

# History of the Powhatan County Historical Society

A Historical Society in the County of Powhatan  
Commonwealth of Virginia  
United States of America

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## **Founding of the Powhatan County Historical Society**

In 1975, a pressing need to form a county historical society was recognized by Dorothy Cosby and Helen Lawton, two retired schoolteachers. “Don’t you think we oughta do something about . . .” Dorothy began in her inimitable way. They gave a luncheon at the Cosby home, Tuesday, January 25, 1975 with Mr. Elie Weeks of Goochland County as a special guest to explain the details involved in getting a society started.

Ten women from various areas of Powhatan County who had expressed an interest in forming such a society attended. Those present were Mesdames C. N. Elam, Charles Cella, Julian Binford, T. G. West, Louis Allen, J. G. Palmore, Taylor Smith, E. P. Hicks, C. F. Noble, and Miss Elizabeth Gills.

A second meeting was held on February 20, 1975 with approximately fifty persons attending. Officers and Board of Directors elected were:

### **Founding Officers**

Mrs. Dorothy Cosby	President
Mrs. Helen Lawton.	First Vice President
Mrs. Ruth Tilman	Second Vice President
Mrs. Vi Allen	Recording Secretary
Mrs. Drusilla Blanton	Corresponding Secretary
Mrs. Page Moncure	Treasurer
Mrs. Lucy Ann Cella	Historian

### **Founding Board of Directors**

Mrs. Drusilla Blanton	Mr. B. Hancock
Mr. Robert Cabell, Jr.	Mr. Elie Weeks
Mrs. Rachel Elam	Mrs. Lillian West

“The purpose of organizing a historical society is to preserve and present the history of Powhatan County. It is hoped that through the acquisition of manuscripts, printed source materials and artifacts relating to the county’s history, we can keep alive the county’s inspiring history.” These were the first goals set by the Society.

Under Dorothy Cosby's leadership, the Society worked with the Bicentennial Commission in preparing for both the bicentennial celebration held in July 1976 and the celebration of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Powhatan County in 1977. The society's main project was the sale of historical plates designed by Mrs. Mary Jane Stokes, a local artist. Proceeds from the sale helped finance the writing and publication of the *History of Powhatan County* by Richard Couture.

Between 1977 and 1980, the society grew under the leadership of Second Vice President Helen Lawton. The society's chief interest was helping Richard Couture to complete his research and writing of the county's history.

Highlights of the first years include the Bronze Plaque placed at Derwent, Robert E. Lee's post-war sanctuary; the printing of three calendars of homes, churches, and scenes in Powhatan for the Bicentennial Celebration; securing a Coat-of-Arms; and sponsoring many illustrious guest speakers at the Society's meetings.

## **Powhatan County Historical Society Mission Statement**

The Powhatan County Historical Society is dedicated to promoting the county's unique past for present and future generations through collecting, preserving, educating, interpreting, and researching our local history. Our broadest and most compelling objective is to use the lessons of the past to improve the life and vitality with the Powhatan Community.

We intend to do this through innovative programs and community activities to include:

- Tours
- Highlight historical sites
- Internet web site and cemetery research information
- Program speakers
- Publications
- Genealogy research
- Collections



### **Powhatan County Historical Center Formerly the Old Jail**

This building is located behind the courthouse in the village of Powhatan. The first mention of a jail in the village of Scottville, as Powhatan was known, was in 1778. A notice appeared in the Virginia Gazette, in Williamsburg. From the records, it appears that prior to this time a log structure may have been constructed, or an existing one was used for a 'gaol'. The Revolutionary War had taken most of the able-bodied men and there were not enough in the county to construct adequately a suitable building.

The earlier building was replaced by the present structure and used as a jail for 150 years. In 1951, it was remodeled for use as an office building, and in 1994, it was again remodeled, for use by the Powhatan County Historical Society as a museum, library, and office.



## **The Powhatan Courthouse**

The present courthouse is Powhatan's second, built on the original foundation in 1849. When the present Powhatan County was formed from Cumberland in 1777, the first session of the court was held in the Old Cumberland Courthouse, the home of Littlebury Mosby. It lies approximately 8 miles west of the courthouse on Route 60, and is known today as Mosby Tavern, the home of Dr. and Mrs. Donald Sanders.

The present courthouse community was selected for its central location and was named Scottville in honor of General Charles Scott, an important figure in the American Revolution, who was born in what is now Powhatan. Records suggest that the first courthouse was poorly constructed, unsuited to the needs of the court. It was replaced by the stuccoed brick building designed by noted architect Alexander Jackson Davis, and featured a recessed portico accented by Doric columns, a courtroom balcony and enclosed balcony staircases, which can be seen today. This courthouse was renovated in 1992.

## **Brief History of the County of Powhatan**

The County of Powhatan, Virginia, contains 269 square miles (172,160 acres) of undulating terrain due to the many bottoms and hills running from the main ridge that passes east and west through the center of the county. It is bounded on the north by the James River, which separates it from Goochland County, on the east by Chesterfield County, on the south by the Appomattox River, which separates it from Amelia County, and on the west by Cumberland County

Siouan-speaking Indians once dominated this valley. The first account of their settlements was recorded by the explorer John Lederer in 1670. On the twentieth of May, with twenty horses and five Indians, Lederer's party marched from the falls of the James River toward the Monakin village that stood twenty miles above, upon the south bank of that river, a journey of two days. "Near this village," Lederer wrote, "we observed a pyramid of stones piled up together, which their priests told us was the number of an Indian colony drawn out by lot from a neighbor-countray over peopled, and led hither by one Monack, from whom they take the name of Monakin." Here inquiring the way to the mountains, an ancient man described with a staff, two paths on the ground: "one pointing to the Manocks, and the other to the Nahyssans."

