Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia’s “Dine Out Night” at O’Charley’s

Want to help us raise funds and enjoy a great meal? Well, O’Charley’s in Chester will donate 10% of the total of your meal to the Chesterfield Historical Society. All you need to do is join us on Tuesday April 17th from 4pm to 8pm and purchase food and/or beverage. O’Charley’s is located at 12301 Bermuda Crossroads Lane (next to Home Depot on Route 10). You just may meet a new or an old friend. For further information contact Nick Gordzelik, General Manager of O’Charley’s at (804) 751-9250.

CultshaXpo – You Are Invited June 23!

As a member of Richmond Cultureworks, the Society will participate in CultshaXpo June 23 at the Science Museum of Virginia. All visitors that day will be given Cultshabucks to spend or donate to the more than 50 participating cultural, performing arts and other non-profit organizations. At the end of the day the organizations exchange Cultshabucks for real money. Visit our booth to donate or purchase items. Live performances will occur throughout the day, and many door prizes will be won by attendees. Learn more at www.cultshxpo.org.

April Quarterly Meeting

Sunday April 22nd 2pm

Fuqua Farm 8700 Bethia Road off of Winterpock Road

Please join us for our Spring Quarterly Meeting and a private tour of historic Fuqua Farm, located south of Swift Creek Reservoir on a hill above Dry Creek. Owned by Michael and Sherry Seckman who have painstakingly restored the property over a period of ten years. The original one-room portion with a sleeping loft dates to the late 18th century and is described as “one of the earliest and most substantial one-room plan dwellings recorded in Chesterfield,” by O’Dell. Oral tradition states that the farm has been in the Fuqua family since 1803. Sherry Seckman is a seventh generation Fuqua; her father grew up on the property and her grandmother lived there until the mid-1970s. In 2000, the Seckmans began to research its history and restore the home, replicating the materials and the methods of construction used when the home was first built. They even managed to acquire the original farm bell that had been sold at auction in 1962. The home sits on a 23 acre parcel which includes a graveyard. In 2007, Fuqua Farm received historic land-mark designation thereby ensuring that this beautifully restored home remains a permanent fixture in Chesterfield. Please join us for this unique opportunity to look inside a 200-year-old Chesterfield farmhouse! The event is free and refreshments will be served. Please bring a lawn chair!

Mission Statement

The Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia serves as the center for Chesterfield County history. Its purposes are to collect, preserve, interpret and promote the county’s unique past for the education of present and future generations.
From the President -

Recently many of you contacted our county elected officials on behalf of our Society in regard to the threat of reduced funding for our part-time staff next year. It worked! This kind of volunteering shows real dedication to our mission. What a wonderful response.

“I’ve never been inside before but always wondered what was in here—it’s beautiful.” “I’m new to gardening but this encouraged me to give it a try.” “This is a magnificent home, it should be preserved.” New members of the seed exchange have been very excited about Castlewood and the exchange itself. A very promising venture has begun for CHSV. Have you noticed raised seed beds to the left of Castlewood’s entrance? Soon we will see heirloom veggies and flowers.

Chesterfield County has hired John D. Watt to be Tourism Project Manager working through Chesterfield Economic Development. Mr. Watt has been working for the Commonwealth in tourism capacities. He hopes to locate businesses within Chesterfield using tourism culture as part of the “business” of the county. I am looking forward to showing him around our facilities in early April.

Have you been to the Ettrick area of Chesterfield County recently? Virginia State University (VSU) is expanding so there are many changes to be seen now and to come later on East River Road and on Chesterfield Avenue. Your society has an intern from VSU working on a history of one of the historic houses on Chesterfield Avenue which has in the past been called “Summer Seat.” According to Jeffrey O’Dell (Chesterfield County: Early Architecture and Historic Sites, p.64) its name came from its possible use in the 19th century as “the seat of the local magistrate during the summer.” There were places for a courtroom and a detention center for persons awaiting trial. It was used as a home in the 20th century and was last used as an antique store.

After its very successful and worthwhile “Fourscore and More II” exhibit the County Museum will open “Childhood 100 Years Ago” on Saturday, May 5, which is also the date of our Colonial Market Day to be held on the grounds of Castlewood. Please be there.

The digging and rebuilding of Route 10 at Beach/Lori Road will leave us with new traffic patterns. The County has been very good about making it possible for everyone to get around. Don’t let what you see going on keep you from visiting our sites and bringing your friends and visitors to see us. Stop in, say “hi,” visit the gift shop at Magnolia Grange. The support of our members has been superb. Thanks to all of you.

Claire Wagenknecht

From the Messenger editor – please e-mail by June 10 any submissions you would like to see in The Messenger to lipowic21@verizon.net. Your stories, research, and photos are all welcome. If your submission is handwritten or typed, please provide to Diane Dallmeyer.

There is no issue #74 of The Messenger. The issue was published, but it was numbered #75. This happened in 2005. Issue #75 was just four pages. I took a look at it and decided that I could help out. I have been editing The Messenger starting with issue #76.

A few years ago, a young volunteer named Alex Mait scanned each issue of The Messenger from 1 to 75. What a great help that was! Now we have all the issues on the computer for future generations.

Finally, did you know that The Library of Virginia and the Virginia Historical Society index The Messenger? That means that if you are an author of a Messenger article, your name will appear as an author in their catalogs. You will be an official contributor to Virginia history. What a nice surprise for your grandchildren to learn one day.
An Opportunity to Recapture the Oral Histories of Our African-American Elders

Sarah Gregory and Audrey M. Ross

On February 5, 2011, the Chesterfield County Museum opened its doors to the African-American History Committee’s (AAHC) Black History Month exhibit entitled FourScore and More: Capturing Memories of aged 80 and Older African-Americans in Chesterfield County and their Struggles and Successes Experienced. This article is a continuation from the January 2012 issue of The Messenger.

