and Queen C. H., VA 23085

Tales from the Tavern

Ivor Noel Hume Bottle Exhibit

The Ivor Noel Hume bottle collection is owned by Frank Hurst of Newington Plantation in King and Queen County and is on loan to the Museum for two years. The bottles in the collection date back to 1650. Because the shape of the bottles have changed over time, they help date artifacts that are found in archaeological digs. The exhibit also includes (1) Noel Hume's own written comments on the significance of each bottle and (2) a video presentation Noel Hume specially filmed at the museum for this exhibit. Artifacts from the Newington Plantation archaeological dig are also part of the exhibit.

Courthouse Tavern Museum Hosted 2012 Holiday Open House

The sixth annual old-fashioned Holiday Open House was held on Sunday, December 2nd from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. for the community. The Museum was decorated inside and out by the docents for the Holiday Season. There was a special story-teller on hand for the children and grown-ups, alike. Guests inside and out enjoyed delicious Yuletide refreshments, including homemade donuts and caramel popcorn made in an open kettle over an open fire outside. There was special holiday music to bring the spirit of the holidays to the community. Brownie Bevan provided a small pony and cart for rides. Wallace Mahanes was the Santa Claus elf for all the young ones, holding court in an old sleigh.

Historical Society Meeting Features Taylor & Caldwell Cannery

October 28th, 2012, the 4th Qtr 2012 meeting of the King and Queen Historical Society, was also the weekend that Hurricane Sandy passed by the coast of Virginia. As a result, the meeting location and tent overlooking the Mattaponi River on the site of the Taylor and Caldwell Inc vegetable cannery in Walkerton, VA needed to be changed to an inside venue. Mizpah Church, located nearby, graciously provided use of their sanctuary. Many thanks to Pat McLemore and Bin Trice who stood outside in the rain to re-direct the guests from the original site to the new one. In spite of the weather, the meeting was well attended. Page Owen McLemore and Ben Owen, IV, were guest speakers sharing family stories and photos involving their grandfather, Henry P. Taylor, and the Taylor & Caldwell Inc, Vegetable Cannery that remained in operation from 1921–1959. Many former employees attended the meeting and shared their experiences surrounding the cannery, as well as their activities in Walkerton after each payday.

The Walkerton boat ramp today is an active summer place. Boat trailers carrying speed boats and jet skis fill the parking area of the lower landing while kayakers and canoeists prefer the quieter upper landing. Fishermen use the landing in all seasons and duck hunters find the access convenient in winter. The scene was still busy, but distinctly different sixty years ago when the landing was the site of the vegetable cannery owned by Taylor and Caldwell, Inc.

Canning season began in Spring with early peas and ended in September with black-eyed peas.

The area was a bustling workplace for many men and women all summer long processing butter beans and corn, as well as peas. Fed by the harvest from nearby farms, the factory produced canned goods that were trucked to markets in Maryland, D.C., North Carolina and throughout Virginia.

Taylor and Caldwell owned several properties in the Walkerton area, most located in King and Queen County. Besides the cannery itself, the company owned farmland, warehouses, and workshop sites. In order to increase the supply of vegetables produced by the independent farmers who were contracted to deliver their own crops, they rented farmland and had farmers who worked directly for the company. Bad weather and market conditions coincided to convince the company's board of directors to cancel the 1960 canning season. 1959 was the last year the cannery operated.

The Stansbury Canning Company originally built a factory on the site in 1908. Henry P. Taylor, a Richmond native, worked for Stansbury for the 4 years following his graduation from the University of Virginia in 1914. He returned to Walkerton in 1921 to purchase the cannery. His partnership with C.C.Caldwell began in 1926 and in 1930 the corporation was formed and the new factory built. All in all, Henry P. Taylor, was associated with the Stansbury and Taylor and Caldwell canneries for a period lasting for more than 40 years.

Museum Sponsors Trip for Endowment Donors

On October 25th, 29 donors to the King and Queen County Historical Society Endowment Fund and their guests ventured to historic Mount Airy and Menokin Plantations. It was a beautiful day for a special visit arranged by the King and Queen Courthouse Tavern Museum. The Endowment Fund supports the activities of the Museum.

Since Mount Airy and Menokin, both near Warsaw on the Rappahannock River in Richmond County, are close to King and Queen County, the participants car pooled and were met at Mount Airy by Mrs. Catherine Emery, the wife of the present owner, John Tayloe Emery, and his uncle Gwynne Tayloe. They are both direct descendants of John Tayloe II, who built Mount Airy around 1758, and whose descendants have owned the house since that time. Mrs. Emery gave the group a personal and informative tour of the house, including the grand hall, library, dining room and bedroom. The furniture and portraits have belonged to the family and been in the house for years. A point of special interest was the extensive array of family portraits. Following the tour of the house, Gwynne Tayloe and Mrs. Emery gave a tour of the gardens, leading to a visit at the family cemetery where Francis Lightfoot Lee and his wife, Rebecca, are buried. Lee was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence from Virginia.