A full description of this exploration can be found in Clarence Walworth Alvord and Lee Bidgood's book *The First Exploration of the Trans-Allegheny Region by the Virginians, 1650-1674*, Cleveland, The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1929. Location: The Library of Virginia.

These two ancient paths remain. The first drawn upon the ground to point to the Manock village became the 1700s path that the French refugees, the Huguenots, followed to their new home in the Colony of Virginia. Today this old Indian path located in the east end of Powhatan is named *Huguenot Trail*, Route 711.

The second path the old Indian drew that pointed to the Nahyssans led cross country to the Peaks of Otter in the present Bedford County. Remnants of this *Old Hunting Path* can be found winding around present U. S. Route 60. The most important stretch is the Old Buckingham Road, marked as Route 13 that passes through the county seat at Powhatan Courthouse Village.

Many Americans are descended from the first group who settled here at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The National Huguenot Society of the Founders of Manakin in the Colony of Virginia keeps alive their memory. This society owns a small library that is housed in the parish house of the old Manakin Church located on the Huguenot Trail. On their roster are listed descendants of Abraham Salle, Jacob Amonet, Anthony Tribue (Trebue), Abraham Soblet (Sublett), Peter and Stephen Chastain, Francis Flourney, John Peter Bondurant, Matthew Agee and John Martin.

Following the arrival of the French Huguenots, others came to claim land beyond the falls, but not because of religious persecution. These were Tidewater planters who needed new lands for their tobacco crops. Up the James River and Appomattox corridor came planters who had purchased small tracts of land, up to four hundred acres for fifty shillings. Many were former indentured servants - artisans and craftsmen - men who had their passage to the colony paid by another in return for their skills as coopers, blacksmiths, cordwaingers (leather tanners) and carpenters. Among this group of people were John Burton; Warham and Robert Easley; George and Bartholomew Stovall; Robert and Ashford Hughes; Richard Parker; the Cox brothers: Nicholas, Henry, George, Frederick and Matthew; John Tabor; Richard and Benjamin Mosby; John Woodson; James Pleasants; Peter Jefferson; John Arthur and Henry Hatcher.

The larger planters usually identified as *Gentlemen*, patented thousands of acres in this region. Such gentlemen were William Byrd III, Col. Francis Eppes, William Mayo, Henry Cary, Thomas and Richard Randolph, Capt. Bowler Cocke, John Bolling, Henry Anderson and others. Usually these gentlemen resided at their Tidewater seats and placed their "upcountry quarters" under the management of overseers.

## Political Formation

The political formation of Powhatan was precipitated by a long pattern of “inconveniences” that accompanied up-country settlement. Getting to court was difficult.

When all the land was Henrico shire during the seventeenth century, Varina was the county seat. It was located on the north bank of the James River, east of present Richmond. For those who settled beyond the falls, a trip to court meant a journey by horseback that lasted several days and was difficult because of the many streams and the river that had to be crossed.

By 1728, the first petition to form a new county was presented to the legislature. The petition was granted. Goochland County was formed of all the land above the fall line, indefinitely west. The land was separated into two parishes: all north of the James River became Northam Parish, all the land south of the river became Southam Parish.

By 1748, settlement had so thickened south of the James River, the inhabitants presented a new petition to the legislature . . . “to cross the river to attend court at which is present Maidens,” the petitioners pleaded. Their request was granted and all of the land south of the James comprised of Littleton and Southam parishes became a new county called Cumberland. The seat of government sat in session at Mosby’s Tavern near Deep Creek, a structure still standing at the corner of Old Tavern Road and U. S. Route 60.

By 1777, however, the climate of Virginia as well as twelve other colonies had changed. The colonies were at war with Great Britain. Again, a petition was presented: “whereas many inconveniences attend the inhabitants of Cumberland by reason of the great extent . . .

Be it therefore enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia. That from and after the first day of July next, the said County of Cumberland be divided into two distinct counties by the line which divided the parishes of Littleton and Southam, and all that part of the said county which lived in the parish of Littleton shall be one distinct county and retain the name of Cumberland, and that all other part thereof which lies below the said line, including the whole parish of Southam and part of the parish of King William be called and known by the name of Powhatan.” Hening, The Statutes at Large IX:322-323.

A seat of government central to the new division was set on Ligon’s land at the head of Fine Creek. It was to become the town of Scottville, the present Powhatan Courthouse Village.

## The County of Powhatan’s Name

Powhatan County burst forth from the first acts of the Virginia Commonwealth in 1777 as fiercely as the first shot was fired at Concord, Massachusetts. *Powhatan represented* a name as far removed from former practices of naming places as possible. The legislators were determined to renounce any suggestion of allegiance to England, members of the royal party or places. The most awesome of names came to mind - that of the most fierce warrior Powhatan, who, numerous times, had resisted the incursion of the English settlers upon the shores of his mighty river, so named in his honor - the Powhatan - that river which today we call the James.



## **Powhatan County Historical Society Today and Annual Activities**

Today, more than twenty-seven thousand citizens call Powhatan County home, and although we continue our many rural traditions, we are becoming increasingly more of a suburban community. Like the ancient Indian colony, John Lederer discovered in 1670 in the present east end, “. . . a lot from a neighbour-country over peopled, and led hither by one Monack...” Powhatan’s *thickest* settlement remains here.