Louise Permillia Friend – Friend

Born December 15, 1914

Louise was the oldest of three daughters born to Junius Lee and Lucy Cogbill Friend, in Chester, VA. When Louise was four, her mother passed away in the 1919 flu epidemic. Louise’s two aunts came to look after the young sisters until their grandmother was able to take over their care. When she reached school age, Louise’s grandmother held her back until her sister, Ruby, was old enough and both girls could make the dangerous trip together. Each school day they took a streetcar to Petersburg, and then made the long walk to the school. They attended Virginia State Training School on the Virginia Normal School campus. In 1925 Louise’s father remarried and the family moved to Pennsylvania where he worked in the coal mines. In December of that year Louise and her sister moved to Philadelphia, where they returned to school while living with their aunt, Virginia Robinson. Louise attended a women’s vocational school where she learned dressmaking. At age 17, Louise returned to Chesterfield and began domestic work for the Wheelwright and later the Reed family. In 1935 she married James B. Friend (no relation) and together they had 3 sons and a daughter, eventually becoming grandparents of 8 and great-grandparents of 9. While raising her family, Mrs. Friend managed the Chesterfield Motel, worked for the Bellwood General Defense Supply Agency and also completed her Associate’s degree in Education. She worked as a teacher’s aide, for Chesterfield County Public Schools, retiring in 1980. Louise has been an active member of the PTA, the Home Demonstration Club, the Black Chesterfield County Fair, King David’s Lodge, and an adult leader for 4-H. Gardening has been her main hobby; she grows beautiful vegetable and flower gardens. She received special honors from the Garden Clubs of Virginia in 2007. Mrs. Friend has taught Sunday School, been a Missionary Leader, and held many other positions at the First Baptist Church Centralia. In December 2010, her congregation acknowledged their appreciation for her many years of service to both church and community.

Geraldine Olivia Foster Gray – Friend

Born February 14th, 1926

Geraldine was born on Valentine’s Day in the Hallsboro neighborhood of Chesterfield, to Eunice Foster and Robert Graves. She attended Dry Bridge Elementary School at the junction of Old Hundred Road and the old Southern Railroad tracks. Due to the lack of busing, students walked to school. To begin the day, the boys chopped firewood for the classroom’s potbelly stove. As things warmed up, they read a Bible verse to lead their studies. All the children brought lunches from home, but on occasion the teacher would make a pot of beans or soup. When Geraldine entered the fifth grade, she attended the three-room Midlothian Elementary School. In 1938 busing was finally supplied for this school, with Mr. Bentley as the driver. For two years she attended Hickory Hill High School even though it did not have busing. She had to quit due to family needs. Around 1946, she obtained work as a domestic for various local families working 5 hour days for just 50 cents. She always gave her mother half of her pay. Geraldine moved to Richmond and continued working in this area making $8 per week. Her workdays consisted of cooking, cleaning, and doing laundry from 6 am to 8 pm, with only a half day off on Thursdays and alternating weekends. In 1950 she married Harvey Gray; they returned to Hallsboro in 1954. In 1961, they moved into a new home, where she still lives today. Mrs. Gray is a lifelong member of Mount Sinai Baptist Church, where she was baptized at age 12 by Rev. Manning. She has faithfully served in many capacities including Pastor’s Aide, as a member of the Usher board, and as part of the Missionaries and senior ministries. She is the mother of three, grandmother of six, and great-grandmother of three.

Ruth Harris Greene – Friend

Born February 16, 1920

Ruth was born February 16th, 1920 in Hallsboro, VA to Charles and Frances Pemberton Harris as one of their sixteen children. She grew up enjoying a very typical lifestyle, in a two story house on Old Hundred Rd. in Midlothian. She walked to Dry Bridge School on Old Hundred Road, a one-room schoolhouse where morning classes were for lower grades and the upper grades met in the afternoons. The schoolteachers, Jessie Branch, Emma Mosby, Mary Smith, and Pearl Mints, all of Richmond, boarded nearby during the school year. After her seven years at Dry Bridge she was unable to attend Hickory Hill High School, because Chesterfield did not offer busing and it was a 20-mile trip. Ms. Greene remembers a happy childhood where the family worked and played together. The girls did household chores such as cleaning and laundry, while the boys chopped wood, cared for the livestock, and worked the family vegetable garden. Ms. Greene also helped in harvesting produce from the garden. Fun times were playing baseball with her siblings or checking under a shade tree. Food came from the bounty of their garden, and the chickens, cows, and pigs they raised. Ruth has fond memories of Aunt Till who came to live with them after she retired in 1935 from her job as a housekeeper for the Watkins family. Mrs. Greene’s father also worked for the Watkins at their Nursery. The Harris family attended Mount Sinai Baptist Church in Hallsboro, which had a very positive influence on Ruth’s life. Reverend George W. Manning baptized her at age 12 in the church pool and later performed her marriage to the late Chappelle Greene in 1947. The Greenes became parents to 2 daughters, Patricia Mersiers and Brenda Green. Mrs. Green now has two grandsons and remains active at Mt. Sinai Baptist Church.
John Benjamin Harris

John Benjamin Harris was born in Kingsland area of Chesterfield, Virginia in 1927. While growing up in Chesterfield County, he attended Kingsland Elementary School, walking to school every day. He rode a bus to attend D. Webster Davis High School on the Virginia State University campus. His classes focused on “reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, and hygiene.” At that time in his life, there were no community centers in his area; however, he participated in 4-H and Boy Scouts though his church. During his academic years, schools were segregated. While in elementary school the students and teachers had to provide their own heat and water, and they had to use outdoor latrines. Likewise, they had to pay for extracurricular activities. When he attended high school, the segregated black students were bused far beyond the white schools to the campus of Virginia State University. He enjoyed attending Virginia State Trade Center, where he had the opportunity to learn the barbering trade in conjunction with his regular academic studies. Mr. Harris went to college at Virginia State University and received a BS degree in Business Administration and an MBA in Marketing and Management from New York University. He worked as Public Relations Director and Professor of Economics at Virginia State University from 1955-1965. He then taught Management and Marketing from 1968-1996 at the School of Business. Mr. Harris has since advised three governors on economic development and is a member of the Masons. He is also a member of the Masons, and became the first Chairman of the NAACP of Chesterfield County. He was employed with Richmond Beneficial Life Insurance Company in Petersburg for 37 years. The Masons have been happily married for 65 years.

