

Essex County Countryside Alliance

2017 Report

ECCA Works to Preserve, Protect, Retain and Enhance the Farms, Forests, Fisheries, Wildlife Habitat and Other Productive Natural Resources of Essex County on Virginia's Middle Peninsula



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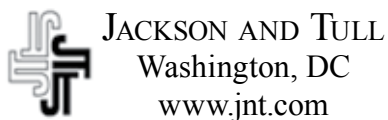
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Essex County Countryside Alliance 2017 Report

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Letter From the President & Vice President

ESSEX COUNTY IS A RARE AND SPECIAL PLACE



Photo credit Hill Wellford

Over the last ten years, the ECCA has worked to advocate the protection and preservation of Essex County's **rural and scenic lands** and its **historic properties**. We have done this through a variety of education initiatives that remind land owners and our County's leaders that, in this day and age, Essex is indeed a very rare and special place. Residents of Essex are privileged to live in an area with unspoiled natural resources and steeped in well documented history that dates back to the earliest period of our nation's founding. It is useful to remember that Captain John Smith explored the Rappahannock in 1608 and when he landed at the site of Tappahannock, our County seat, it was an indian town before it was patented as an English settlement in 1645. Our scenic landscapes, clean water and abundant wildlife have long been the essential characteristics of our County. They are literally the reason the first settlers located here and for over 400 years they have defined our region and the values of the people who have lived on the shores of the Rappahannock.

The ECCA's message to the residents of Essex County is clear. We are not trying to turn back the pages of history or ignore the present day needs of our County. But as Essex's leaders struggle to meet the County's economic goals, we believe it is essential that the decisions they make reflect a uncompromising commitment to protect and preserve Essex's critical natural resources, its rural and scenic lands, and its historic properties. These are the assets that distinguish Essex, they are our most attractive features, and if nurtured and protected, they will help fuel our County's economic needs by promoting tourism and encouraging compatible businesses and retirees to relocate here.

The ECCA takes pride in the fact that today over 23,000 acres of rural land in Essex County are protected by conservation easements. Much of the land we have helped to protect borders the Rappahannock or surrounds its tidal marshes. Still other acreage borders the creeks and beaver ponds that flow into the Rappahannock and contain wetlands which provide food sources for wildlife. By any measure, the Rappahannock is one of the most pristine and scenic rivers in the Chesapeake Bay region. It is to be treasured and as stewards of land which borders its shores, Essex County residents should strive to preserve and protect it.

We are also pleased to report that, with assistance from the ECCA, the Millers Tavern District of Essex has achieved state certification as a Rural Historic District. We are currently working to obtain the same certification for the Occupacia District. Rural Historic District certification is important because it creates the potential for tax credits when historic structures are rehabilitated.

While our conservation efforts continue in our quest to preserve the Rappahannock and adjacent lands, it is clear that major challenges lie ahead.

The threat that critical natural resources areas will be sacrificed for development is a constant challenge, as we learned from the Fones Cliffs rezoning experience in Richmond County. But another threat, which could impact the entire Rappahannock River Valley, is presented by oil and gas companies who advocate extraction of natural gas in the Taylorsville Basin through the process of hydraulic fracturing, commonly referred to as “fracking”.

The ECCA has worked hard to inform Essex residents about the destructive nature of fracking and the irreparable damage it could inflict on our rural tidewater environment. We have published and distributed articles which describe the fracking drilling process, including its use of highly toxic chemicals in the fracking fluids that are pumped deep into the ground in order to fracture the underground rock formations where natural gas exists. We have described the flow back to the surface of the toxic waste water and the waste ponds that typically exist at each drill site, and we have emphasized that with fracking there is a constant risk of spills or leaks which could contaminate ground water and seep into the creeks that feed the Rappahannock. In 2014, The ECCA also hosted representatives from three townships in Pennsylvania who came to Essex and spoke at our annual meeting about the damage to their townships that fracking had caused. And, we have repeatedly urged Essex landowners not to sign gas leases.

Our position on fracking, and our message to the residents of Essex, is unequivocal. We believe **fracking poses an unacceptable risk** to tidewater Virginia and particularly to Essex and the other counties which border the Rappahannock. It is important to emphasize that much of the land in our tidewater region is less than 20 feet above sea level and is environmentally sensitive. The primary sources of revenue for our tidewater communities are farming, forestry, fishing, recreational activities, and tourism. Fracking, with its heavy truck traffic and constant threat of water contamination, would materially change the rural and scenic character of our tidewater region. It is likely to drive down property values, hurt tourism, and materially diminish the traditional revenue sources our residents depend upon. It should be **prohibited** by the local governments of our tidewater communities.

Our concerns about fracking in tidewater Virginia are consistent with the warnings expressed by other conservation organizations, including Friends of the Rappahannock, the Rappahannock Wildlife Refuge Friends Group, the Southern Environmental Law Center, and American Rivers, a national river conservation organization. American Rivers recently designated the Rappahannock as number 5 in its 2017 report on America’s “Most Endangered Rivers” due to the threat posed by fracking.

Proposals to develop key natural resource areas and to allow fracking in our tidewater region are on-going threats which require our constant vigilance. But they are not the only serious challenges that confront us. In the State legislature, there have been proposals to cut the level of tax credits available to landowners who place conservation easements on their lands. And at the local level, land use taxation policies which are intended to encourage the preservation of rural lands and open spaces have come under attack by some citizens who contend that “use valuation” gives owners of farms and forests an unfair tax break.

We have never experienced a time since the ECCA was formed where our advocacy for conservation was more important. We hope this message helps you better understand the work of the ECCA. Please support our efforts to keep Essex County a rare and special place.



Peter Bance



Hill Wellford



Fallen Rappahannock tree at Champlain
by Allison McAshan, 2017

A blue ink signature of Peter Bance.

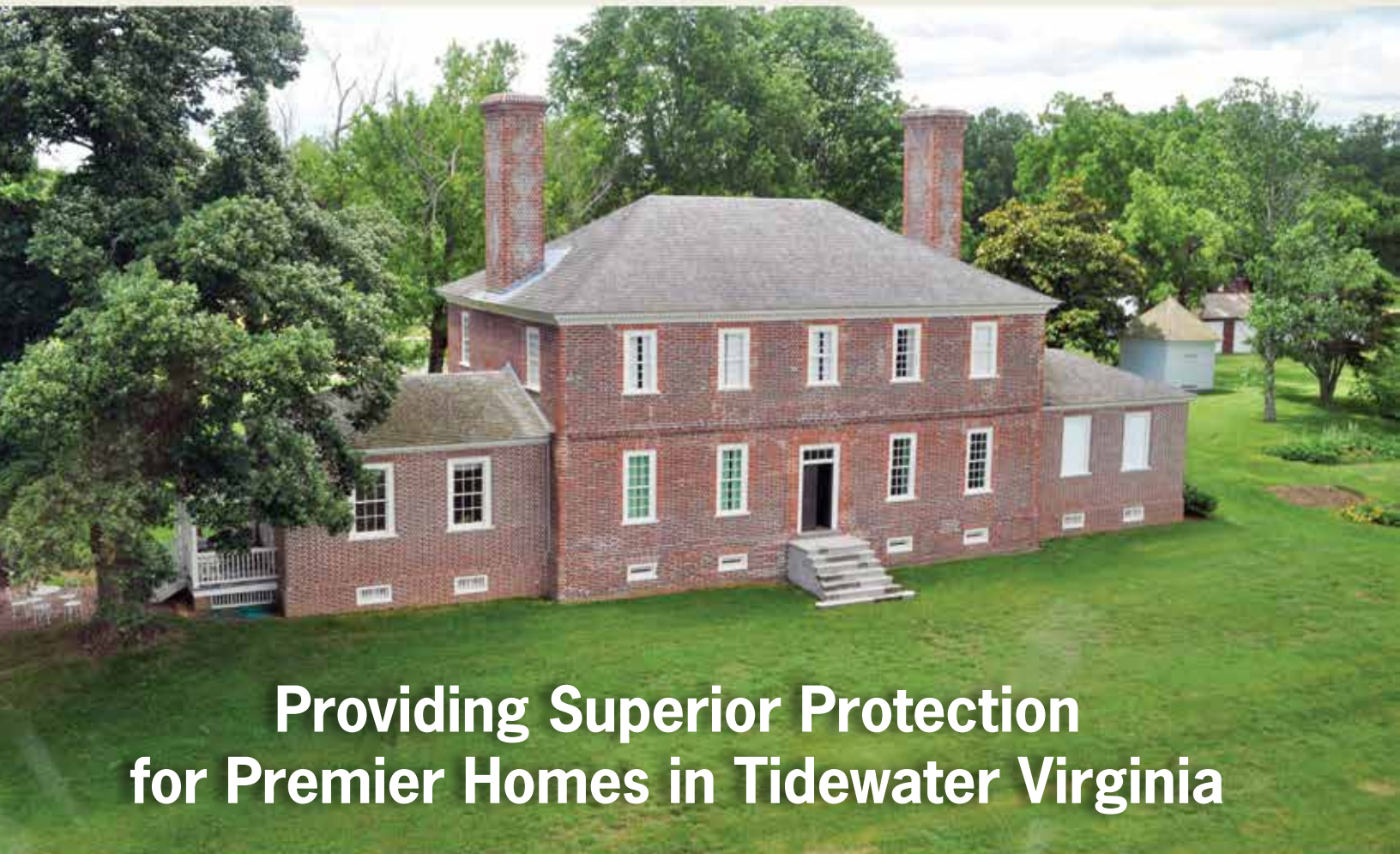
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THE OCCUPACIA & RAPPAHANNOCK

Rural Historic Landscape · Project News

by Kimberly R. Abe

The Occupacia & Rappahannock Rural Historic District initiative presents a unique challenge to help protect the pristine Rappahannock River Valley in Tidewater, Virginia, a segment of one of America's most significantly threatened historic and natural landscapes.

Nature still dominates in this remarkably unspoiled region. The local economies are primarily agricultural. Wooden oyster boats still plow choppy waters at the wide mouth of the Rappahannock River where it empties into the Chesapeake Bay. Many residents are descendants of Native Americans who have called this region home for over 10,000 years, African Americans, and European settlers. Centuries of family and social connections among and between these groups have produced a contemporary social community and diaspora that is culturally significant in its own right.

The goal of the Occupacia & Rappahannock Rural Historic District project is to nominate 53,000 acres of northern Essex County, Virginia, for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. In 2013 the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) matched community donations with state funds to pay for the development of a preliminary assessment of the proposed district. The state hired Dovetail Cultural Resource Group to complete a photographic survey and a seven-page Preliminary Information Form (PIF). The Virginia State Review Board reviewed the PIF and subsequently determined the Occupacia & Rappahannock Rural Historic District as "eligible" for listing on the National Register.