Much of Powhatan’s population increase is a result of homes in subdivisions, built on once agricultural land. A retirement complex, Scottville, has been built in Powhatan village. Housing development continues to burgeon.

Throughout the county are many small businesses and major industry inches ever closer. The first traffic light in the county was installed in the Flat Rock area in 1993, and a second one was installed at the intersection of Routes 60 and 522 in 1994. The first fast food restaurant in the county, McDonald’s, opened in December 1995. Several banks are located here. The post office is located at Route 60 and Emmanuel Church Road. At Flat Rock, five miles east of the courthouse, a shopping center replaces the old tavern that once catered to the need of the stagecoach travelers of the early nineteenth century. Powhatan Plaza anchors the intersection of Anderson Highway and Academy Road and other shopping centers have sprung up along the Route 60 corridor. In 1996, the old Powhatan High School building was renovated by the county for its new use as the Powhatan Village Building.

The Powhatan County Public Library is now located in an airy, spacious building in Fighting Creek Park, where the Elizabeth Randolph Lewis YMCA and a new armory have also been erected. The construction of Route 288, through the county near Huguenot Springs Road and across Huguenot Trail, to a new bridge over the James River, has eradicated familiar landscapes in its path. Golf courses now include the Independence at Founders Bridge and the Foundry on Huguenot Trail.

One of the first to describe Powhatan was Joseph Martin, known throughout the state as *Gazetteer of Virginia*. His writing, published in 1835, mentioned the schools. Martin said, “There are ten male schools now in operation in the county, under the superintendent of competent teachers for the instruction of youth in the ordinary branches of education. There are also two female schools under the management of judicious and able teachers.” Today, Powhatan’s public school system is comprised of elementary, middle, and high schools and a vocational and technical center. A new high school has opened, and a new elementary school opened in the fall of 2008. Blessed Sacrament-Huguenot, a private school, has grades Pre-K to 12.

Martin listed the churches of Powhatan, the only regularly formed ones, as being Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian. “The old Episcopal churches, Peterville and Manakin, have become free for the use of all denominations.” Today church denominations, in addition to Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Episcopal, include Assembly of God, Mennonite, Catholic, Lutheran, Christian, Jehovah’s Witnesses and Pentecostal.

## The President's Preservation Awards

The practice of presenting an award for outstanding private preservation was begun in 1982. Since that year, each succeeding president has made this award at the end of his/her term of office. The following awards have been presented:

President's 1 <sup>st</sup> Award	Thomas and Paula Layman Sublett's Tavern 1652 Huguenot Trail
Presented by:	Mr. John Rotherth
President's 2 <sup>nd</sup> Award	John and Lynn Rotherth Tavern & Other Buildings At Powhatan Courthouse
Presented by:	Mr. Morgan Sincock
President's 3 <sup>rd</sup> Award	Mr. & Mrs. Warren West Restoration of Edgemont 2211 Ballsville Road
Presented by:	Mrs. Dorothy Cosby
President's 4 <sup>th</sup> Award:	Mr. Sam D. Hatcher Muddy Creek Schoolhouse Trenholm Road
Presented by:	Mr. Edgar Bolte
President's 5 <sup>th</sup> Award:	Mrs. Edna Blanton Smith Restoration of Blenheim 7177 Blenheim Road
Presented by:	Dr. Elmer H. Gish
President's 6 <sup>th</sup> Award:	Dr. and Mrs. Donald Sanders

	Mosby Tavern Farm 2625 Old Tavern Farm Road
Presented by:	Mr. Edgar Bolte
President's 7 <sup>th</sup> Award	Powhatan County Board of Supervisors Restoration and enlargement of The county courthouse
Presented by:	Mr. Edgar Bolte
President's 8 <sup>th</sup> Award:	Mr. and Mrs. J. Hardie Karrh III Restoration of The Miller's Cottage at Fine Creek 2434 Robert E. Lee Road
Presented by:	Dr. Robert Buttermark
President's 9 <sup>th</sup> Award:	Mr. and Mrs. Charles Neurohr Restoration of French's Tavern 6100 Old Buckingham Road
Presented by:	Dr. Robert Buttermark
President's 10 <sup>th</sup> Award:	Powhatan County Board of Supervisors Preservation of the old Powhatan High School Building renamed: The Powhatan Village Building
Presented by:	Dr. Robert Buttermark
President's 11 <sup>th</sup> Award:	Mr. Carson Tucker & Board Michaux-St. James Foundation Restoration of St. James Chapel Old River Trail & Maidens Road
Presented by:	Mrs. Ruth Doumlele
President's 12 <sup>th</sup> Award	Mr. Royall S. Brown, Jr. and family

Preservation of Red Lane Tavern  
3009 Lower Hill Road

Presented by: Mrs. Ruth Doumlele

### **The President's Historic Markers**

The practice of presenting an historic marker to highlight history was begun in 2008. While not an annual event, the opportunity to highlight historic sites is undertaken by the Society when the occasion arises. The following markers have been dedicated:

#### President's First Historic Marker

Designation The one room schoolhouse at Muddy Creek

Presented by: Mr. John Kerr

#### President's Second Historic Marker

Designation Cumberland Old Courthouse (Mosby Tavern)

Presented by: Mr. John Rothert

## Highlights of the Powhatan County Historical Society 1975-2011

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### 1975-1976

In January 1975, Society founders Mrs. Dorothy Cosby and Mrs. Helen Lawton and interested Powhatan County citizens met with Elie Weeks of Goochland County. Mrs. Cosby was elected president and Mr. Raymond Boelt showed slides of Powhatan's historical sites.