Membership Report

Rachel Lipowicz

Membership stands at 651. This quarter we welcomed 47 new members. Mr. & Mrs. Robert A. Andersen (Mary), The Baker Family (Claude, Maria, Daniel & Jacob), Mr. & Mrs. David Beem (Carol), Mr. Haskins R. Bell, Dr. Glenn Crawford, Mr. & Mrs. Michel Debaets (Lucylyle), Mr. Mark Doss & Ms Kimberly Keene, The Elliott Grays Chapter 1877 Library, Mr. Robert Forman, Mr. & Mrs. Marshall Henry (Susan), Mr. & Mrs. Frank D. Hotz (Jacquelyn), Mr. Dennis Hudson, Mr. Christopher Lonon, Ms. Lori Norton & Mr. Courtney Wells, The Pastore Family (Dominick, Christine, Dominick, Lucia, Nina & Vincent), Mr. Phil Pedlow, Ms Jeannine Reynolds, Mr. & Mrs. Randy Ridgely (Carolyln), Mr. Paul Snead, The Sturm Family (Rory, Beth & Cheyenne), Mr. & Mrs. Chris Sweet (Nanette), Ms Lorna Swenson, Mr. & Mrs. Leslie Thysell (Gloria), Ms. Elinor Uhrig, Mr. Randall Welch, Mr. & Mrs. Bill Wise (Inez), Mr. & Mrs. Michael Young (Alice). The Membership Committee reminds members to check their mailing label. If the date in the upper right hand corner reads 12/31/2011, your membership has expired. To keep receiving The Messenger and other benefits of membership, please remit your dues. And thank you to all of our Business Members: Colonial Honda, Shoosmith Bros., Martins Grocery Stores, Ms. Sandra R. Claytor CPA, Express Auto Center, Howlett’s Tavern, Old Stage, and Patient First.

Library Committee Report

Liess van der Linden-Brusse

In 2011, our Society's Library at Castlewood welcomed 212 local and national visitors. They came from California, Ohio, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Arkansas, Indiana and Iowa, to name just a few states. Each walked in with a request for information, each left with a deeper knowledge of Chesterfield County. Our dedicated Library volunteers contributed 2,007 hours. At the current rate of $22/hour (per the Bureau of Labor Statistics), our volunteers donated the equivalent of $44,154 to collect, preserve, promote and interpret the history of our county. Thank you! Thank you! Here’s how we accomplish the many projects in our research library: David Jensen continues to index the Title Deed Abstracts, a valuable collection of more than 2,000 files filled with details of property ownership and transactions dating back to the late 1800s. As documents, books and maps are donated or acquired; Donna Siebold accession these items into our collection, acknowledging donations and establishing the necessary records and index data. Our Vertical Files, which contain information on people, places and events in Chesterfield, is maintained by Doug Blake.

Last year, Jeanette and Roy Hamilton agreed to take on the huge task of updating our Picture Collection which had been accumulating dust since 2005. Roy also undertook the challenge to photograph every structure (still standing) that is described in Jeffrey O’Dell’s book Chesterfield County Early Architecture and Historic Sites!

Assisting patrons with research requests on virtually any topic is an important task provided by Jerry Rudd who, despite recent ill health, has returned to his post in our library. Genealogical research is provided by Ley Diller who somehow manages to find extra hours in each day to continue her in-depth research of the original landowners of Pocahontas State Park.
Throughout last year, Patty Watts managed to provide research input on a number of library projects in addition to her many commitments on our Events Committee.

Since 2009, our Veterans database has been completely overhauled and updated by Mike Thomas who, together with Peter Lipowicz, edited Chesterfield County Virginia Veterans last year. This 65-page publication contains information on more than 6,260 Chesterfield veterans. Mike and his wife recently moved out of state and they will be sorely missed. Meanwhile, we are in need of a volunteer who will continue the great work Mike has done on our Veterans Database. This is an on-going project.

Earlier this year, we welcomed a new volunteer, Gloria Thysell, whose first project was to inventory four boxes of the Atkins family papers donated last fall.

In closing, we would like to remember Gwen Coalter who passed away on January 29th. Gwen was a charter member of our Society and served as a Library volunteer for 25 years. Her knowledge of the history of Chesterfield County was unparalleled. Thank you, Gwen, for your dedication and for sharing your love of history with all of us. We miss you.

Our Library always needs volunteers; please call Liess (804)937-0737. Thank you.

Native American Bone Tools in the Museum
George Cranford

Our newest acquisition is a set of Native American bone tools. Bone tools are mostly utilitarian, and seldom have a significant monetary value. Sometimes it is very hard to tell what a tool was used for unless you can actually recognize what its modern day equivalent would look like. The true value of these tools is what they tell us about the way people were making a living and the jobs they were doing in those long ago times. This exciting new donation is from Sharon Walls, a Native American who works at the Jamestown Settlement Indian Village. I enjoy Jamestown and learn something new on each visit. On one of my recent trips there, I stopped to watch Sharon making bone tools. She would stop her work long enough to explain to a visitor the purpose of a certain tool – a needle, an awl or a knife. My eight-year-old grandniece visiting from Chicago was so enthralled with the tools before her that she had more questions about the tools than I could answer. Sharon smiled at my little niece and began explaining each tool and its purpose. As I watched her skilled hands wearing down a portion of bone, my eyes became fixed on a completed set of tools she had on display. This set contained sewing needles, awls, a fish hook, pins, and scrapers, all wrapped in a round piece of deer skin. We spent a long time at this display and before leaving I asked Sharon how much would a similar set cost if she would make one. I told her that I was a volunteer with the Society. She offered to make a set for our museum in memory of her deceased Chesterfield friend, Darrel W. Coley. I accepted her offer. That was this past summer and the tools arrived in January. The set she made for our museum is bigger than the one she had on display and I was even more thrilled to get these. They made a nice addition to our Native American exhibit. You can see these on display in the Chesterfield Museum. A lot of time and work went into the making of the tools and I am so grateful to Sharon for her gift to us. If you are ever in Jamestown, stop by her display at the Jamestown Settlement Indian Village. Listen to her story of the tools of the Native Americans. It is quite a learning experience to see such tools made into useful items fashioned from animal bones.