Official listing will avail historic building owners access to rehabilitation tax credits and also stimulate

**"History is the essence
of innumerable biographies."**

-Thomas Carlyle, Scottish Philosopher

cultural tourism economic development. As evidenced in other Virginia counties such as Fauquier and Clark, historic preservation and land conservation prove to be mutually reinforcing and economically enhancing.

There are **NO** local historic regulations associated with National Register listings. Property owners, churches, and other entities are able to alter or demolish historic buildings as they deem necessary.

Your Family History is Essex County History

Get out your old family photos and jot down your childhood memories about your neighborhood! The Occupacia and Rappahannock Rural Historic District project is underway and your stories and recollections will help make it a success.

History is not only about wars, architectural styles, or influential people. Most history is made by ordinary people living everyday lives. Farmers, watermen, shopkeepers, teachers, preachers, and housewives, along with their ancestors' lives, collectively contributed to make Essex county history.

Historians working with communities on National Register nominations connect human stories to the buildings and landscapes. Buildings and sites have little or no historical meaning without recognition of their human associations.

Private Donations Needed

ECCA is actively seeking private foundation grants and private donators interested in enriching student experiences in community historic documentation and preservation.

ECCA has contracted with the renowned architectural historian Mrs. Genevieve Keller, University of Virginia professor, to complete the Occupacia Landscape Project in concert with a student team. This university arrangement brings fresh perspectives and vigorous academic research standards to this historic landscape evaluation. *Please contact MaryMoss Walker at essexcca@gmail.com for additional information.*



Brooke's Bank



Elmwood



Clarke's Store



Champlain School



Farmfields



View from Marl Bank Road

Buildings and Settlement Patterns

The proposed Occupacia & Rappahannock River Rural Historic District abounds with a wide array of architectural and archaeological resources, some of which are already individually listed on the National Register. There are three known early eighteenth-century structures; Vauter's Church, St. Anne's Parish, and Glencairn. Surviving antebellum-era plantation homes were built in the full panoply of architectural styles. Blandfield, Brookes Bank, Elmwood, Rose Mount, and Lily Mount are all in the Georgian style. Oakalona is Greek revival, Malvern is Gothic revival, and Epping Forest features Italianate elements. Upper Essex Baptist Church, Enon Baptist Church, and St. Matthews Church were all built prior to the Civil War in the Greek revival style.

The post-Civil War period architectural and community heritage is evident in both buildings and settlement patterns within the district. African American neighbor-

hoods originating in the last quarter of the nineteenth century still feature some of their churches, schools, and post office buildings. Small clusters of newer homes built adjacent to early century-old starter homes—possible family subdivisions of African American farms and home sites—are identifiable throughout the countryside.

The Occupacia & Rappahannock Rural Historic District Project will help shed light on those who established free black communities and farmsteads in post-Civil War Essex County. *The US Census recorded 503 black-owned farms and 449 white-owned farms in 1925.*

Historic research will also focus on Native American history, slavery, church histories, local genealogical connections, farming practices, watermen histories, and possible Underground Railroad sites. ECCA is committed to recognizing the histories of all the people who have worked on these lands or inhabited this region.

Kimberly R. Abe has over twenty-five years of professional community planning and historic preservation experience. After dealing with local land use and zoning dynamics in several fast-growing regions, she has a special perspective on the importance of preserving the natural world for its people. Kimberly Abe, a self-taught artist and great lover of the Chesapeake Bay, currently resides in Northumberland County.





Miller's Tavern Rural Historic District

by Hylah Haile Boyd

The Miller's Tavern area received official designation as a rural historic district (RHD) from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) at the December 15, 2016, meeting of its State Review Board.

The addition of Miller's Tavern to the Virginia Landmarks Register (VLR) and the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) comes after four years of intensive research and historical documentation. A rural historic district is a geographic area with a significant concentration of buildings and structures, roads and waterways, cultural and historic landscapes, and natural features. RHD designation is recognition that the area is historically unique.

The Miller's Tavern Rural Historic District is located in the western part of the Central District of Essex County. The area is roughly bounded by US Route 360 (Richmond Highway) and Route 707 (Millers Tavern Road) on the south, Route 620 (Dunbrooke Road) on the east, and Routes 621 (Midway Road) and 622 (Latanes Mill Road) on the west.

The 3,900-acre Miller's Tavern area becomes the first RHD in the Middle Peninsula, and one of the few in Tidewater. Its rural landscape in western Essex County

still shows evidence of phases of local development from the late 1700s through to the present. The historic fabric of the area has survived because several eighteenth-century homes are intact, the agricultural significance of the area remains, and it boasts two historic churches that have contributed, and continue to contribute, to the culture of the area. The five late eighteenth-century houses are almost within walking distance of each other and other early nineteenth-century houses are nearby. Landscape features, agricultural fields, creeks, and dense woods have not changed significantly in two centuries—all features that attest to the evolution of a typical rural Tidewater community.

The natural landscape is perhaps the most important aspect of the district. Piscataway Creek starts in King & Queen County and flows east to the Rappahannock, bisecting the top of the Miller's Tavern RHD. Western Branch runs up the center of the district, flowing north to join with the Piscataway. These two creeks were both



St. Pauls Church



Cherry Walk



Shelba

the reason and the means for this area becoming one of the earliest European settlements in Old Rappahannock County, with land patents that began in the 1650s. Where the creeks intersect at the district's north end, it creates a large swamp from which the land rises gently to the north and south. Western Branch has numerous smaller branches, all heading up at fresh water springs. The branches make gullies that divide the land into long necks of high ground, creating small-scale agricultural fields that have been in use for 350 years.

Miller's Tavern is a unique cluster of buildings, structures, landscape features, and sites. Many of the historic roads, landscape patterns, and waterways remain intact. The district's period of significance spans from 1770, the construction date of the oldest building, to 1963. The NRHP recognizes only buildings 50 years or older as contributing structures. The original application for RHD designation was made in 2013, hence the cutoff date of 1963. The district contains only seventy-two resources (both historic and non-historic buildings). The resulting ratio—one property per forty-nine acres—speaks to the surviving rural character of the area. It is noteworthy that the parcels with modern infill make up only 15 percent of the total district acreage. The Miller's Tavern area retains its rural or agricultural integrity.

Many of the historic features can be seen from the roads that began as Native American trails and serve as boundaries, including the trace of a colonial road. US Route 360, also known as the Richmond-Tappahannock Highway, is a major regional transportation corridor at the southern end of the district. It is here that the community of Miller's Tavern was formed. A portion of the southwestern boundary of the district shares the county's boundary with King & Queen County and three contributing dwellings in that county are included in the Miller's Tavern RHD.

The buildings in the Miller's Tavern community reflect eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century develop-

ment. They have been associated with the domestic, agricultural, educational, industrial, ecclesiastical, and commercial life of the residents of this community since the mid-eighteenth century. Some of the buildings in the district have experienced common modifications and alterations over time (e.g., replaced windows, new siding, loss of historic details, modern additions), and some have lost integrity as a result of vacancy. However, as a whole, the district retains a moderate level of integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, locations, and association.

The five late eighteenth-century buildings in the district that date from 1770 to 1800 exhibit a form and style that is representative of Colonial Tidewater Virginia architecture common to the areas closer to the coast. These five—Cherry Walk, Elton, Retreat, Shelba, and Woodlawn—all feature similar attributes including raised brick basements, large exterior brick chimneys, and side-gambrel roofs with steeply pitched lower slopes. It is a style often called Dutch Colonial and may be a combination of English, Flemish, German, Dutch, and Scandinavian influences.

Cherry Walk, ca. 1795, is the only house constructed of brick and is representative of the early residential development that occurred shortly after the establishment of Miller's Tavern as a stop along Richmond Road. It was listed on the VLR and the NRHP in 1982. In addition to the high level of historic integrity of the main dwelling at Cherry Walk, this property retains several of its outbuildings including a barn, privy, kitchen, smokehouse, and two dairies.

Two houses survive from the early nineteenth century: Mount Rescue, and Beaver's Hill. Beaver's Hill was built ca. 1818 and is a fine example of federal period architecture. After the American Revolution, builders created the federal style, which coincided with the rise of the federal government between 1790 and 1810. It was patterned after the European neoclassical style. Mount Rescue, in



Beavers Hill



Elton

King & Queen County, on Millers Tavern Road, was constructed in 1820. After its completion, very few dwellings were built during the mid-nineteenth century.

Around or just after the turn of the twentieth century, eight relatively unadorned farmhouses were constructed. Six of them are two-story, three-bay buildings with a central hall. Two other dwellings, Home Lea and the Lane house, stand out. They have two stories and feature a central, front-gabled projection to form a T plan. The central-hall plan and T plan are commonly found in rural areas throughout Essex County and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Although the majority of the architectural buildings are residences, there are two stores, two churches, an old frame post office, a miller's cottage, and two mill sites, all over a century old. Meade, at the intersection of Latanes Mill and Dunbrooke Roads, had granaries and storehouses used by nearby Latané's Mill. A general store known as Sisson's was constructed on the site in the 1880s. The second store along Richmond Highway is an example of a mid-twentieth-century gas station and general store.

The religious needs of the Miller's Tavern area were met by six churches including two inside the district: St. Paul's Episcopal Church and Beulah Baptist Church. St. Paul's, at the intersection of Richmond Highway and Midway Road, was built in 1838. It is brick, built in Flemish bond, and has Federal and Gothic elements. St. Paul's was developed as an Anglican church and replaced two colonial brick churches, Upper and Lower Piscataway. It was the first church to feature the Hobart pulpit, which it has retained. The Hobart pulpit, with its placement in the center at the front of the church, instead on the side, emphasizes preaching. The placement can be traced to

the evangelical influences that arose in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Beulah Baptist church is on the west side of Latanes Mill Road at the intersection of Beulah Church Road. The present building was erected in 1893. It is a wood frame Queen Anne, ell-shaped building with a tower located within the ell. The African American congregation was organized in 1873 on the site of the 1774 Piscataway Baptist Church, which moved in 1818 and later became Mt. Zion Baptist Church at Dunbrooke.

Native American tribes lived in the area along the banks of Piscataway Creek and Western Branch. The Mattaponi Indian town was on the eastern side of Western Branch just across from Elton Farm. Also, the former locations of some of the district's earliest buildings (e.g., Miller's Tavern, Poplar Grove, Midway Female Academy) are known and have the potential to yield additional information about the area's prehistoric inhabitants, development as a stage-coach stop, and early residential and agricultural settlement history.

History of Miller's Tavern

Prior to the English settlement period, Essex County was inhabited by a Native American tribe referred to as the Rappahannock Tribe. Until the seventeenth century, the land now known as Essex County likely appealed to the Native Americans for its access to the Rappahannock River, numerous creeks and tributaries, and dense forests.