Mr. Charles Houston, of the Richmond News Leader, spoke on *Early Huguenot Descendants and Settlers*, in May 1975 and in October 1975, a picnic and display of Indian artifacts was held on the shoals of Mr. and Mrs. Julian Binford's home, *Old Foundry of Fine Creek Mills*.

In March 1976, Colonel Richard B. Smith, Director of the Lee-Jackson Association, discussed *General Lee's Travels in Virginia*. The Chancel Choir of Bon Air United Methodist Church entertained with *Early American Church Music* in June. Later in June, at a Bicentennial Celebration, a commemorative historical plate designed by Mrs. Mary Jane Stokes, and produced by Kettle Springs Pottery Alliance, Ohio, was presented. Sales proceeds helped to finance research and writing of the county's history, completed in 1980 by Mr. Richard Couture. Colonel H. A. McCord spoke in September on *American Indian Artifacts*.

### 1977-1978

In honor of the Bicentennial Celebration, the Society published three calendars: Powhatan's Strength - Its Churches, Powhatan's Heritage - Its Homes, and Powhatan County - Historical Sites. *Powhatan's Major Roads* was discussed in March 1977 by Miss Elizabeth Gills, Mr. William Cover, and Mr. Roy Nicholls, who spoke on *Sites Along the Buckingham Road*; and Mrs. Helen Lawton, who spoke on *The Older Homes Along the River Road*.

In May, the Bicentennial Celebration at the courthouse featured county school students, the Fort Lee Detachment and Band, the Honorable Watkins M. Abbitt, the Honorable W. C. Daniels, the Honorable Mills E. Godwin, Jr., National Park Service uniformed members and members of community organizations.

Mr. Richard Couture spoke on *Gathering Historical Facts* in September, while in November, a commemorative ceremony was held for The General, a 365-year-old stump of the Derwent White Oak Tree, which had been struck by lightning.

In March 1978, Mr. Richard Couture spoke on Architecture of Powhatan County; Mr. John Rothert discussed Ante Bellum Powhatan as Seen in the Works of Marion Harland; and Mr. Edward Appling spoke on Techniques of Preserving Antiquities.

## 1979-1980

In March 1979, a conducted tour of Mr. John Rothert's property, The Courthouse Tavern; the Courthouse; the Old Clerk's Office, and other buildings, was led by Mr. Rothert.

*Making the Most of Local History* was presented by Mr. Edwin L. Dooley, Director of the Virginia Historical Society, in June. Another 1979 program, *The Powhatan Troops During the War Between the States*, was presented by Mr. Rothert.

In March 1980, Mr. Morgan Sincock spoke on *Early Tools and Tasks* and in July, he returned for *Shenandoah Valley Folk Life*.

*Powhatan: a Bicentennial History*, authored by Richard Couture, was published. In July, Mr. Couture reported on the book and its sales.

Also in March of 1980, a milestone was reached when the Board of Supervisors approved the use of the Old Clerk's Office, the oldest building on the square, dating to 1796, for the Powhatan County Historical Society's use.

The dream of publishing a history of Powhatan County was realized and the task of creating a library and museum began.

## 1981-1982

Richard M. B. Reynolds, Director of Information for the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA), presented slides on *Historic Preservation* in March 1981.

A Labor Day exhibit by the Sincock's, *American Coverlets and Quilts*, was followed in October by Dr. Edward Campbell, Director of the Museum of the Confederacy, in Richmond, who spoke on *Current Research Projects of the Museum*.

In March 1982, Colonel H. A. MacCord, AIA, discussed *Early Indian Life*. Also during this month, Mr. Edgar Bolte's watercolor design of the Powhatan County Seal was presented to the county's several offices.

*Early American Gravestone Art*, with a display of gravestone rubbings, was Mr. Morgan Sincock's topic in June. In October, *Early Indians of the Piedmont*, a slide presentation of archeological digs made near the Appomattox River and Willis Mountain in Buckingham County, was presented by Dr. William J. Jordan, archaeologist from Longwood College in Farmville.

## 1983-1984

March 1983 found Colonel Harold Treble speaking on *Heraldry* with a focus upon the new coat of arms designed by Mr. Bolte. In June, Mr. Morgan Sincock spoke on *Early Photography of the Blue Ridge*; and in October, Ms. Margaret Peters of the Virginia Landmark Commission gave advice on *How to Register Historic Buildings*.

In March 1984, Mr. Joseph H. Crute conducted a tour of the newly renovated Derwent with a lecture, *Derwent and Its Historical Significance*.

The Reverend James McAllister, rector of Goochland's Grace Episcopal Church, gave a slide presentation on *Architecture of Colonial Churches* in June. Mr. William Boelt presented slides of the Powhatan Village from Mr. Raymond Boelt's collection in September.

The Society's first historic homes tour, held in October, featured the west end of Powhatan County. Homes shown were Laurel Springs, Edgemont, French's Tavern, Churchview, and Muddy Creek School.

### 1985-1986

In March 1985, *Up From the Ashes*, the story of the rebuilding of Red Lane Church, after it was destroyed by fire, was told by Mrs. Vickie Skalsky.

At the James River Batteau Landing in June, Mr. John Rothert presented the *Chief Powhatan*, the first batteau built and entered in the first of a Living History event. Mrs. Emily Maxey Jenkins presented slides of *Early Huguenot Homes and Churches*.

In October, Mr. Alan Morledge, AIA, of Colonial Williamsburg presented *Procedures for Architectural Restoration*.

In June 1986, Mr. Sam D. Hatcher spoke on *Transportation* at the Annual Meeting, and in October, Mr. Mickey Stokes gave a slide presentation on *The James River Batteau Race*.