Heirloom Seed Exchange Grand Opening
Patty Wells

February 2 was indeed a busy day at Castlewood because of all the people that crowded the Ballroom seeking seeds for their gardens from the Heirloom Seed Exchange’s Grand Opening. That day alone, 64 gardeners became the first members. For most of the members this was their first visit to Castlewood and were in awe of our beautiful building and were doubly happy to procure their seed bounty. Since the Grand Opening, the Heirloom Seed Exchange membership has grown to 113 members. The event was not only well attended by gardeners from many walks of life - handymen, farmers, school teachers, office workers, retirees and waitresses but also a representative of the University of Richmond Culinary Department seeking Heirloom seeds for special repasts that he serves. Ms. Evans, a reporter for the Progress Index, was also in attendance taking photos and interviewing attendees and staff. It was indeed a chaotic but very gratifying day for all involved. Ms. Evans wrote a great article that conveyed the enthusiasm, excitement and activity that happened during the Grand Opening. We have been blessed with much publicity in five local newspapers that did seven stories on our efforts. The Seed Exchange has procured over 2600 seed packets. While giving away approximately 870 seed packets was quite extensive, that has only put but a small dent in our inventory. So if you are interested in gardening in pots or in your yard, stop by on a Thursday soon to gather up your share of these wonderful old heirloom varieties of vegetables, herbs and flowers to delight your senses.

Four Score and More Part II
Glenda McEachern

The exhibit opening took place at the Chesterfield County Museum on February 4, 2012. The African-American History Committee spent countless volunteer hours orchestrating the exhibit of artifacts, pictures and conducting interviews. The interviews told the stories about the dauntless African-American men and women, all over the age of 70, on how life was in Chesterfield County as far back as the 1920s. One interview was with Rev. Turner who will tell you, “I’m 89 and feeling fine.” He also stated “we didn’t know what poor was, and we were happy, life was good back then.” The matriarchs established businesses, worked on farms, raised children, taught in the public school system, provided military service and a host of other occupations. As Ms. Hattie Mae Trent Carter stated, “I wanted to be a nurse, but I didn’t like to see people die, so I first began to work at the Tobacco Company.” Although segregation still existed in Chesterfield County and across the nation, these citizens did not allow negative words and actions delay them
from achieving the American dream. Today, you will find many of them active within their community and local churches. The Committee invited Rev. Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker, a valiant contributor and instrumental in the fight against apartheid and leader of civil rights movements, to be a guest participant. Dr. Walker was born on August 16, 1929 in Brockton, Massachusetts. Dr. Walker drew the plan for desegregation of the "Birmingham movement. He was one of the key architects of the 1960-64 civil rights campaigns and a chief strategist for Rev. Dr. Martin King, Jr. As a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated, Dr. Walker graduated Magnum Cum Laude from Virginia Union University with a Bachelor's degree in Chemistry and Physics. He also graduated Summa Cum Laude with his master's degree in Religion. Rev. Walker continued to pursue his education by receiving his Doctor of Divinity degree from Colgate-Rochester Divinity School. Although Rev. Walker was a Pastor at the Gillfield Baptist Church in Petersburg, Virginia, he always maintained his position within the civil rights movement. He was arrested 17 times in efforts to open doors for African-Americans in order to share the same rights and liberties as all Americans. Dr. Walker held the position as the Urban Affairs Specialist of the State of New York under Governor Rockefeller. Rev. Walker was the Pastor of Canaan Baptist Church, in Harlem for over 37 years and he is currently the Pastor emeritus. He has 27 published books, and has written numerous letters which some are located in the digital archives of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Non-Violence Social Change. Dr. Walker now resides in Chester, Virginia with his lovely wife Theresa Ann celebrating 61 years of marriage. They have four children and two grandchildren.

Confederate Marines and Chesterfield County

Don Gardner, Major General, USMC, (Ret)
Chesterfield natives are very familiar with the Battle of Drewry’s Bluff, when a Federal flotilla attempted to storm forcibly past the Confederate fort and “on to Richmond”. The Federals retreated after a stiff battle. The capital city of Richmond was never seriously again threatened by a naval force.

Key to this effort was the Confederate James River Squadron and the land and water defenses on the Drewry’s Bluff precipice eight miles south of Richmond, commanded by Commander Ebenezer Farrand, CSN. On May 15, 1862 Confederate forces included Army, Navy and Marine Corps units operating together to defeat the federal flotilla steaming upriver to force Richmond’s capitulation. The USS Colena was to receive the most damage, being hit more than 90 times. Corporal John Freeman Mackie was the first U.S. Marine awarded the Medal of Honor for bravery while serving on this ship. Two companies of Confederate Marines in rifle pits on the river bank volleyed heavy fire into the Federal ships making it dangerous to show yourself. Confederate casualties were light. The Southside Light Artillery, from Chesterfield County, saw considerable service in the battle, had none killed, but several wounded. The naval forces had 7 killed and 8 wounded. Following the battle Captain Sidney Smith Lee, CSN assumed command of the James River squadron and naval forces assigned to Drewry’s Bluff. He sought and received assurances from General Robert Edward Lee that he would not interfere with Naval Forces commanded by his older brother.

Over the next several years, Drewry’s Bluff was expanded into a major fortification, referred to by some as a “Southern Gibraltar”. The earlier fortalice was now a lethal barrier manned with 20 cannon, including rifled 32 pounders and three large Columbiads. It had become the base for the James River Squadron, the Confederate States Naval Academy school ship Patrick Henry and Camp Beall, home of the largest contingent of Confederate Marines in Virginia. Marine companies were stationed at Camp Beall for training and instruction. The Camp is named in honor of Lloyd James Beall (photo courtesy of The National Archives), Colonel Commandant of the Confederate States Marine Corps. He was a West Point graduate and both he and President Jefferson Davis served together in the 2nd U. S. Dragoons prior to the war.