The original county in this part of Virginia was established as Northumberland County in 1645, which was subdivided into smaller counties. At the same time, Bartholomew Hoskins patented an area on the Rappahannock River, which later became known as Hobbs Hold or Hobbs His Hole. As a result of its prime



Mount Rescue



Old Post Office at Midway

location on the Rappahannock River, Hobbs Hold, or Tappahannock as it would later be known, quickly became a crucial port for river traffic and soon developed into a village. Essex County was formally established in 1692 and the town of Tappahannock was named the county seat.

Throughout the remainder of the seventeenth century and beginning of the eighteenth century, road systems leading to and from Tappahannock were developed. As late as the mid-eighteenth century a road extended southwestward from the port town across Hoskins Creek and Piscataway Creek to a crossing at the Mattaponi River toward the town of Richmond, which was laid out during the second quarter of the eighteenth century and eventually became the capital of Virginia in 1780. This southwestwardly road gained increased importance when it became the primary route between Tappahannock and the new state capital. During the first and second quarters of the eighteenth century, small communities developed along this stagecoach route, by then called Richmond Road.

The Miller's Tavern was constructed in the late-eighteenth century as a stop on this road. According to records on file at the DHR, the original core of the tavern was set on a raised brick basement and featured dormers, a stately chimney, and a cellar. Later additions overshadowed this early section. Miller's Tavern remained a visible part of the area's landscape until the late twentieth century when it was demolished.

In 1861 citizens of both Essex and King & Queen Counties gathered at Miller's Tavern to vote to secede from the Union. Selected quotes from the book, *Settlers, Southerners, Americans: The History of Essex County 1608–1984* by James B. Slaughter (pages 164–165) follow:

Essex was burning with Southern patriotism and anxious for Virginia to leave the Union ... Essex voters gathered at Millers Tavern on 1 February, 1861 ... to select a delegate to the State Convention making Virginia's decision on secession ... The convention wrote and adopted a set of resolutions expressing their views on the crisis. These Millers Resolutions of 1861 form one of the most important documents in Essex history ... The first resolution affirmed "the right of a sovereign State peacefully to withdraw from the Union for just and adequate cause." ... The second Millers Resolution committed Virginia to the defense of the South ... [The third resolved that] Virginia should secede immediately upon the assembling of the [state] Convention and at once unite with her sister southern states ... In the fourth and final Millers Resolutions, the Convention dismissed the last minute efforts to find compromise.

The historic roads that bound the Millers Tavern RHD began as Native American paths, which followed the high ground between the many creeks and branches. The English colonists adapted these paths upon their settlement. Modern Dunbrooke Road follows a path that crossed the Mattaponi River below Walkerton, then ran north past Miller Tavern and Dunbrooke, then headed northeast to Caret and Loretto, and up to the Portobacco Bay settlements. At one time it was named the King's Highway. Latanes Mill Road follows an alternate westerly route from Walkerton to Dunbrooke and takes its name from the old mill located along the road. The path of the colonial-era road that predated Latanes Mill Road is clearly visible for approximately a quarter mile across from Elton Farm. In the decades following the establishment of Miller's Tavern, landowners created several plantations (all farms were then known as plantations) with primary houses, outbuildings, and surrounding agricultural fields along the two roads.

A very old water-powered mill was built in a bowl formed by the intersection of Piscataway Creek and Western Branch. Records date to 1739 although there may have been earlier mills there. It became known as Latané's Mill in later years but has since fallen into ruins. All that remains is evidence of the brick foundation, the poured bases for the milling equipment, and the roof. The Latané's Mill miller's cottage overlooks the mill and is set on the hill that leads down to Piscataway Creek. It is possible that the cottage pre-dates the mill. The collapsed ruins of Latané's Mill are still visible from Latanes Mill Road

The first half of the nineteenth century brought with it an influx of non-residential development for Miller's Tavern including Wright's Mill, which was built at the headwaters of Western Branch. St. Paul's Church was established and a nearby school was formed.

The Midway Female Academy was started in the early nineteenth century by Dr. Jefferson Minor on Midway Road. This complex was once composed of several buildings including dormitories, a meat house, kitchen, dairy, office/post office, barns, and slave quarters. Today, all that is left is the office, which, according to local tradition, was used as the Miller's Tavern post office prior to the Civil War. The office/post office is a one-story, frame building clad in weatherboard and covered by a side-gabled roof.

In addition to the former Miller's Tavern building, there are two previously recorded dwellings that are no longer: Poplar Grove, located on Latanes Mill Road and constructed around 1770, and Snugly, a Sears Pattern House, constructed around 1880 and situated north of Richmond Highway just east of St. Paul's Church. Although these resources have not yet been formally recorded as archaeological sites, it has been noted the

soil around the former locations of these buildings is intact. The Indian settlements along Piscataway Creek and Western Branch also await potential archeological research. All these archaeological sites hold the possibility of yielding important information about the history and development of Miller's Tavern.

The Miller's Tavern area is significant for its architecture and rural landscape. It is a distinct cluster of farmhouses and outbuildings, industrial sites, historic commercial buildings, agricultural fields, creeks, and dense forests. Centuries of landowners have been good stewards of the Millers Tavern area. Designation as a Rural Historic District is well-deserved recognition.

Primary Contributing Resources

Suzanne Derieux supplied most of the historical information for the nomination form from which this article is heavily drawn.

The National Register of Historic Places

Registration Form: the nomination form submitted to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in August/September 2016 and approved at the December 15, 2016 meeting of the State Review Board, designating the Miller's Tavern an RHD.

Dovetail Cultural Resource Group, April 2013: its staff conducted the preliminary survey to determine if the Miller's Tavern area qualified for an RHD designation and wrote a description of the area.

Elizabeth Lipford, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, completed and shaped the nomination form for final submission to the State Review Board.

Settlers, Southerners, Americans: The History of Essex County 1608–1984 By James B. Slaughter.

Historic Sites in Virginia's Northern Neck & Essex County, edited by Thomas A. Wolf.

Born and raised in Minor, Virginia, Hylah Haile Boyd became aware of the beauty in nature, growing up at Elton Farm. She has dedicated years to conservation efforts in Virginia and has received numerous awards including the Garden Club of Virginia's de Lacy Gray's Award for conservation and the Garden Club of America's Cynthia Pratt Laughlin Medal for conservation. She founded Scenic Virginia in 1998, a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving, protecting and enhancing the Commonwealth's most important and historically significant vistas.



An aerial photograph showing a winding river or stream flowing through a lush green landscape. The river meanders across the terrain, creating a series of loops and curves. The surrounding land is a mix of vibrant green fields and dense forest. In the background, there are rolling hills and a clear sky with some light clouds. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic, highlighting the natural beauty of the area.

Too Much To Lose

Essex County's Rural Nature is Also its Economic Engine

by Woodie Walker,
Community Conservationist, Friends of the Rappahannock

Words like charming are often used to describe the landscape of Essex County. The county government's website rightly touts its pastoral charm, relaxing rural environment, access to vibrant cities and a "plethora of activities centered on the water." It's a beautiful way to describe Essex, whose character deserves to be celebrated and protected.

Looking at an aerial photo of the county, its relationship to water quickly stands out. The Rappahannock River, Occupacia Creek, Hoskins Creek, Dragon Run Swamp, Piscataway Creek and Mount Landing Creek are just some of the watersheds that drain the county's more than 167,000 acres. Nearly 30 of Essex County's 260 square miles are covered in water, and many of the county's backyards contain boats, canoes, or kayaks. The county has a population of just over 11,000, a mix of "come heres" and "from heres," the result of its proximity to Richmond, Norfolk and Fredericksburg, and a residual population of families who have been there, in some cases, for generations.



Fishing in Essex comes in two principal flavors: commercial fishing along the Rappahannock River, centered in Tappahannock, and sportfishing throughout the countryside.

Both of these groups share an appreciation for Essex County's quiet evenings, light traffic, and landscapes punctuated by lush green forests and rolling fields of corn and soybeans. At Friends of the Rappahannock (FOR), we are very concerned how this lifestyle could be changed forever by the hydrofracturing industry. We feel the county's citizens have valid alternative options when they consider the long-term health—economic, environmental, and otherwise—of their community.

In April 2017, American Rivers named the Rappahannock River the #5 Most Endangered River in the United States. The designation does not mean the Rappahannock is polluted. It's actually quite healthy, compared to other East Coast rivers. It is endangered because of the threat of fracking, the more common name for the process of injecting cocktails of industrial fluids under high pressure into subterranean rocks,

to release natural gas. Fracking isn't a new subject, of course. FOR has been working with residents and government officials of the Middle Peninsula and the Northern Neck for more than four years, exploring the benefits and risks associated with fracking, and we've found ourselves faced with a moment of great opportunity: Essex County is poised to protect its most precious and basic resources by minimizing the threat from fracking. Counties across the region are making similar decisions. It's a time of hope for natural spaces.

Protection from fracking does not require shutting the door on economic growth. More and more studies underscore the existing and potential value of forestry, farming, fishing, and eco-tourism to rural localities. Essex County's approximately 100 farms covered more than 53,000 acres in 2013, and the adoption of land-use taxation has improved the outlook for farms

remaining in families for generations to come. Agriculture and forestry contributed more than \$68 million in 2011 to Essex County's economy, and accounted for 10% of the county's jobs. Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting on the Middle Peninsula supported approximately 430 jobs in 2013, about 20% of the region's total, not counting the impact of support jobs that benefit from these industries.

Fishing in Essex comes in two principal flavors: commercial fishing along the Rappahannock River, centered in Tappahannock, and sportfishing throughout the countryside. Traditional working waterfronts now jostle for space with waterfront bedroom communities, but adaptive commercial fisherman are adjusting to sustainable harvest limits, creating new markets for species like blue catfish, and exploring the viability of aquaculture techniques. Sportfishing, marinas and boat facilities are important elements of eco-tourism, part of any economic growth plan when your main assets include woods and water. Statewide, about one-third of the more than \$1 billion derived annually from fishing is commercial in origin, while sportfishing makes up about two-thirds of the total. Such figures highlight the value of the "hook-and-bullet" crowd, whose licensing fees and activities promote conservation in so many ways.

In spite of eco-tourism's "pie-in-the-sky" veneer, the numbers don't lie. According to the 2013 Virginia Outdoors Plan, published by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Virginia "receives more than \$18 billion annually in economic benefit from outdoor recreation." The plan says bicycle trails, water trails, wildlife watching, fishing and hunting made up an \$871 million industry in the study year. According to the Virginia Tourism Corporation, domestic travelers in 2015 spent nearly \$40 million in Essex County on things like food, accommodations, entertainment and recreation. No wonder the DCR report lauds outdoor recreation as a \$646 billion industry nationwide. Economists get it: eco-tourism is real.