### 1987-1988

In February 1987, the Board of Supervisors appointed the Historical Society as the Powhatan Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution. The Commission was charged with promoting various programs to celebrate the event. In March, Mr. Patrick M. McSweeney spoke on *Celebrating the United States Constitution* and in April, the Society joined the Junior Women's Club in celebrating "Let Freedom Ring Day" on Courthouse Square.

In May 1987, the topic for Rob Coles, an actor and seventh generation descendant of Thomas Jefferson, was *Meet Thomas Jefferson*. The event was co-sponsored by the Society, the Powhatan Commission on the Bicentennial of the U. S. Constitution, the Powhatan Public School Gifted and Talented Program, the Powhatan Elementary School Parent-Teacher Organization and the Woman's Club of Powhatan County.

Once again, in June, the Society sponsored the Chief Powhatan, under the command of Captain John Rothert, in the James River Batteau Race. The Society hosted a food festival for participants at Maiden's Landing.

Also in June, at a joint meeting of the Society with the Virginia Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians, Dr. Charles Brownwell, professor of architectural history at the University of Virginia, spoke on *The Life and Works of the Nineteenth Century Architect, Alexander Jackson Davis*.

In September, Dr. Timothy O'Rourke, Executive Director of the Virginia Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States, spoke on *Understanding the Constitution*, and in October, Mr. David Bovenizer, Research Associate at the Center for Ethics and Public Policy in Washington, D. C., discussed *U. S. Constitution Issues*.

In March 1988, Dr. David Bovenizer's topic was *Comparison of the U. S. Constitution and the Confederate Constitution*, at a joint meeting of the Society and the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV).

Mr. John Rothert moderated a panel of five senior citizens on *This is What I Remember* in June.

The Society celebrated Christmas with a party at Belnemus, home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Douberly, Jr.

### **1989-1990**

In March 1989, Patricia Jackson spoke on *Reflections on the Past*. In June, members picnicked on the lawn at Elmington, home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Cosby.

A September meeting was held on Courthouse Square, where Dr. Charles Brown, Asst. Director of the Virginia Historical Society, spoke on *Virginia's Past and Future*. The Christmas party was held at Millwood, home of Dr. and Mrs. Michael Hakala on Huguenot Trail.

Mr. John Brown, director of Planning and Community Development, spoke in March 1990.

A June picnic was held on the grounds at Derwent, where Ms. Beatrice Bland spoke briefly on Robert E. Lee and gave her *Hats presentation*.

Dr. John Shearin, president of the Virginia Society of Historic Landmarks, was guest speaker in October 1990 at Emmanuel Episcopal Church, where the Powhatan High School Choral Group provided musical entertainment. The Society Christmas party was held at Dr. and Mrs. Charles Beorn's home, Calais.

### **1991-1992**

In April 1991, Ms. Betsy Jiranek, Architectural Historian, discussed the *Survey of Historic Resources in Powhatan County*. In October, a slide preview of the findings of the Powhatan historic architectural survey was presented. The Society's Christmas party, again with



music by the Powhatan High School Choral Group, was held at Dr. and Mrs. Donald Sanders' home, Mosby Tavern Farm.

Mr. John Rothert conducted a tour of the courthouse area in April 1992, where the monument on the grave of James Poindexter was dedicated in October. The Christmas party and celebration of John Singleton Mosby's 159<sup>th</sup> birthday was held at Mr. and Mrs. Warren West's home, Edgemont.

### 1993-1994

In March 1993, Dr. Robert Buttermark spoke on *Mrs. Robert E. Lee*. In October, *Thomas Jefferson as Seen Through the Context of Political Cartoons of His Period* was the topic presented by Dr. Charles Bryan, Director of the Virginia Historical Society. The Christmas party was held at Keswick, the home of Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Keck.

In February 1994, the Society was authorized use of the Old Jail by the county board of supervisors as the Society headquarters. Renovation of the building was completed in the next few months. The cost of the renovation was the responsibility of the Society. The first board meeting in the Old Jail, now the Historical Center and Museum, was held Monday, June 6.

Mrs. Bettie Weaver spoke on *The Huguenots of Manakintowne* in March 1994. Mrs. Margaret Palmore discussed the *History of Fine Creek Mill* at the June picnic meeting held there. In September, a successful Historic Homes Tour was held. Approximately 500 people toured Belnemus, Derwent, Edgemont, Mosby Tavern Farm, and French's Tavern. Proceeds from the tour covered the cost of purchasing a computer for the Society.

The September meeting featured a talk by Christopher Calkins, Park Ranger and Historian, on *General Lee's Retreat from Petersburg to Appomattox*. Goodwyn Farm, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Archie Goodwyn, was the site of the 1994 Christmas party and meeting.

### 1995-1996

In March 1995, Marc Wagner of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources spoke on *The National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Register*. The Summer Meeting was held at Muddy Creek Baptist Church where Joseph Crute spoke on *Derwent, Robert E. Lee's Sanctuary*. In July, the Society's first exhibit, written and curated by President Robert Buttermark, opened in the Historical Center. The exhibit focused on *The Lee Family in Powhatan County* and commemorated the 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the family's arrival in the county. Later that month a benefit reception was held at Derwent. The benefit proceeds were used to pay for exhibit costs, insurance coverage for the museum and contents, and a security system for the building.

The Society celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at the September meeting. Six of the original founding members were present: Dorothy Cosby, Vi Allen, Rachel Elam, Peggy Palmore, Edna

Smith, and Lillian West. Mrs. Emily Maxey Jenkins was named Historian Emeritus. *The Old Buckingham Road* was the subject of a presentation by Dr. Agnes Gish.