After 1861, three companies were assigned to Camp Beall. From Drewry’s Bluff Marine detachments were trained and deployed to Navy Yards in Manchester and Rockettes very near Richmond. Other Marines were transferred to Naval Squadrons in Wilmington, Charleston and the James River. One company was stationed at Savannah to provide detachments for the ships of the Savannah and Mobile squadrons. The remaining company in the regiment served as the depot and replacement company. Having Confederate Marines in Chesterfield required Recruiting Officers to be assigned and it was not usual to see advertisements in the Richmond Daily Examiner and Petersburg Express encouraging enlistment.

During the war Marines deployed from Camp Beall and served on the high seas aboard the best known of Confederate Navy ships and commerce raiders, including the Sumter, Alabama, and Tallahassee. Other Marines under Captain Reuben T. Thom, CSMC (photo courtesy of Ralph W. Donnelly), had served with distinction aboard the CSS Virginia off Hampton Roads on the night of May 9-10, 1862.

The Marine Battalion at Camp Beall in the fall of 1862 moved from tents into barracks constructed by the Marines prior to the onset of winter. Secretary of the Navy Stephen R. Mallory on January 3, 1863 visited Chesterfield to see the new barracks. The Confederate Marines turned out under arms and their officers in full dress. By now the Camp included families, a chapel, post-office, Masonic Lodge, gardens and a small hotel. A steamer made round trips daily to Manchester and Rockettes. The Confederate Marine Corps maintained a guard at each Navy Yard under the command of a Company Officer. Lieutenants David Bradford, Nathaniel E. Venable of Prince Edward County, John S. Van de Graff, Samuel M. Roberts and Henry H. McCune commanded this guard between September, 1863 and September, 1864. The usual size of the guard was one sergeant, several Corporals and 22 Marines.
As the Chancellorsville Campaign developed in May, 1863, Major Francis W. Smith’s artillery battalion assigned to Drewry’s Bluff, including the Johnston Heavy Artillery, with men from Dinwiddie County, where send to Richmond to reinforce the defenses. This included a number of Confederate Marines who manned picket lines protecting the rear and flank of Lee’s army from attack by Union Brigadier General George Stoneman’s cavalry. Brigadier General Fitzhugh Lee’s Confederate cavalry brigade successfully broke up the flanking raid. For the remainder of 1863 Confederate forces at Drewry’s Bluff capably served as the Northern anchor to Richmond-Petersburg sector.

By mid-May, 1864 the Confederate Marine Battalion stationed at Drewry’s Bluff was fully engaged in repulsing General Benjamin F. Butler’s threat from Bermuda Hundred. The Confederate Marines under Major George H. Terrett, of Fairfax County, skirmished with small arms and supported by artillery, assisted in driving off the attack. Major Terrett and First Lieutenant Francis H. Cameron (photo courtesy of The National Archives), CSMC, took an active part in the battle to protect a break-through of the Petersburg-Richmond line.

The Confederate Marine Battalion was given a special operations mission in June, 1864. This important mission involved the planning and execution of an amphibious raid from Wilmington, N.C. to Point Lookout, Md., freeing Confederate prisoners of war. This raid was to coincide with General Jubal A. Early’s march toward Washington. Only a great deal of hard fighting forced Early to retreat back into Virginia cancelling the Marine raid near launch time. Another special operation involved a special boarding party designed to capture Federal ships in Charleston Harbor. The last of these daring operations was an attempt by a small overland torpedo expedition to attack Grant’s supply base at City Point. The expedition was betrayed and almost captured in February, 1865. These special missions were very dangerous, yet were planned and carried out carefully, although unsuccessfully. More impressive, was the prolonged defense of Fort Fisher, N.C. in December, 1864 and January, 1865. This was one of the few times the two Marine Corps fought each other in land combat. The Corps of Marines continued to be active near Augusta, Georgia and at several Navy Yards and stations. The Confederate Congress on four occasions extended the “Thanks “ of the Congress for Hampton Roads, the CSS Sumter, Drewry’s Bluff and “cutting out the USS Underwriter.”

The Confederate sailors and Marines were later assembled at Drewry’s Bluff from Charleston and Wilmington under command of Captain John R. Tucker, CSN. Then organized into the Naval Brigade and on April 2, 1865 the brigade joined the retreat from the Richmond-Petersburg line towards Appomattox Court House. Much fighting remained as the Confederate Marine Corps exhibited courage and elan in their strong resistance at Sayler’s Creek on April 6, 1865. Finally, Captain John R. F. Tattnall paroled two junior officers and 14 enlisted Marines, along with Major and Paymaster Richard T. Allison on April 28, 1865 at Greensboro, N.C. By the May 10, 1865 all Confederate Marines had ceased fighting.

The Confederate Marine Corps was established by the original Act for the Organization of the Navy of March 16, 1861. It was to consist of six companies and a battalion staff, totaling 22 officers and 662 Marines. Following Fort Sumter and the secession of the Upper South the Confederate Congress enlarged the Corps on May 20, 1861 to a full infantry regiment with a staff and compliment of 46 officers and 944 Marines. The extra officers and NCOs were to provide for small detachment deployment. The Corps never reached it authorized strength. After the first year it averaged 542 enlisted Marines. There were 56 officers commissioned during the war. One Army officer served briefly with the Corps. Nineteen former U.S. Marine Corps officers joined the Southern Corps. While 11 Confederate Marine officers were born in Virginia, none were from Chesterfield County. Most were from Northern Virginia, Alexandria, Fairfax, and Fredericksburg.