FOR supports keeping open pathways to prosperity the county has favored for many years. Those pathways literally lead from forest to field and creek to river. We applaud the realistic approach of the 2013 Middle Peninsula of Virginia's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, which states that the benefits to the region from fracking are "speculative and open for debate." We support the plan's assertion that "the natural resources of the Middle Peninsula of Virginia are the ingredients that make the local economy work." We encourage progressive growth that will protect the health of every citizen, and the

community in which they live, and industries that operate in an environmentally-friendly manner.

Consider the wastewater retention process, which FOR River Steward Richard Moncure calls "the principle threat to the region from fracking." Fracking wastewater is a toxic brew. Whether it is stored in retention ponds, which can overflow and contaminate nearby wells or surface water, or shipped over normally quiet county roads, fracking wastewater is a subject of extreme concern. There is also the question of where the immense amounts of water needed for fracking will come from in the first place. Local groundwater? The nearby stream? Trucked in? The risks seem overwhelming and unnecessary, especially when compared to a sustainable plan that continues to respect the inherent value of Essex County's existing clean water and rural landscape.

"The Rappahannock River was named the fifth most endangered river in America for a reason," said Moncure. "American Rivers recognizes the negative impacts which have been documented in other communities, and decided that our river, and our regional community, have too much to lose. The good news is, we can do something about it right now. We can prevent a toxic situation. We can be proactive and avoid that situation in the first place."

Woodie Walker has worked for Friends of the Rappahannock for nearly four years, organizing outreach events, recruiting new members, and leading interpretive trips along the river. A native of Chesapeake, he is an avid angler and loves Colonial-era history. He has two daughters and three grandchildren, all of whom share his passion for nature, and especially, rivers.



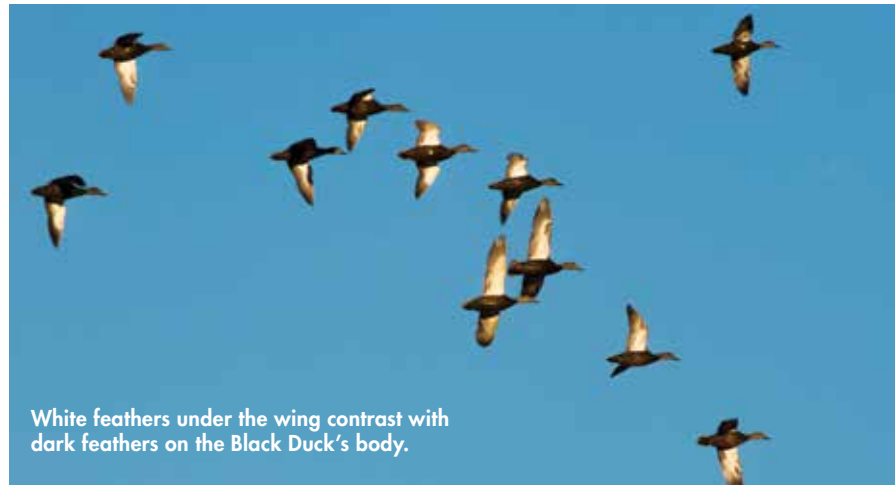
The American Black Duck

a Rappahannock Species of "Priority Concern"

by Hill Wellford

In its annual magazine for 2015, The ECCA published an article on the American Black Duck written by Ben Lewis, a waterfowl biologist with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. Lewis noted that Black Ducks which winter in the marshes along the Rappahannock are a species of "priority concern" for wildlife biologists. Ben Lewis pointed out that Black Ducks were at one time the "most abundant" duck in eastern North America prior to experiencing a steep decline in its population which reached "an all-time low in the 1980s."

Mr. Lewis' article also referenced the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) and the Black Duck Joint Venture in which VDGIF participates which were adopted in the later half of the 1980s to address the causes of species decline and to develop strategies for conserving habitat and sustaining waterfowl populations. As described in Ben Lewis' article, VDGIF, in coordination with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and other state conservation agencies, annually engages in a monitoring and banding effort in the Chesapeake Bay's tributaries to estimate the number of Black Ducks that winter in Virginia and to assess the availability of habitat which Black Ducks need for the species to survive. This data, along with comparable information from research projects by waterfowl biologists in other states, allows conservation agencies to estimate



the number of Black Ducks that use the Atlantic flyway and to allocate resources to protect and enhance the growth of the remaining Black Duck population.

This article supplements Ben Lewis' article on Black Ducks, and is written from the perspective of a duck hunter, waterfowl enthusiast, and wildlife photographer.

Interesting Facts and Observations about Black Ducks

1. The continental breeding goal established by the NAWMP for Black Ducks, revised in 2004, is 640,000, which is based on the 1990 estimate of the species. Today the population of Black Ducks is only about half of the number that existed in the early 1950s.
2. The goal for the Chesapeake Bay watershed is to restore, enhance and preserve habitats that would support a wintering population of 100,000 Black Ducks by 2025. The survey results for 2013-2015 for the Chesapeake Bay watershed showed an average of 51,332 Black Ducks, a slight improvement over the prior survey.

This is approximately 51 percent of the goal and far less than the estimate of 200,000 Black Ducks that at one time wintered in the Chesapeake region. Nevertheless, the latest survey estimates are encouraging and may indicate that the decline in the number of Black Ducks in the Chesapeake Bay watershed has finally stabilized.

3. VDGIF lists the American Black Duck as a "Species of Greatest Conservation Need" under the Virginia Wildlife Action Plan.
4. As shown in the photographs accompanying this article, the Black Duck is actually dark or dusky brown, with a violet-blue

or purple wing patch and white feathers under the wing. It has a dark eye stripe running from the eye to the back of the head. Unlike other duck species, the plumage of the male and female Black Duck is almost identical. A distinguishing feature is the color of their bills. The male's bill is more yellow whereas the female's bill is a darker olive color. The Black Duck male is usually slightly larger than the female. Because Mallards and Black Ducks often share the same habitat, it is not unusual to see a hybrid.

5. Black Ducks begin nesting in March, about the time Osprey arrive, usually in secluded areas of a marsh or other wetland habitat. The female may lay 6-12 eggs which hatch in approximately 30 days.
6. Black Ducks generally return in the fall and winter to the rivers and marshes where they fed and roosted in the previous year. Some Black Ducks may choose to live in the Chesapeake Bay region throughout most of the year.
7. Long time waterfowl hunters usually have a profound respect for the Black Duck. Black Ducks tend to be wary and

will frequently tease hunters by circling decoys from a distance, only to land well out of range. They usually fly in pairs or alone, rather than in a large flock. They are hearty ducks who seem to be unaffected by harsh weather conditions that punish the hunter.

8. The Black Duck has been referred to as the "gold standard" of eastern waterfowl. It is typically found on the edges of tidal rivers, in marshes or forested swamps, not in man made ponds. The Black Duck's diet will vary with location and seasons but it typically feeds on the seeds of wetland plants, roots, berries, and crustaceans. Its presence is often viewed by biologists as an indicator of wetland health and plant diversity.
9. Ducks can live for many years. The record age for the oldest American Black Duck is 26 years and 5 months.
10. For many years, Virginia waterfowl hunters have been restricted to a 1-bird daily limit for Black Ducks. For reasons which make no sense to this hunter, the limit will be increased to a 2-bird limit for the 2017-2018 waterfowl season.

VDGIF's Monitoring and Banding of Black Ducks in the Marshes of the Rappahannock

Since 2014, VDGIF biologists under the supervision of Ben Lewis have captured and banded Black Ducks in the Beverley Marsh on the Rappahannock. This activity is part of a collaborative project between states in the Atlantic Flyway to band Black Ducks in their wintering areas. This project allows waterfowl biologists to evaluate and report on differences in rates of survival

and harvest between black ducks banded in the pre-hunting season on their breeding grounds in Canada and Black Ducks captured and banded in the post-hunting season on their wintering grounds in the United States. The marshes in the stretch of the Rappahannock from Tappahannock to Port Royal host some of the highest concentrations of Black Ducks in the Chesapeake



Cindy Anchor holds a Black Duck captured in a swim-in trap.



The violet-blue wing patch is a distinguishing feature of the Black Duck.



From left to right, Dylan Bakner, Cindy Anchor, and Devin Jen prepare to band ducks caught with a rocket net.



Ducks captured with a rocket net are secured in crates prior to banding.



After banding, the ducks are released back into the marsh.



Dylan Bakner prepares to release two Green-winged Teal.

region. In 2014, one of the Black Ducks captured and released in the Beverley Marsh after the end of the hunting season was a female banded in the pre-hunting season in southwest Quebec, Canada. This female Black Duck had traveled approximately 750 miles to spend the winter on the Rappahannock.

VDGIF's most recent banding effort on the Rappahannock took place in the Beverley Marsh in February and March of 2017. In that effort, VDGIF staff used both swim-in traps and a rocket net to capture, band, and release ducks. The swim-in traps captured 8 Black Ducks, 2 Mallards, and 2 Black Duck-dominant Mallard hybrids. The rocket net captured 23 Black Ducks, 9 Mallards, and 2 Green Winged Teal. Included in the rocket net catch was a female Black Duck that had

originally been banded on August 23, 2014 in La Croche, Quebec, Canada.

The photographs in this article are of the three DGIF representatives who performed the capture and banding exercise in the Beverley Marsh in February and March, 2017. They are Cynthia Anchor, Dylan Bakner, and Devin Jen. The enthusiasm and professionalism they exhibited as they performed this project and their careful and gentle handling of the ducks was inspirational. It was a privilege for this old duck hunter to have the opportunity to meet Cindy, Dylan and Devin and to watch them work. VDGIF can be justly proud of the manner in which Ben Lewis and his team have performed the Black Duck banding project on the Rappahannock.

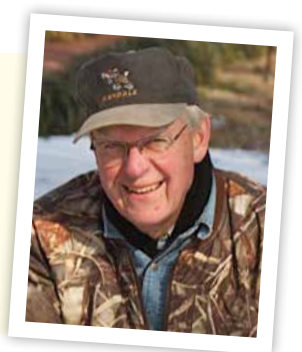
Hill Wellford, Kendale Farm

All photographs displayed in this article were taken by Hill Wellford.

Sources for the Interesting Facts section of this article are the following internet sites:

- American Black Duck Facts- USF&WS
- American Black Duck - Whatbird.com
- American Black Duck - Audubon Field Guide
- American Black Duck - Chesapeake Bay Program
- Chesapeake Bay Program - Black Duck Outcome
- Ducks Unlimited - American Black Duck - Waterfowl ID
- Hinterland Who's Who - American Black Duck
- VDGIF - American Black Duck - Change in Hunting Regulations 2017-2018

Hill Wellford and his wife, Alice, are co-owners of Kendale Farm in Essex County. Hill is a graduate of Davidson College and the University of North Carolina Law School. Upon his graduation from law school in 1967, Hill joined the law firm of Hunton & Williams and for many years held the position of Group Head of the firm's labor, litigation and antitrust attorneys. Hill is a member of the ECCA's Board of Directors. Hill and Alice are advocates for the use of conservation easements to protect critical wildlife habitat and natural resource areas.