The Christmas party was held at Norwood, on Huguenot Trail, the 18<sup>th</sup>-century home of the Kennon family.

In January, the exhibit, *Civil War Scenes, Soldiers and Officers*, opened at the Historical Center. This art exhibit in acrylic featured the work of A. Jay Skii. The topic of the spring meeting at Blessed Sacrament-Belmead was *General Philip St. George Cocke and his home, Belmead*. John Richardson was presenter. A June picnic for Society members was held at Kelona, the home of Mr. and Mrs. David Moyer. This large farm on the James River dates back to 1797.

The Society Historic Homes Tour on September 21 featured these homes along Huguenot Trail: Keswick, Oak Haven, Holly Hill, Roseneath Farm, and Comotomo. More than 500 visitors from all over Virginia attended this successful event. At the fall meeting, which was held in the restored Village Building, Paul Grasewicz, Director of Planning for Powhatan County, discussed *Planning for the Future, Preserving the Past*. Society members gathered at Morewood, home of Rod Elser and Jane Carroll, for the 1996 winter meeting and Christmas party.

## 1997

In March, Dr. Harry M. Ward, of the University of Richmond spoke on *General Charles Scott and the Spirit of '76*, at Emmanuel Episcopal Church. The Society hosted the Eighth Annual Conference of the Historical Societies of the Virginia Piedmont. William J. Martin, Executive Director of the Valentine Museum, was keynote speaker.

A June picnic and meeting was held on the lawn of Monacan Farm, home of Mrs. Rebecca Denny. The Society's fall meeting took place at Manakin Episcopal Church. J. E. B. Stuart IV spoke about his illustrious ancestor, Major General J. E. B. Stuart, CSA. French's Tavern, home of Carolyn and Fred Neurohr, was the setting for the 1997 meeting and Christmas party. Dorothy Cosby presented the Society with a large framed photograph of the Society's founding members.

## 1998

Spring Historic Powhatan Village walking tours were conducted in February and March. The *Education in Powhatan* exhibit, curated by Edgar Bolte and Roy Nicholls, opened. The spring meeting at St. Luke's Church featured Beverly Reynolds, of The Reynolds Gallery, and John Richardson, who spoke briefly about the life and work of Julian Binford.

The first Society \$1000 college scholarship was awarded to Susan Swoboda. A June picnic and meeting, held at Hobson's Chapel, featured a program on the Chapel's history. The Society published *Historic Powhatan: A Coloring and Activity Book for Children*, with text by

Page Clark and sketches by A. Jay Skii. The Biennial Historic Homes Tour, *Spanning Two Centuries*, included Creekside, Hatcher's Plantation, Macon Tavern, Morewood, Paxton and Emmanuel Episcopal Church. The fall meeting coincided with the opening of our exhibit, *Crazy About Quilts*. John Richardson was curator. Colleen Callahan, Curator of Textiles at the Valentine Museum, spoke on quilt conservation. The Society Christmas party was held at Derwent, home of Dr. and Mrs. Robert Buttermark. Rebecca Rose, from the Museum of the Confederacy, discussed the need for conservation of the Powhatan Troop flag. The Society began a fund-raiser effort to pay for the flag's conservation. The Society first president, Dorothy Cosby, was named President Emeritus.

## 1999

The Society endorsed and supported the Michaux-St. James Foundation project to restore St. James Chapel. The spring meeting featured a field trip to the Virginia Historical Society to view a new exhibit, *George Washington: The Man Behind the Myths*. The village walking tours were continued. *The Art of Julian Binford* exhibit, curated by John Richardson, opened at the Historical Center.

The second \$1000 college scholarship was awarded to Jeremy Utt. Members enjoyed the summer picnic and meeting at Fighting Creek Plantation, home of Mr. and Mrs. William Stoyko. The Powhatan Troop Flag Fund reached its goal of \$4800 and the Museum of the Confederacy presented a plaque to the Society as the First Patron of the Flag Restoration Project.

The Society published its new brochure featuring Powhatan County statistics, a map, and photographs of historic places and sites in the county. An organization of the Society's archives by category was completed. The fall meeting featured John Rotherth's presentation on Marion Harland, a nineteenth-century author who had lived in Powhatan County. At the fall meeting in the restored county courtroom, the officers and directors of the Society presented a plaque to Robert and Nancy Buttermark in appreciation of their dedicated service for three two-year terms of office.

The *Remembering World War II* exhibit opened in conjunction with a drive that solicited more than 400 names of World War II veterans to be recorded in the Registry of Remembrance at the memorial to be built in Washington, D. C. Dr. and Mrs. Garth Stevens hosted the Christmas Party at Belnemus.

## 2000

In February, Jack Zehmer and Ann Andrus of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources conducted a workshop for homeowners on registration requirements for the historic landmark designation. In March, Langhorne Gibson, Jr. spoke on his research for the publication of his book, *Cabell's Canal: The Story of the James River and Kanawha*. The spring village

walking tour included a field trip to Rocky Oak Church and cemetery. Diane Sanfilippo conducted an oral history workshop.

In April, a reception opened the exhibit curated by Susan Ash, appointed chair of the exhibit committee: *Powhatan Artists: Fine Arts, Photography, Pottery, Jewelry and Textiles*. At our June picnic at Provost, home of Peggy Palmore, Royall Palmore spoke of the various functions that the house has served through the years. Members attended the reception and unveiling of the newly conserved Powhatan Troop Flag, at the Museum of the Confederacy. The Society awarded a \$1000 scholarship to Michelle Monk.