Lieutenant John D. Fowler (photo courtesy of the Fowler Family), CSMC was from Goochland County. His life was spent in Perry County, Alabama, where he enlisted in the 4th Alabama Infantry in April, 1861. He was badly wounded at First Manassas and was visited on the battlefield by President Davis. The President promised to promote him for his service. Young Fowler was discharged from the Army and he recovered at his family home in Goochland. Lieutenant Fowler was commissioned in the CSMC on October 26, 1861 and assigned as a recruiting officer at the Gosport Navy Yard in Norfolk. After Norfolk fell Lieutenant Fowler fought with Company B and their sharpshooters. He died from his earlier wound at “Tuggles,” the family home in Goochland on August, 1862.

Another regional officer was First Lieutenant Everard T. Eggleston (photo courtesy of the Austin Public Library) of Amelia County. He was from a distinguished Virginia family from near Malvern Hill, Mr. James Powell Cocke, and also a cousin of Confederate General Joseph E. Johnson of Cherry Grove, Georgia. Following enlisted service in the 1st Infantry Battalion of Louisiana, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel N.H. Rightor and Fenner’s Battery, commanded by Captain Charles E. Finner, he completed his enlistment in May, 1864 and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the C.S. Marine Corps. His Marine Corps service included Drewry’s Bluff, Wilmington, N.C. as member of Point Lookout, Md. Expedition to free P.O.W.s.

Afterwards Eggleston joined the CSS Fredericksburg on the James River for some very hazardous duty. He departed the Richmond area as a member of Admiral Semmes’ Naval Brigade. First Lieutenant Eggleston was paroled at Greensboro, N.C., on April 28, 1865. After the war he removed to Texas, dying in 1885.

The Confederate Marine Corps recruited Marines for 4 year enlistments of regular service. It was difficult to compete with the better pay and shorter enlistments in volunteer units. As a result, the Marine Corps never reached authorized strength. In April, 1862 the Confederate Congress passed acts of conscription. This made it very difficult to recruit except for those too old to be drafted. Therefore the Marine Corps found it necessary to accept conscripts.

Seven Chesterfield men are known to have served in the Confederate States Marine Corps. Their service records were extracted from Service Records of Confederate Enlisted Marines compiled by Marine Corps historian Ralph W. Donnelly:

ARCHER, JAMES RICHARD Company B Private enlisted Richmond August 6, 1864 - Assigned: Navy Yard Richmond; Marine Guard on Schooner Galleio; Company B, Nov.-Dec. 1864 Paroled at...
Manchester, Va. April 27, 1865 and permitted to go home in Chesterfield County. Born: Chesterfield County, Va. Age: 18 in 1864; 5 feet 8 inches; blue eyes; dark hair; fair complexion; occupation: student

GOODE, WILLIAM DANIEL Company B Private enlisted Richmond September 13, 1864 Assigned to Camp Beall, Drewry's Bluff Paroled at Manchester, Va. April 26, 1865 Age 21 in 1864; hazel eyes; dark hair; dark complexion; occupation: farmer Born in and resided in Chesterfield County, Va.

HALL, HENRY BRIDGEWATER Company C Private enrolled Camp Lee, Richmond, March 17, 1864 Assigned to CSMC April 22, 1864 Transferred to Company B; Marine Guard on Schooner Gallego; Marine Guard Navy Yard Richmond, Nov.-Dec. 1864 Born: Chesterfield County, Va.; Age 29 in 1864; 5 foot 5 inches; blue eyes; dark hair; light complexion; occupation: tobacco inspector; married

PEMBERTON, JOHN HENRY Company A Private enlisted Richmond June 15, 1864 Assigned to Camp Beall Deserted December 25, 1864 Born: Chesterfield County, Va.; Age 25 in 1864; 5 feet 6 inches; dark eyes; dark hair; dark complexion; occupation: soldier

RUDD, ROBERT WESLEY Company B Private enlisted Richmond September 1, 1864 Assigned to Camp Beall December 31, 1864 Born: Chesterfield County, Va.; Age 23 in 1864; blue eyes; dark hair; dark complexion; occupation: student

VAUGHAN, RICHARD HOLT Company B Private enlisted Richmond August 6, 1864 for the war by Lt. N.E. Venable Assigned to Schooner Gallego, Company B, Sep.-Oct. 1864; Marine Guard at Navy Yard Richmond, Company B, Nov.-Dec. 1864 Paroled at Manchester, Va. April 27, 1865 Born: Chesterfield County, Va.; Age 18 in 1864; 5 feet 5 inches; blue eyes; dark hair; florid complexion; occupation: student

THOMAS, WILLIAM HENERY Company B Private enrolled Camp Lee, Richmond, July 10, 1863 Assigned to CSMC February, 1864; Marine Guard, CSS Virginia, July, 1864; Returned to Camp Beall February 18, 1865 Paroled at Manchester, Va. Born: Manchester, Va.; Age 20 years, 7 months in 1864; 5 feet 5 inches; black eyes; dark hair; dark complexion; occupation: armorer. Consent to enlist given by John Thomas, father, February 24, 1864

The demand for Marines continued throughout the war, as did recruiting and conscription. It is unlikely the CSMC ever exceeded 600 Marines at any given time. Yet approximately 1200 enlisted Marines’ names appear on the rolls during the course of the war. Not counting officers, 74 Virginians are known to have enlisted. Seven of these were born in Chesterfield or Manchester. No other Virginia county did more. The Confederate States Marine Corps was a small permanent force of the armed forces of the Confederate States. Although small, it has a proud history. These lesser-known stories are also a part of Chesterfield’s rich history.

Sources


The Search for the Manchester Diamond
Peter Lipowicz

I first read about the “Manchester Diamond” several months ago while perusing Weisger’s book about Manchester. A laborer named Benjamin Moore found a diamond while working at the corner of Ninth and Perry Streets in Manchester. Of course, this area was Chesterfield County at the time. Diamonds are rarely found in Virginia, as the conditions to form them do not exist in the state. But what made this particular diamond so special was that it turned out to be about 24 carats. It is one of the largest diamonds ever found in the United States, and a rare diamond by any standard. It was sold to Captain Samuel Dewey, of Philadelphia, for $1500. That’s how it got its other name, the “Dewey Diamond.” Later, it was sold for $6000 to a boxer named John Morrissey, also known as “Old Smoke,” who went on to become heavyweight champion. After his boxing career was over, Morrissey served two terms as in Congress representing his home state of New York. He also owned a number of gambling houses and was rather a notorious figure. He was involved in the Tammany Hall scandal. Morrissey was the last known owner and the diamond has not been seen since he died in 1878.