Rappahannock Retracing Their Past

by Joe McCauley



Chief Anne Richardson
and Joe McCauley

In 1940 Thomas Wolfe wrote *You Can't Go Home Again*, a novel about finding one's identity in the modern world. In popular American speech, the phrase has come to mean it is impossible to relive the optimistic expectations of youth once you have experienced the world as an adult. Perhaps so, but through the Indigenous Cultural Landscapes (ICL) initiative, the Chesapeake Conservancy and the National Park Service intend to turn that concept around for the American Indian tribes of the Chesapeake region and demonstrate that in some respects, you can go home again.

The ICL initiative is an attempt to identify and map geographic areas where Chesapeake tribes once lived, where they worked the land, fished and hunted, gathered materials for pottery, weaponry, and utensils, and where they fought for survival against the English incursion. ICLs are defined as trail-related resources for the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail in its Comprehensive Management Plan. From the National Park Service and Chesapeake Conservancy perspective, identifying and mapping these places help us achieve one of the trail's three goals: "to share knowledge about the American Indian societies and cultures of the 17th century." Equally important, this initiative provides an opportunity for Chesapeake American Indian tribes to, in a sense, go home again. This collaboration among the tribes, the Chesapeake Conservancy, and the National Park Service is also critical to achieving another of the goals of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake Trail: "to interpret the natural history of the Bay (both historic and contemporary)."



Historical Marker

Tribal members at Beverley Marsh with Fones Cliff in the background from left Barbara Williams, Cochise Fortune, Chief Anne Richardson, Reeva Tilley, Mark Fortune, Dana Mulligan, and Col. John Fortune (USA retired).

The ICL concepts and opportunities came together beautifully on a warm, blustery April day when six members of the Rappahannock Tribe, including Chief Anne Richardson, visited several sites along the Rappahannock River and two tidal tributaries. Tribal members were joined by archeologists from St. Mary's College of Maryland, along with staff from the National Park Service and Chesapeake Conservancy. Stops included Sabine Hall, which may have been the site of the Rappahannock town of Toppahanock; Cobham Farm, where the Rappahannock dug clay for pottery even into the 1960s; and Totuskey Creek, which formed one boundary of the land grant to Moore Fauntleroy, which that resulted in one of many moves the Rappahannock were forced to make by the English.

The day was filled with excitement and discovery. Most tribal members had never before visited these sites with the exception of Cobham Farm, where Chief Anne remembered digging clay for pottery when she was a teenager. Vestiges of the Packett family campground that once thrived there along the Rappahannock River still remain and brought back memories from decades past. At Menokin, the ancestral home of Francis Lightfoot Lee, the group toured the visitor center where artifacts from the original eighteenth-century building are on display. Of particular note for the Rappahannock was an engraved "X" in a mantelpiece that resembled one they had seen on a seventeenth-century treaty. Was it the same mark used as a signature by the tribal leader who signed the treaty?

This is just one of many questions that surfaced throughout the day and during another similar visit in early May. In fact, there are now more questions in search of answers than before the ICL Rappahannock initiative was begun. Does an Essex County farm hold remnants of palisade walls erected by the Rappahannock? If so, it would be the first such palisade documented along the river. Where are the exact locations of the many Indian towns mapped by Captain John Smith along the Rappahannock River? To date, none have been accurately mapped or documented.

During the second of the two trips, the group visited Beverly Marsh, a special place whose history is unquestioned. On August 18, 1608, as Smith's shallow approached the narrowest part of the river at what is now called Fones Cliff, Rappahannock bowmen let loose a volley of arrows directed toward the English. Smith had erected shields along the gunwales of his boat, so the arrows did no harm. The event is exquisitely captured in Smith's writings and there is little doubt as to the location, with the high white cliffs being a prominent feature in the story. What remains in doubt is the future of this ecological and historic treasure as Richmond County has approved two development proposals that would place hundreds of homes and townhouses atop Fones Cliff. While Beverly Marsh is permanently protected through the generosity of the Wellford family, Fones Cliff is highly threatened.

From Smith's journals and maps, it is believed that at least one, and perhaps more, Rappahannock towns existed on the Fones Cliff properties, but no archeological

work as been performed. As Chief Anne noted during the May visit to Beverly Marsh, “I was amazed to find the places we frequented on the south side of the river were directly across from historic towns on the north side of the river.” But exactly where those towns were remains unknown.

The entire Fones Cliff ecosystem is within the boundary of the Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge and efforts are ongoing to bring the properties into public ownership, or at a minimum, protect them via conservation easements. If they were to come into public ownership, it would provide opportunities for tribal members, young and old, to visit their ancestral lands. It would provide equal opportunities for visitors from around the nation and the world to experience what it must have been like to be there in 1608, since the landscape is remarkably intact with few intrusions of twenty-first-century habitation.

Documentation is key to the ICL project and any similar archeological endeavor. Investigators, in this case from St. Mary’s College, the National Park Service, and the Rappahannock tribe, are attempting to piece together what is known from historic records with oral history to get as close to the truth as possible. The St. Mary’s team is using geographic information systems to map the best corn-growing soils, high-resource marshes, fresh-water sources, and routes of travel among other key ingredients for pre-seventeenth-century survival. Those layers are augmented by reports of known archeological sites maintained by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. What sets the ICL initiative apart is the added layer provided by the Rappahannock themselves, who have incorporated their oral and written history in the mix, which will provide the most comprehensive mapping project of its kind for indigenous occupation along the river.

When completed, the Rappahannock ICL report will have multiple uses. Areas mapped as having a high probability of being sites of occupation and utilization by the Rappahannock Tribe can provide another layer of information for those who wish to conserve their lands. Adding this information to known priority areas for fish and wildlife, for example, will help focus efforts to work with willing landowners who are interested in both habitat and cultural resource conservation. Participation in the endeavor is encouraging the tribe in ongoing efforts to revisit their cultural heritage and relearn the traditional skills involved.

The ICL work will also help identify those sites that warrant further investigation by archeologists on public land, and with landowner concurrence, on private lands as well. There is great public interest in the pre-seventeenth-century indigenous use and habitation of the Chesapeake Bay region, as evidenced by well-attended public lectures on the subject. Public land managers have a duty to understand where important cultural resources exist on lands they manage, so they can both protect these sites and interpret them for the visiting public. Private landowners too have shown great interest in knowing where on their property these sites exist so they can avoid accidentally damaging resources that are vital to our understanding of the earliest days of what would become the United States of America.

And then there are the Rappahannock themselves, without whom the ICL project would be just another academic exercise. Tribal members’ recollections, research, and willingness to become fully engaged in the process are what set the ICL initiative apart from more traditional archeological endeavors. Where this path will ultimately lead only time will tell. But for now it offers hope for the Rappahannock and other Chesapeake tribes that you can go home again.

*This article is reprinted from Living Landscape Observer: livinglandscapeobserver.net
All photos courtesy of St. Mary’s College of Maryland*

Joe McCauley retired in 2015 after thirty-two years with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and now serves as the Chesapeake Fellow for the Chesapeake Conservancy (www.chesapeakeconservancy.org). Joe can be reached at jmccauley@chesapeakeconservancy.org.



Pound Net Fishing on the Upper Rappahannock



Wayne Fisher and his son, Aaron, bringing in a boat load of catfish.

by Marty Taylor



Wayne Fisher unloading the morning's catch.



Albert Oliff hefts a large catfish.

Blustery wind and a driving rain kept Albert Oliff, seventy-eight, and his partner Wayne Fisher, fifty, on shore long enough recently to talk to Hill Wellford and me about the fish netting operation they run daily, April through November, near Carter's Wharf and Leedstown. The partners set four nets, placing two off Beverley Marsh on the Essex side of the river and two off Leedstown. Off Beverley Marsh, the river narrows as the marsh juts into the stream, creating an ideal situation for fish to spawn.

Pound fishing is not for the casual outdoorsman. Statistics bear that out. The nets are long, heavy, and expensive to maintain. Each requires 125 poles; the net is 450 feet long, with 150 yards of net measured from the end to the pound (place where the fish become trapped). Each net is made of rope. (Upriver, nylon and polypropylene is used because it tangles less. Downriver, an antifouling paint is applied to the rope. The cost of this paint for two nets is \$2,700).

"We can manage to fish only two nets a day," Wayne said.

It's a labor-intensive operation with two boats being required for each net: one boat to go inside the compound, or pound, and lift the net with a hydraulic winder; the other to transport the fish to shore. The smaller boat goes into the pound to release the net from moorings. When the net floats upward, fish are dumped onto a culling board to be sorted. Some small ones are tossed overboard to be captured by eagles circling greedily overhead, but most fish are loaded into the larger boat. The catch can range from 15 to 18,000 pounds a day.

“The eagles know our schedule,” the men said with a laugh. They don’t consider them a problem, but cormorants are different, “The cormorant will bite a hole in the head of our good fish. We’d like to keep them away.”

They’d also like to keep away those they call weekend warriors: boaters who speed through the nets, tearing out sections, causing the men to mend them on-site or even take the entire net to shore for repair. Nature, as well, can be cruel. Flooding upriver as far away as Rappahannock, Culpeper, and Orange Counties can create a force that tears the nets.

Catfish and mud shad are their cash crops, but they also get perch and the protected striped bass. When the moon is full, scale fish are plentiful, they say. When it is dark, they catch more catfish. They sell to a wholesaler in Colonial Beach, who ships shad to Louisiana to be used for

crawfish bait and catfish to Maine for lobster pots.

The area off Beverley Marsh is an important site for scientific research. The men save all striped bass beyond their quota in a floating net sac so that scientists from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science can assess the health of the river by their numbers. Herring, American shad and sturgeon also are protected. They are being seen in larger numbers since the destruction of the Embrey Dam above Fredericksburg. The presence of sturgeon, the watermen say, indicate the improving health of the Rappahannock.

Like all fishermen, Albert and Wayne have stories to tell. Some involve bird rescue, but the most unusual one has been passed on since the day Stanley Oliff, Albert’s brother, was one of the partners. Stanley died in 2015, but this story he told lives on.



Albert and Stanley Oliff at work repairing one of their pound nets.



Stanley Oliff at the helm of his boat the "Privateer."

STANLEY'S SNAKE STORY

A fierce Nor'easter was blowing the men out of the river when they looked back at their net and saw a black snake in the pocket. Although they felt bad about leaving the snake, they kept moving toward shore.

The next morning they motored back out when the tide was rising to find the snake almost submerged with only four inches of his head sticking above water. Hurriedly, before it drowned, they released it and watched as it made its way to shore. The snake had almost reached the cliffs when it seemed to change its mind. It turned around and came directly back to the boat where the men sat, watching. It paused at the boat, raised its head and looked each man in the eye, and then turned and went back to the cliffs.