Homes featured in September on our Biennial Historic Homes Tour, *Land Grant Legacies Along Old River Trail*, were Massinacack, Michaux Grant, Michaux Mill, Miles House, and Shadowlawn Farm, in addition to St. James Chapel.

In October, we celebrated the Society's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Powhatan County Board of Supervisors presented a framed proclamation to commemorate the event. John Rothert spoke on his home, Courthouse Tavern, where docents in period attire conducted tours for members and guests. Other events on Courthouse Square included music by members of the Powhatan High School Band, the unveiling, by Delegate F. Lee Ware of the revised Powhatan Courthouse Historical Marker. Other activities included arts and crafts demonstrations, period music, and refreshments including homemade ice cream.

The fall village walking tour included a field trip to St. Luke's Episcopal Church. Our fall exhibit featured *Railroading in Powhatan*. Mr. and Mrs. Richard Rose hosted our Christmas party at Malvern.

## 2001

Spring activities included the village walking tour and a reception for the opening of the exhibit, Toys, *Having Fun with the Past*. Superintendent Cynthia McCleod, of the National Battlefield Park, spoke on current activities at the new Tredegar Visitors Center in Richmond and the Maggie Walker Historic Site.

In June, our picnic was held at Blenheim, home of a recently deceased founding member, Edna Blanton Smith. Dr. G. T. Smith discussed the history of his family home, a Virginia Historic Landmark property. Ann Miller, of the Virginia Transportation Research Council, visited Powhatan to examine, measure and photograph the north and south boundary markers in the village. In September, Gordon Lohr, Director of the Historic Property Revolving Fund of the Virginia Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, discussed the program that helps owners in the restoration of qualified properties. Heinrich Gideons, Chairman of the Powhatan School Board, presented the board's resolution for a long-term loan to the Society of the David Silvette portrait of Philip C. Williams, who served as Powhatan's superintendent of schools from 1921 to 1947.

The Christmas party was held at Elmington, home of Elizabeth and Robert Cosby.

## 2002

Denny McSweeny of the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation spoke at the spring meeting on plans and activities in connection with Jamestown and the Jamestown 2007 celebration.

The Society, at the request of the board of supervisors, planned the Powhatan County 225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in May on the Courthouse Square. Robert Buttermark and Ruth Boatwright were co-chairs. Our representatives from the General Assembly attended, letters came from other representatives, and Board of Supervisors Chairman Robert Cosby delivered a keynote address. The event also featured a slide presentation, photograph exhibit, and arts and crafts booths.

Ways and Means Chair Connie Harriss arranged “*A Historical Evening at Norwood*,” her family home. The summer picnic was held at Edgemont, birthplace of the Civil War Grey Ghost John Singleton Mosby and the home of Warren West.

*Powhatan’s Pastoral Treasures*, the September historic homes tour, featured Malvern, Norwood, Millview, Elmington, Beauvoir, and St. Luke’s Church.

For our fall meeting, members visited the Virginia Historical Society to view the exhibit, *The Story of Virginia*. Dr. Thomas Powers spoke at the opening of the fall exhibit, *Powhatan and the Confederate Years*. Spring and fall walking tours continued. The Christmas party was held at Hallborough Tavern through the hospitality of Mrs. Mary Game.

## 2003

The opening of the spring exhibit, *Sampling the Society’s Collections: Powhatan Past and Present*, coincided with the Spring Powhatan Village Historical walking tour.

Dr. Woody Holton, associate professor of history at the University of Richmond, spoke at the Spring quarterly meeting on *Little-known Motivations for the Framing of the U. S. Constitution*.

The Society sponsored a trip to view the archaeological digs at Jamestown and work in preparation for Jamestowne 2007.

We visited French’s Tavern, home of Carolyn and Fred Neurohr, for our summer picnic in June. Ms. Ann Blomquist spoke on her new book, *The Vestry Book of Southam Parish, Cumberland County 1745-1792*. In July, the Society Museum opened for the Powhatan Chamber of Commerce event, *The Festival of the Grape*.

Hurricane Isabel’s devastation forced the cancellation of the fall meeting. Mr. and Mrs. Robert Goodman and Mr. and Mrs. Kels Goodman hosted the Christmas party at Sublett’s Tavern.

## 2004

At the Spring meeting, Powhatan Director of Economic Development Dan Jones spoke on the potential economic growth that the county could expect through the promotion of tourism. The same program also included a presentation by Robert Wilcox of plans to bring the Virginia Civil War Trails program to the county.

The summer picnic was held at Roseneath, the home of Francis and Helen Graham.

In spite of tropical storm Gaston, our 2004 tour, *Historic Huguenot Trail: Homes Along Powhatan's Scenic Byway*, was held. Homes featured were Millwood, Monacan Farms, Buena Vista, and Turtlewood. In addition, Julian Binford's mural, *The River Jordan*, was shown at historic Shiloh Baptist Church.

The fall program was a first person portrayal of Revolutionary War hero John Paul Jones, presented by William Young.

Larry and Jean Temple at their home, Erin Hill, hosted our annual Christmas party.

## 2005

At the Spring general meeting, we were treated to a slide presentation of *Powhatan in Bygone Days*, presented by William Boelt.

The summer picnic and installation of officers was held at historic Derwent, the home of Kenneth and Valerie Cox. In August, the Civil War Trails came to Powhatan, with the unveiling of the Society's sponsored marker at the courthouse green.

In October, the Society hosted its first dinner/lecture program, which featured Virginia attorney and author Mary B. Kegley who spoke about her Powhatan-based novel, *Free in Chains*, the story of Rachel Findlay's 47-year struggle to win her freedom.