The diamond itself, though large, had a number of flaws. When it was cut, the final gem was 11 carats and off color. So it’s monetary value was not great. What remains of the Manchester Diamond today is a glass replica. Various sources have reported it at the Peabody Museum in New Haven, Connecticut. I wanted to see a modern photo of the replica so I contacted the Peabody Museum. After some emails back and forth with a curator there, it was determined that the Peabody Museum never had a glass replica. So I contacted the Smithsonian Institution. Eventually, I confirmed that it was there but I could not get a photo. But it turns out that photos of the diamond replica are online at http://collections.si.edu/search/results.jsp?q=dewey+diamond. I have reproduced one here that shows the diamond to be just about the size of a dime. The other shows the diamond held between two fingers. When I first saw it, the Smithsonian website said the diamond was found at the Virginia-North Carolina border. I couldn’t leave that alone. I contact a staff member there who agreed to correct the record.

Court Order Book 8  December 1788
Angie Wilderman

Page 188  Ordered that the Court adjourn till Court in Cowise, Signed Geo. Robertson

At a court held for Chesterfield County on Thursday the eleventh Day of December one thousand seven hundred and eight-eight. Pres.t: John Batte, David Pattison, Creed Haskins, and Edward Moseley Gentlemen Justices.

The last will and testament of Robert Gill deceased was proved by the oath of James Gill a witness thereto and continued for further proof and on the motion of Daniel Dyson an executor named in the said will he gave bond and took the oath as the law requires.

A power of attorney from James Frasure to David ____ was proven by the oaths of John Bair and John Grayson Witnesses thereto and was ordered to be recorded.

A deed from Francis Lockett Senior to William Branch was acknowledged by the said Lockett and ordered to be recorded.

Samuel Davis coming into court and producing his commission appointing of him notary publick for the District of Petersburg gave bond and took the oath as the law directs.

John Rudd Pltf vs Thomas Rudd Df] Ejectment... On the motion of the Plaintiff a Commission is granted him to take the deposition of Aaron Fargis a Witness de bono efee?.

Ordered that Thomas Bolling, Geo Woodson and Alexander Marshall or any 2 of them do settle the account ___ of Stephen Cocke Executor of Thomas Batte deceased also his Account as Guardian of Elizabeth C. Batte and Richard Baugh Batte.

Page 189  Anne Beasley making choice of William Hatcher for her guardian. He thereupon gave bond as the law directs.

Ordered that Frances Eppes, Geo. Evans, Creed Haskins and Francis Goode or any three of them do settle the accounts of the executors of Geo Worsham deceased and make report to this court.

Ordered that Peter Talbott, Jordan Anderson, Francis Patram, William Hill and James Moody or any thee of them do appraise the estate of John Elam deceased they being first sworn for the purpose and return and inventory thereof to court.

A deed from John Brown and Ann his wife to Edward Bass was acknowledged by the said John Brown and also by the said Ann she being privately examined and ordered to be recorded.

A Deed from Edward Bass and Judith his Wife to John Goode senior was acknowledged by the sd Edward Bass and also by the said Judith she being first privately examined and ordered to be recorded.

A Deed from Sarah Pilkington to Edward Loafman was further proved by the oath of Peter Rowlett a Witness thereto and ordered to be recorded.

A Deed from William ____ to Joseph Roper was acknowledged by the said William and also by Anne his wife, she being privately examined and ordered to be recorded.

The last Will and Testament of Phebe Farmer deceased was proved by the oaths of Robert Haskins and Elam Farmer Witnesses thereto and ordered to be recorded and on the motion of Henry Farmer an executor therein named who gave bond and took the oath as the Law directs. Certificate for having obtained a Probate thereof in due form is granted him.

Ordered that King Graves, Thomas Worsham Thomas Burfoot and James Baugh or any three of them do view the grounds proposed to turn the road on by Mary Blankenship and make report.

Ordered that Peter Talbott, Jordan Anderson, Francis Patram, William Hill and James Moody or any thee of them do appraise the estate of John Elam deceased they being first sworn for the purpose and return and inventory thereof to court.

A deed from John Brown and Ann his wife to Edward Bass was acknowledged by the said John Brown and also by the said Ann she being privately examined and ordered to be recorded.

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A Deed from William ____ to Joseph Roper was acknowledged by the said William and also by Anne his wife, she being privately examined and ordered to be recorded.

The last Will and Testament of Phebe Farmer deceased was proved by the oaths of Robert Haskins and Elam Farmer Witnesses thereto and ordered to be recorded and on the motion of Henry Farmer an executor therein named who gave bond and took the oath as the Law directs. Certificate for having obtained a Probate thereof in due form is granted him.
Robert Donald jr & company presenting a claim against the Estate of John Frith deceased due by Bond ordered that the same be paid agreeable to the Dignity thereof.

Page 191 Deed from John Cogbill, Geo. Robertson, Thomas Worsham and Jesse Cogbill to John Varnier was acknowledged by the said John Cogbill, Geo. Robertson, Thomas Worsham and Jesse Cogbill and ordered to be recorded.

On the Motion of Amey Evans Ordered that David Moor, John Parker, Joseph Vadin and William Dunivant or any three of them they being first sworn for that Purpose do lay off and Assign to the said Amey her Records? In the Personal Estate of her deceased husband Isham Evans.

Thomas Burfoot, Archer Bass and Bernard Markham Deputy Sheriff for Francis Goode Gentleman Sheriff of the County sworn to serve Returns Ordered that the same be certified.

A Deed from Joseph Watkins to James Ruchey was acknowledged by the said Joseph and ordered to be recorded.