Albert and Wayne, like Stanley, have the river and its creatures in their DNA. The ebb and flow of the current is as much a part of them as the air they breathe. The river’s health is their health, not merely their livelihood. Development, increased boating, loss of farmland and woodland, erosion, chemical runoff, sewer pollution—these cause them more than economic anxiety. They feel the pain for each natural creature that will lose its habitat and even life.

Albert and Wayne work the last pound nets on the Rappahannock from Leedstown to Sharps, but Wayne’s twenty-two-year-old son hopes to follow his father—that is, if the primary spawning area on the Rappahannock is not destroyed. Perhaps, one day, the young man will have a story to tell about an appreciative rock fish. There is always hope.

Marty is a Tappahannock resident, transplanted from the downriver village of Morattico. Her soon-to-be-released book entitled “Place of Rising and Falling Water” about Tappahannock will be available at the Essex Museum, as are her other books “The River Me” and “From Some Full Heart”.





Credit Where Credit Is Due

Virginia's Agricultural Resource Management Plan Program Aims to Quantify Farmers' Use of Voluntary Conservation Practices

Waring and his son stand among the cover crops that protect their farm's soil.



by Julie Buchanan

As a third-generation Essex County farmer, Rob Waring wants to continue his family legacy of caring for the Rappahannock River.

While the farm is enrolled in federal and state conservation programs, the Warings have implemented many practices on their own to protect water quality. They've invested time, money, and energy to preserve soil and water resources.

Waring, seventy-two years old, doesn't feel alone in that effort.

"I think farmers are eager to become better stewards of the land," he said. "Many of them are doing the right thing."

Waring's farm is one of a handful certified recently under a state program that aims to better document farmers' use of voluntary practices that protect water quality. Through the Resource Management Plan program (RMP), farmers are encouraged to implement a suite of practices that benefit their operation and reduce the farm's impact on local rivers and streams.

In return for their participation, farmers are deemed to be in compliance over the next nine years with any new state nutrient or sediment water-quality requirements.

The Virginia General Assembly approved legislation establishing the program in 2011. State and federal agencies, conservation groups, soil and water conservation districts, and agricultural commodity groups worked together over the following three years to develop the program's regulations. It launched in the summer of 2014 with support from both the agricultural and environmental communities.

At the time, the RMP was only the fifth of its kind in the country and the first such program among states in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

It's managed by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the agency also responsible for the state's agricultural best management practice cost-share program, of which

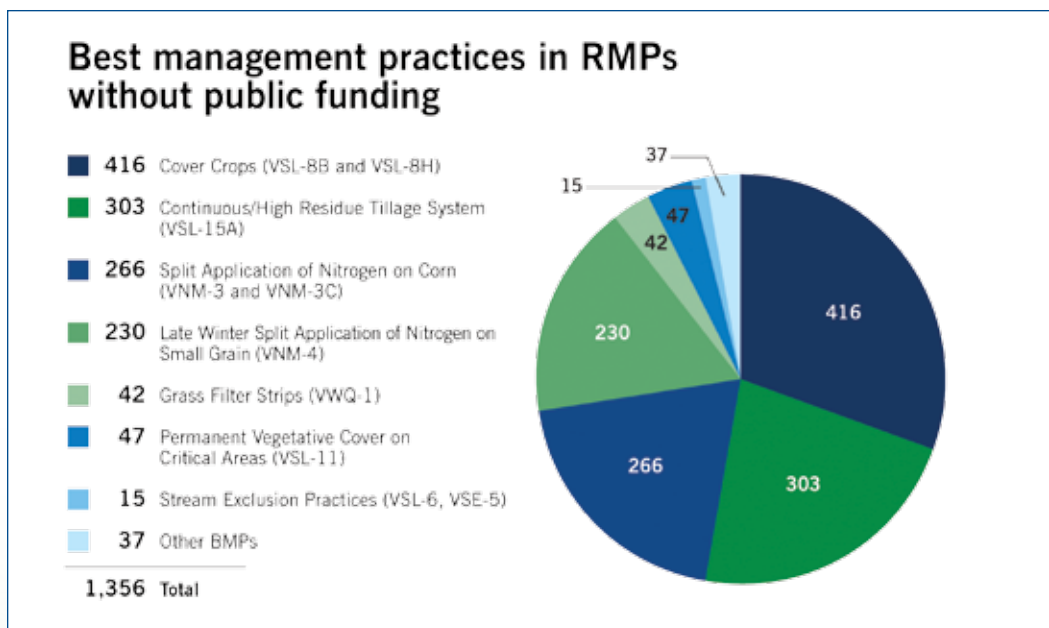
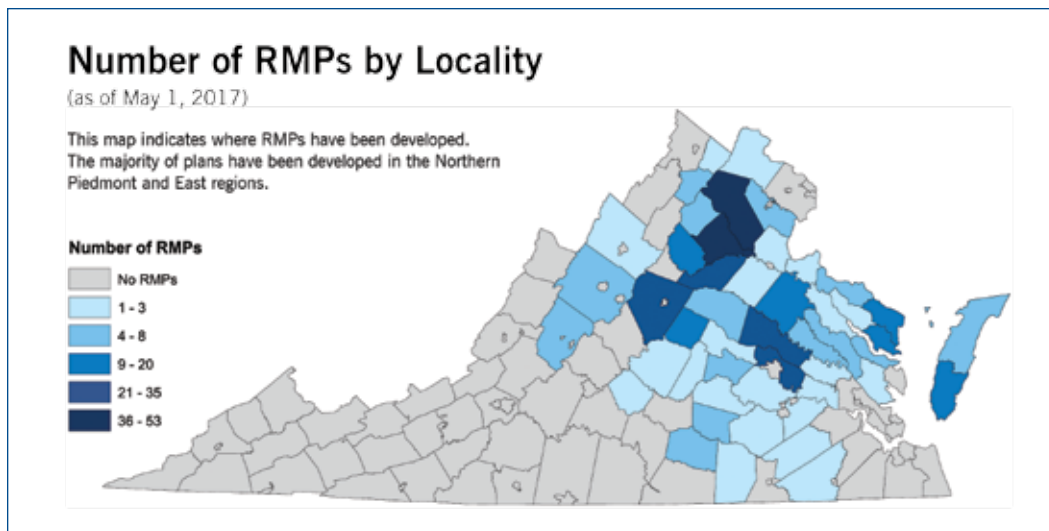
the RMP is an important component. The state's forty-seven soil and water conservation districts help implement the program.

RMPs can help farmers be more efficient and profitable. When fully implemented, the practices required for RMP certification, and those that are voluntarily included, can lead to wiser use of fertilizers, increased yields, and improved livestock health.

The assurance afforded through the certification also can give farmers greater confidence as they plan for investments in their operations.

"The resource management plan helps farmers get credit for what they're doing," Waring said. "It bothers me that the blame for what's wrong with our rivers and the Chesapeake Bay always falls on the farmer."

A similar concern had been voiced by the agricultural community at large, including statewide groups such as the Virginia Farm Bureau and the Virginia Agribusiness Council. They said farmers' voluntary contributions



to clean rivers and streams weren't being adequately documented in state progress reports to the US Environmental Protection Agency. The regular reports are mandated as part of Virginia's agreement with the federal government to reduce nutrient and sediment loads entering state waters and, ultimately, the Chesapeake Bay.

Prior to the launch of the program, only practices that were being implemented through cost-sharing programs were being captured for state reports. Agriculture is one of several sectors required to act in the cleanup effort. Others include stormwater, wastewater, and septic.

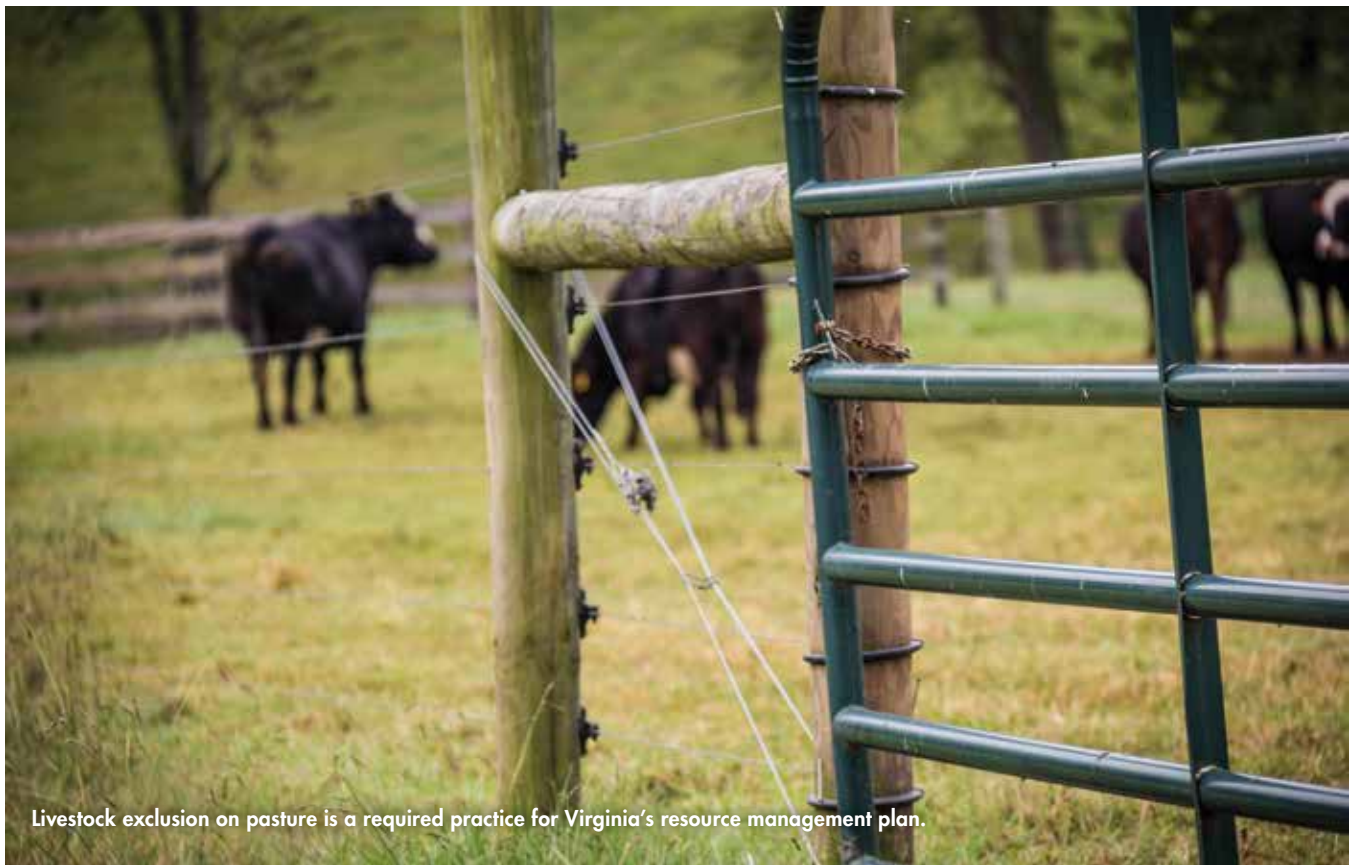
"The RMP Program really stresses documentation of voluntarily adopted best management practices," said Scott Ambler, one of the program's coordinators

at DCR. "Documenting those practices can help the agricultural community meet the goals of Virginia's Chesapeake Bay watershed cleanup plan and other water-quality plans across the commonwealth."