The plantation had been in the Tayloe family for over 100 years when John Tayloe II built the house, one of the first of stone in Virginia and the first in the style of a Palladian villa with outbuildings connected to the main house. It is both a Virginia Historic Landmark

on the National Register of Historic Places. When Francis Lightfoot Lee of Stratford Hall married Tayloe's daughter, Rebecca, Tayloe gave them land a short distance from Mount Airy and built Menokin for them. Francis Lightfoot and Rebecca lived at Mount Airy during construction of Menokin and then moved to Menokin. They had no children and are buried in the Mount Airy Cemetery.

After saying good-byes to Mrs. Emery and Mr. Tayloe, the group headed to Menokin just a few miles away. After the death of Lee and his wife, Rebecca, Menokin left the family and for some years in the 20th century was unoccupied and fell into disrepair, resulting in the roof collapsing. The curators say it is not a 'ruin', because it never burned, but it is a 'collapsed building'. It is now owned and actively cared for by the Menokin Foundation which has built an open roof to protect the house and an exhibit building for artifacts and information, including video histories.

The King and Queen group had box lunches at the exhibit hall that had been ferried there by Howard Walker, Chairman of the Endowment Fund, directly from Scott's Store in Walkerton, King and Queen County.

After lunch the director of the Museum gave a talk with a film on the history of Menokin and then led a tour of the building holding the identified pieces of the house. Much of the interior woodwork of Menokin had been removed and stored before the roof collapsed. Over 80% of the structure has been recovered. The present plans are to rebuild part of the building with glass and plastic, so colonial construction methods can be displayed. The director then led

the group through the house where wooden stairs and walkways have been constructed so the visitor gets a feeling of the complete house before the collapse. Around 3:00 pm, the group headed back to King and Queen County and their places of origin, having had an enjoyable and fact-filled day.

The Endowment Fund has over 400 donors since its creation. Donors are located throughout the United States.

New Teachers Tour the Museum

Eight new King and Queen County teachers and their mentors for the 2012 – 2013 school year were guests of honor for a special meeting and tour at the Courthouse Tavern Museum in August..

2012 Suppers

The Museum hosted the School Board of King and Queen County for supper on Oct 17th and the Board of Supervisors on Nov 13th. Many thanks go to Sally Walker who organized and coordinated the preparation of the home-made meals prepared by Museum members.

Become a VOLUNTEER

The Museum needs Volunteers to be Docents to welcome visitors, show the Museum and explain exhibits. It's a great way to use your spare time, to meet and work with wonderful people and to expand your knowledge of the County. You will be helping to keep the Museum open to the public 3 days a week, Fri, Sat, Sun-----Pick your day each month.

Staff will train you in Museum operations. The Museum is equipped with up to-date technology.

Curious about your family history? The Library has many books on King and Queen family genealogies. Check out the gift shop for a unique gift for someone special.

If need more info on this opportunity to provide a service to your community, please call 804-785-9558 & leave a message. Any help you can provide will be greatly appreciated.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Historical Society 2nd Qtr Meeting.....04/28/13
Historical Society 3rd Qtr Meeting.....07/28/13
Historical Society 4th Qtr Meeting.....10/27/13
Christmas Open House.....TBD

Museum Hours

March until Mid December
Friday and Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Sunday 1:00 p.m.– 5:00 p.m.
Closed Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day

King and Queen Courthouse Tavern Museum Newsletter

Contact information for
Museum and membership
applications for Historical
Society at:

PO Box 129
King and Queen C.H., VA
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Phone:
(804) 785-9558
eMail:
kandqmuseum@hughes.net

or
Visit us at:
www.kingandqueenmuseum.com
www.kingqueenhistsoc.com

Welcome to the third issue of *Tales from the Tavern*, a newsletter to bring news to you as a friend of the King and Queen Courthouse Tavern Museum and the King and Queen Historical Society.

Sylvia Hamilton Hutt, Editor

eMail: Do you have an eMail address? It is much easier (and much cheaper) to contact you if you have an email address that you watch every couple of days. Please send your eMail address to
kandqmuseum@hughes.net

Exhibits At the Museum:

- 1. Bottle Collection Exhibit
- 2. Sundial Exhibit

Historical Society.

2nd Quarter meeting, April 28, 2013
3:00 p.m., Shackelfords Chapel UMC,
3727 Buena Vista Road, Shackelfords,
VA

Speaker: Michael Hild, Owner of
Anderson's Neck Oyster Company
Topic: Growing Oysters in King and Queen
County

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