On the Motion of Elizabeth Pankey Administration with the Will annexed is granted have on the Estate of John Kelshaw deceased on her giving Bond and taking the oath as the Law directs. The said Will being proved by Geo Nice? & Ann Branch to be recorded.

A Deed from Burwell Baugh to Betty Baugh was proved by the oath of George Robertson a Witness thereto and continued.

Ordered that David Pattison, John Fowler, Samuel Branch and Francis Smith or any three of them to view the Grounds proposed to open a Road on by Abraham Salle and make Report.

On the Motion of Thomas Trabue he is sworn Picher of Tobacco at the Inspection of Rockey Ridge Warehouses.

Marley Walthall making choice of William Walthall for his Guardian the said William thereupon gave Bond as the Law directs. Present Abraham Salle and Geo. Robertson Gen.t Justices

Caroline Walthall making choice of Edward Featherstone for her Guardian he gave Bond.

John Pride? Appointed Guardian to Sally Pride? he thereupon gave Bond as the Law directs.

Ordered that David Pattison, Francis Smith, James Scott and Walter Scott or any three of them they being first sworn for that Purpose do appraise the Estate of John Kelshaw deceased.

William Martin P vs Archer Broadie D) Commission granted the Pllff to take the Deposition of Thomas Williams.

Francis Goode Gentleman Sheriff of this County came into Court and complained of the insufficiency of the Jail.

Fundraising
Peter Lipowicz

I am pleased to thank our 90 donors who have collectively given over $7800 in this quarter. This is a record amount for the first quarter. Thank you for your generosity.

Donations of $500 or more Blue & Gray Education Society, Dominion Foundation, Altria, Chester Station Camp 1503
John Rolfe Donor $500 Christopher Longon
Donations of $100 - $499 Nina Thaxter in memory of Cecil F. Belcher, Mary Anne Locklear, Carol & Sam Moffett, Jerry & Julianna Hendrick, Anne & Samuel West. Brulun Assoc, Diane Dotsko in memory of Connie Ashman, Ryan Ripperton, SPARC, William Van Arnim, Ill, Bruce Bacheller, Betty Matthews, Mr. & Mrs. R.L Tatum, A.M. Hooper, Mr. & Mrs. William. Moore, Jennifer & Lawrence Brown, Jesse and Vanessa Crews

In Memory of Mildred Daffron

Start Practicing Your Swing!!
This year marks the 6th anniversary of CHSV’s Golf Classic at the Highlands sponsored by Modern Woodmen of America. The tournament will be held on Monday, October 1, beginning at 1 p.m. Save the date!
CHESTERFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA PRESENTS:

Colonial Market Day in 1780

Saturday, May 5
11 a.m.-4 p.m.
Historic Castlewood, 10201 Iron Bridge Rd., Chesterfield*

Experience the hustle and bustle of a typical Market Day in 1780.
Enjoy Colonial-era crafts, live music, demonstrations, games, costumed interpreters and living history re-enactments.
Food and refreshments will be available.
Admission: $4/Adult, $1/Child (3-12)
For more information call (804) 796-7131 or go to www.chesterfieldhistory.com

*Corner of Krause Road

PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT THE CHESTERFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA
The Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia
P.O. Box 40
Chesterfield, VA 23832

CHS Events Calendar

MAY
Thursdays, 10am-4pm Heirloom Seed Exchange (Castlewood) (804)768-0616
5th, Sat, 11am NEW Exhibit: “Childhood 100 Years Ago” (Museum) (804)768-7311
5th, Sat, 11am-4pm NEW! “Colonial Market Day in 1780” (Castlewood) Adults $4, Kids (3-12) $1 (804)796-7121
9th-12th, Wed-Sat, 11am-5pm Civil War 150th HistoryMobile (Central Library) Free
12th-13th, Sat-Sun, 10am-5pm Drewry’s Bluff 150th (Drewry’s Bluff) www.nps.org
15th, Sat, 9am-noon Genealogy Workshop (Castlewood) $10. (804)796-7003
19th, Sat, 10am noon Butler’s Offensive (Point of Rocks) $8. Register online PayPal
19th, Sat, 8am & 10.30am & 1pm “Civil War on the James” 2-Hour Boat Tours (Deep Bottom Boat Landing) $45. (804)938-2350
19th, Sat, 8-10pm Spirited History Tour (Magnolia Grange) $20. Register online PayPal

JUNE
8th, Fri, 1pm & 9th, Sat, 10am Heirloom Seed Seminar “How to Save Seeds” (Castlewood) Seed Exchange Members Only. Free. (804)768-0616
10th, Sun, noon & 2.30pm “Civil War on the James” 2-Hour Boat Tours (Deep Bottom Boat Landing) $45. (804)938-2350
16th, Sat, 11am-4pm NEW! “Grange Day” (Magnolia Grange) Free (804)796-7121
23rd, Sat, 10am-5pm “Cultsha Xpo: Arts & Culture Day” (Science Museum) Free
23rd, Sat, 8-10pm Spirited History Tour (Court House Green) $20. Register online PayPal

JULY
9th-13th, Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm “Diggin’ in History” Archeology Camp for Kids (8-12) (Castlewood) $95. Prepaid Registration Required: (804)796-7121
14th, Sat, 10am-2pm 1864 Bermuda Hundred Campaign Van Tour (Henricus Park) $15. Register online PayPal.
20th, Fri, 1pm & 21st Sat, 10am Heirloom Seed Seminar “Herbs – Growing, Preserving & Using” (Castlewood) $20. (804)768-0616
21st, Sat, 7-9pm Spirited History Workshop/Basic Techniques (Magnolia Grange) $10. PayPal
22nd, Sun, 2pm Members Quarterly Meeting (First Baptist Church, Centralia) Free
23rd-27th, Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm NEW Historical Archeology Camp for Kids (10-15) (Castlewood) $95, Prepaid Registration Required
28th, Sat, 8am & 10.30am “Civil War on the James” 2-Hour Boat Tours (Deep Bottom Boat Landing) $45. (804)938-2350