This information is useful in helping Virginia meet its cleanup goals and in determining future funding needs for programs such as agricultural cost-share.

Plan Specifics

Similar to agricultural nutrient management plans, RMPs must be written by developers who've been trained and certified by the DCR, which provides a list of these private-sector developers at its website. Farmers may choose to cover their whole farm with an RMP or just a portion of it. Each plan is unique and addresses specific needs of the farm or field.



Livestock exclusion on pasture is a required practice for Virginia's resource management plan.

The minimum requirements of a plan are:

- Thirty-five-foot buffers on perennial streams on crop and hay land.
- Livestock exclusion from perennial streams in pastures.
- The development of a soil conservation plan to "T," or soil tolerance, a nutrient management plan on all included fields and cover crops, where needed.

Once a farmer decides to pursue an RMP, the first step is a farm assessment. A plan developer visits the farm to evaluate the land and agricultural best management practices that are already in place. The developer will recommend any additional practices that are necessary to meet the RMP certification and discuss a timeline for implementing them with the farmer (the plan captures voluntary practices that are being, or could be, considered to improve water quality).

Once the required practices have been implemented, a technical review committee from the local soil and water conservation district and the developer must independently verify that the practices set forth in the RMP are on the ground and functioning. Once this verification is complete, the plan may be certified by the DCR and the nine-year period of exemption from new state water-quality requirements can begin.



Essex County farmer Rob Waring.

RMPs can help farmers be more efficient and profitable. When fully implemented, the practices required for RMP certification, and those that are voluntarily included, can lead to wiser use of fertilizers, increased yields, and improved livestock health.



Soybeans waiting to be harvested on Rob Waring's Essex County farm.



Waring harvests soybeans at the Essex County farm.

Verification visits continue at least once every three years for the life of the plan to ensure that required practices are maintained and functioning.

Al Dews is one of the private-sector developers working to increase participation in RMPs. He's based in the eastern part of the state where row-crop and small-grain operations dominate.

"If you're not currently in the state's cost-share programs for cover crops or no-till, then it's assumed by the Chesapeake Bay reporting model that you're not doing anything to help protect water quality," said Dews, whose clients include about twenty farmers working toward certification. "The RMP process shines a truer light on what's actually happening on the farm."

His strategy is to promote the RMP certification to farmers who already have some of the required practices. Like many farmers, most of his clients are farming leased land.

"What I've found is that the work leading up to the certification has actually strengthened the relationships between farmers and landowners," he said. "Large landowners like conservation, and they like knowing their land is being taken care of."

Help with Costs

The RMP is part of the state's overall program for cost-sharing agricultural best-management practices with farmers. The state provides \$10 per eligible acre in cost-share funds for the development of an RMP (not to exceed \$6,500 per plan), and later, \$5 per eligible acre during implementation (not to exceed \$3,250 per plan).

In addition, farmers who reach RMP certification may receive priority consideration for cost-share funding for the best-management practices required for their plan.

Participation in the RMP is voluntary, and farmers' personal information, such as names and addresses, are kept private.

Gazing out at the Rappahannock, swollen from spring rains, Waring continues to focus on the need for conservation. Without programs such as the RMP, he wonders about the future of farming for Virginians like him.

"In the long run, these programs are important so you can keep your land productive," he said. "I want to keep farming the land I've got. I don't know of any more land that's being found, and I haven't heard of any new rivers. We've got to protect what we've got."

For information on the RMP, visit www.dcr.virginia.gov/rmp.

Julie Buchanan is a communications specialist for the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. She specializes in communications for soil and water conservation, outdoor recreation planning, dam safety, and floodplain management. Julie joined the DCR in 2010. She lives in Henrico County.



Elton Farm:

A Virginia Century Forest Farm

by Hylah Haile Boyd

Elton Farm in central Essex County received recognition as a Virginia Century Forest Farm last November 21st in a ceremony held at James Madison's Montpelier. It was one of twenty-three Virginia farms across the state, and the only one in Essex to be included in the nation's first Century Forest program, which was launched last year, following legislation signed by the governor. The program recognizes Virginia families that have owned working forestlands for more than 100 years and hope to keep their woodlands intact, in forest, and in their family for years to come.

Elton Farm, already designated a Century Farm, one of four in the county, is owned by Dr. and Mrs. John R. Haile and their son, John F. E. Haile. The farm has been in the family for 172 years. It was purchased for John Haile in 1844 by his father, Robert Gaines Haile Sr., who lived at nearby Beaver's Hill. Until 1950, the farm featured a sawmill that milled walnut railroad ties. John F. Haile, the grandson of the original John Haile, placed the farm's first forest management plan in place in 1950.

To qualify for the Century Forest designation, property must have been owned by the same family for at least 100 consecutive years, include at least twenty contiguous acres of managed forest, be lived on or managed by a descendant of the original owners, and have a history of timber harvests or forest management activities. The



Photo credit Virginia Department of Forestry

John and Patricia Haile receiving recognition at James Madison's Montpelier from the Virginia Century Forest program administered by the Virginia Department of Forestry.

program is designed to encourage landowners to keep their land in production.

The Virginia Department of Forestry notes "nearly two-thirds, or 10 million acres, of Virginia's woodlands are controlled by family forest landowners. The decisions they make to manage and conserve them are crucial to sustaining the commonwealth's \$17 billion timber industry." It goes on to state, "Virginia's agriculture and forest industries contribute a combined \$70 billion annually to the state's economy and timber is the third-largest contributing sector."

The Virginia Century Forest program recognizes the forest heritage of families and the future challenges to keeping their forestlands intact.



John Haile-Minor Va. Essex Co. - Trees planted in 1940 as planned by Tidewater Soil Conservation District. Haile has already thinned these pines for pulpwood-Net returns \$50.00 per acre. Photo courtesy of Virginia Forestry Association

Hylah Haile Boyd and John Haile's father and his dog Midge from mid 1950's.

Why Essex County?

by Ralph Harvard

Essex County has always had a strong draw for me. I grew up making the day-long drive from Richmond to a river house on the Rappahannock near Bowler's Wharf. The old brick house had been taken by the water, although there were plenty of bricks left on the bank and the beach. Maybe that's where I first got my interest in brickwork and archaeology. There was a tiny spring where we kept watermelons cold, and we fished and crabbed and napped in an old hammock. It was idyllic.

Those good parts of Essex haven't changed. It's still incredibly rural and quiet, a place to relax or get out on the water. Long and narrow, the county hugs the Rappahannock from the Dragon Swamp almost all the way up to the colonial town of Port Royal, and the hunting and fishing are unsurpassed. But I am mostly drawn to the architecture and the people. Essex probably has the best collection of fine 18th century architecture as any county in Virginia, from the small but important court buildings in Tappahannock to the mansions set along the river. Superb craftsmanship and spectacular settings are the hallmarks of the early buildings, which proliferate in the county, and even the smaller frame houses are built with distinction and character. The people of Essex from the early days have been superb stewards of both their architectural and cultural landscape. Even today, Essex is proud to have over 23,000 acres protected.

And old-fashioned Southern hospitality still abounds. An English traveler to Tappahannock in the 18th century wrote, "This being court day, the town is very full. Though what they come for, God only knows, excepting its to get drunk." Well, spirits and conviviality are still well dispensed in Essex and there is almost always some reason to have a party or at least a friendly get-to-gather.