The society also unveiled its new "official" website at

<http://www.powhatanhistoricalsociety.org>

The Christmas social was held at Hunter's Fare, and hosted by Michael and Sarah Corbett.

## 2006

The general meeting held in March featured a presentation by Josephine Elam Gates. Mrs. Gates who grew up at Belnemus, gave a presentation on the preservation and care of antique furniture, and her book *Antiques 101*.

In June, a permanent Historic Garden exhibit was dedicated as part of the Jamestown 2007 celebration. It sits directly behind the Old Jail and features plans common to Powhatan between the years 1777-1830. The summer picnic was held at Belmead, and featured Mr. Robert A. Walker Jr., a graduate of St. Emma's Military Academy. Mr. Walker's book "*The Black Military Academy on the James River*" was available to the membership.

The biennial historic homes tour was entitled "*Upcountry homes along the old hunting path,*" and the homes featured were Morewood, Mill Quarter, Erin Hill, Macon Tavern, and Field House. The old courthouse was opened for tours, and May Memorial Baptist Church provided lunches.

The annual Christmas party was held at Fighting Creek Plantation and was hosted by Kemper and Beverly Baker.

## 2007

The spring meeting was held at Muddy Creek Baptist church and featured the unveiling of the society's first marker presentation, the one room schoolhouse on the Muddy Creek site.

Our summer picnic was held at Belmead, and new officers were installed. A tour of the grounds of St. Francis de Sales was led by Mr. Thomas Kent, of the Francis/Emma Foundation who discussed preservation efforts.

A cemetery inscription project was begun and is now part of the society website. The goal is to include all of Powhatan's cemeteries and include genealogical data as well.

The September general meeting was held at the historic courthouse and featured Bettie Watson Weaver who discussed her book entitled "*The Continental Training Depot and General Rendez-Vous at Chesterfield Courthouse, Virginia 1780 -1781.*" Powhatan's role in the American Revolution was also discussed.

Homer and Mary Jane Stokes at their home along the Old River Trail at Massinacack hosted the Christmas party.

## 2008

Our spring meeting was held at St. James church at Michaux where Carson Tucker spoke about the early Huguenot experience.

The Society also launched the inaugural program of the World War II Roundtable at the Village Building. Heinrich Gideons spoke about his father, a German Officer at the Battle of the Bulge.

The summer meeting featured the unveiling of the Society's second marker at Cumberland Old Courthouse. Dr. and Mrs. Donald Saunders of Mosby Tavern hosted the picnic.

The September meeting was held at the War Memorial Building and featured local Pearl Harbor survivor Mr. Jack Walker. The meeting was held in conjunction with the WWII Roundtable. The success of the Roundtable group enabled it to become a separate entity within the county.

The Society also acquired Grace Episcopal Church (circa. 1842), and began a preservation project.

In December, the Society published *Powhatan Pathways: Homes, History, Structures, and Stories* co-authored by Margaret “Peggy” Palmore, and John M. Kerr. Also in December, the Christmas party was held at Norwood, and hosted by Ted and Constance Harriss, and featured the unveiling of the book.

## 2009

The spring meeting was held at the Courthouse in Powhatan and featured Mr. Joe Elton, Director of Virginia’s State Parks who spoke about the new proposed state park in Powhatan and updated the progress on the parks at High Bridge and Sailor’s Creek. Mr. Chris Calkins, Park Manager at Sailor’s Creek Battlefield, also spoke about the battle of April 6<sup>th</sup> 1865. The Society conducted tours of the Historic Garden and updated the membership on the progress of the renovations to the Historical Center at the Old Jail.

The annual summer picnic was held at Tilman’s Auction Center and was hosted by James Tilman IV and included tours of the more than twenty restored buildings at the complex.

In September, the meeting was held at Grace Church and the membership was given an update on the preservation of the facility. Mr. John Taylor spoke about the families buried at the church cemetery.

Our Christmas party was held at Mill Quarter Plantation and was hosted by Werner and Roseanne Guttman.

## 2010

Our spring meeting featured a “bushwacker” tour of the Town of Jefferson (1794-1888). This rustic setting featured Dr. Richard Lehew and Paul Geyer who spoke about the settlement and John Rothert who recounted the role of the river bateaux of the era.

The summer picnic was held at Paxton and hosted by Kevin and Suzanne Conner. Ray Dewey unveiled the first reproductions of the Powhatan Heritage Photo Project.

Our fall Historic Homes Tour featured the houses of French’s Tavern, Edgemont, Belmead, and Rosemont, and was titled “From Bell road to Ballsville, A Journey in Architectural Diversity.”

The Christmas party was held at historic Derwent and hosted by Ken and Valerie Cox.



## 2011

The spring meeting was hosted by Drs. William and Eleanor Jiranek at Michaux Grant. President Rotherth and Director John Taylor were pleased to announce that the society had received permission to add a trove of Powhatan history with the acquisition of copies of the files of Evelyn Byrd Pendleton Jervey. These files through the generosity of the Jervey family have greatly enhanced our archives.

Our summer picnic was once again held at “Tilman Town” and Director Ray Butcher spoke about our ongoing cemetery project.

The fall meeting featured the retired Senior Architectural Historian for the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Calder Loth. He spoke of the many destroyed and neglected structures of Virginia, highlighted in his 2001 book “*Lost Virginia.*” The event was held at one of our threatened sites, Belmead.

In December, we met at Sublett’s Tavern for our annual Christmas party courtesy of our host Dan Lette.

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*To be Continued.....*