Essex Court House

Vauter's Episcopal Church



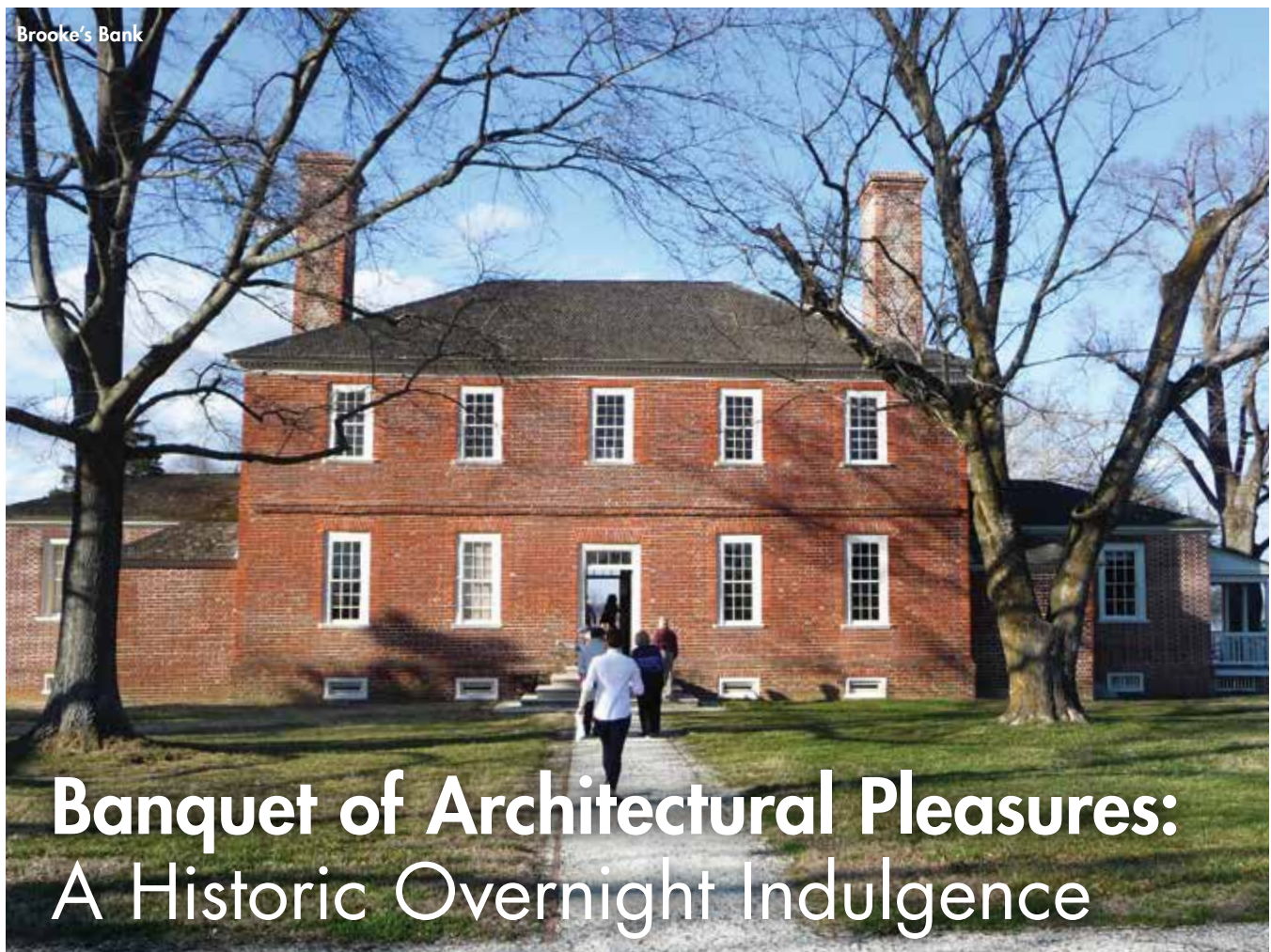
Photo credit Wes Pippenger



Port Micou



The Glebe



by Suzanne Derieux

Join creative, mad building Chef Ralph Harvard for a two-day, multicourse, architectural feast deep into one of Virginia's most historic but undeveloped peninsulas. The area has a diverse menu of both sweet and savory colonial architecture; scrambled vernacular and sizzling Georgian dwellings, as well as tasty obscure and remote treats. We will begin with an amuse bouche; rare English bond in the Flemish taste, followed by lots of rubbed finger-licking bricks and salt-glazed headers, a baker's dozen engraved bricks, and for dessert, a Vanbrugian Delight. We will tarry along the way at the spectacular site of an early 18th century banqueting house, a dwelling owned by Washington descendants, a glebe or two, and other morsels of architectural relish. Real sustenance includes two fine southern lunches, a hearty plantation breakfast, and maybe, even a fantastic candlelit dinner in the greatest great hall in Virginia, and of course, the requisite Harvard libations.

—*Colonial Williamsburg Antiques Forum, 2017*

Left: House at Port Micou



Right: Stairway at Port Micou



A choice of overnight bus trips are offered each year as part of Colonial Williamsburg's Annual Antique Forum, and this year one tour included Essex and Westmoreland Counties. It was led by Ralph Harvard, a Richmond-born architectural historian and interior decorator, who has spent the last thirty years in New York, building a highly regarded practice. His restoration of a house in Annapolis won awards from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Historic Annapolis Foundation.

Mr. Harvard's group arrived at Vauter's Church at 11:30 a.m. for a study of the church's brickwork. He noted the English bond, with rubbed bricks and salt-glazed headers, saying that "almost 300 years ago, when this church was new, the glazing would have been blinding, and the church visible for miles." Mr. MacDowell Garrett gave the group a short history and showed off the interior. Although the box pews and the pulpit have been cut down, this is still a superb example of a colonial Anglican church.

After a quick round of Harvard libations, the tour continued to Port Micou to view the recently restored barn/granary. This was a work of great love by the owners, Hannes and Susan van Wagenberg, who finished the building with crossed horse-head gable decorations, not a common motif in Tidewater Virginia.

A fine Southern lunch (by Prue H. Davis, including ham biscuits and vegetable soup) was offered at Wheatland, where Mr. Peter Bance gave a short talk on the history of the house, followed by a tour of the wharf. Wheatland is a mid-1840s Greek-revival property, with double-height porches and unusual interior double chimneys, instead of end chimneys. Its wharf was a major steamboat stop for upper Essex County and operated from the 1840s to the 1930s. It is one of very few wharfs left on the Rappahannock, and the only wharf left in Essex County.



Barn at Port Micou



Saunders Wharf at Wheatland

The wharf at Wheatland was a major steamboat stop for upper Essex County and operated from the 1840s to the 1930s. It is one of very few wharfs left on the Rappahannock, and the only wharf left in Essex County.



Glen Cairn

A glebe was a house and farm provided by the Anglican Church to its ministers to help with their support.



The Glebe

The next stop was Glen Cairn, where we were met by Mr. Cameron Wood and his corgi. His wife, Nancy, was taking part in the tour and agreed to open the house for Mr. Harvard. Glen Cairn is a lovely example of Tidewater vernacular property, frame with end chimneys. It was built as a hall-and-parlor, with a balancing room added at a later time. Its shed roof dormers are a rarity, most houses having replaced or changed theirs to gable dormers.



The Glebe

The group then went to the St. Anne's glebe, now part of Cloverfield Farm, which is owned by the Hundley family. A glebe was a house and farm provided by the Anglican Church to its ministers to help with their support. The St. Anne's glebe house is one of the oldest left in the state, most probably built at the same time as Vauter's Church and by the same masons. This glebe house has two stories, with three bays, the brick laid with the same salt-glazed headers and rubbed-brick arches and corners as at Vauter's Church. The house was later upgraded with fine interior paneling. With the end of the Anglican Church after the Revolution, the two county glebe farms were sold, and the money used to buy Howard Grove plantation to become the county poor farm. The Hundleys bought Cloverfield in 1964, and they have done a great deal of work recently with the glebe house, fixing the roof, laying a floor, rebuilding the entrance, and re-installing the paneling.



Brookes Bank

The last stop was at Brooke's Bank, an excellent example of early Georgian architecture, built in the 1730s by Mrs. Sarah Taliaferro Brooke. This farm stayed in the Brooke family until the late nineteenth century when it was lost by foreclosure. Mr. and Mrs. Enos Richardson did a rehabilitation in the 1930s, but a complete restoration of the house was carried out by Mr. Walker Box, with the help of Colonial Williamsburg.

After this stop, Mr. Harvard and the tour left Essex County to have dinner and spend the night at Stratford Hall. The second day of the tour took place in Westmoreland County, where they visited Blenheim, Bushfield, the Cople Parish Glebe, Kirnan, Mount Pleasant, the sites of Nomini and the banqueting hall, Wilton, and Yeocomico Church.



Glen Cairn, Tidewater Vernacular

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES IN ESSEX

by Suzanne Derieux

Architecture: from the Latin Architectura, from the Greek arkhitekton “chief’ and “builder”.

From the beginning of human existence, men and women have needed shelter. What was created to fulfill this need depended on the materials available and the skill of the builder. Whether the ready-made cave (with or without bear), huts and teepees of skins, long houses and yurts, whether made of skins, stones, mud bricks, sticks and leaves, form followed function, and gave shelter. Modern man however, wants more out of his dwelling than that.



Ritchie House, Tidewater Vernacular
Photo credit Fleet Dillard



Berry Hill, Federal
Photo credit Wes Pippenger

Tidewater Vernacular

Any type of vernacular architecture refers to folk building, i.e. without a designed style. The earliest dwellings built here were huts, with mud and stick chimneys. Despite the almost endless supply of wood, there were only iron axes to cut the trees, and no way to saw the massive logs unless they were pitsawed. The colonists would girdle the trees to kill them, and plant or build among the stumps. The idea of the log cabin, so often seen on television, was not common in areas settled by the English, more common in areas settled by Swedes or Finns.

Simply because of the better climate and shorter winters in the south, massive half-timbered houses with central chimneys did not dominate here as they did in the north. Smaller frame houses with end chimneys became the norm, and once kilns were built, brick chimneys and foundations. The early houses were often one room with a loft. This room could be added to with a passage and stairway, and then two rooms with a passage. Brick houses became important when a planter wanted to show his status, and could afford the costly labor intensive work of making bricks and mortar.

Frame Vernacular

Emmerson's Tavern, Little Egypt, Retreat, Elton (old part), Woodlawn (Sandy), Woodlawn (Tribble), Rockland (Rennolds), Glen Cairn, Wood Farm, Poplar Spring, Shelba, Adam Spring, Aspen Grove, Bowlers, Plainview (Taff)

Brick Vernacular

Cherry Walk, Ritchie House. Woodlawn (Tribble), near Miller's Tavern, looks like a New England saltbox, but it was built as a hall-and-parlor Tidewater vernacular, in the late 18th or early 19th century. The sloped roof addition on the back was added circa 1840.

Georgian

Georgian was a style that originated in England in the late 17th century and took its name from the four Hanoverian King Georges. It first appeared in America (to those with money) as early as 1700. These houses are usually a simple one or two story box, two rooms deep with a center passage. Windows and doors are symmetrical: the entire house is balanced, either three or five bay. They could have either side-gable, gambrel or hipped roofs. The front door usually has an elaborate crown, often supported by pilasters, and has a row of small windows. Main windows can be nine-over-nine or twelve-over-twelve, double hung sash. Later versions of this house often have highly decorative carved wood interiors. Southern versions usually had end chimneys, and often had dependences, either attached or arranged in a balanced fashion around the house.

See: *Blandfield, Brooke's Bank, Ben Lomand, The Glebe (Cloverfield), Elmwood (hybrid, late Georgian, early Federal).*



St. John's Episcopal Church, Carpenter Gothic
Photo credit Suzanne Derieux



Oakalona, Greek Revival

Federal or Adam

Federal or **Adam** houses are also usually simple boxes, two or more rooms deep. A side-gabled roof with end chimneys is the most common type found. They are often compared to Georgian, but the Federal style is not as massive or heavy looking. Instead of a highly decorated doorway with a crown and pilasters, there is a simpler version, often with a semi-circular fanlight. Palladian windows variants are sometimes used over the main door. In the bigger cities, Federals could have highly decorated interiors, using both wood and plaster decorations.

See: *Elmwood* (started Georgian, finished Federal with a Palladian window), *Edenetta* (original house), *Fairview*, *Beaver's Hill*, *Woodland* (Cauthorn), *Rockland* (Cauthorn), *Mt. Verde*.

Gothic Revival

Originating in England in the 1740s, the **Gothic Revival** style was mainly used in America for large churches and college buildings. It was not as became popular for houses, because its need for long lines and wide rooms did not work on small lots, but a variation of the style called

Carpenter Gothic spread in rural areas through the late nineteenth century. Using the abundant supply of wood, and the mechanical scroll saw, wooden decoration divided the style into high and low: a plain aspect, or the highly decorated "Storybook Cottage". This decoration became the most important part of Carpenter Gothic.

See: St. John's P.E. Church on Duke St., which was built in the early 1850s with board-and-batten siding, steep roof, "pencil point" towers, and lancet (pointed arch) and diamond windows.

Greek Revival

Many of the large houses built in Essex before the War between the States are Greek Revival, a style so popular that it was found throughout the entire United States from the 1820s to 1860s. Usually frame, occasionally brick, with a low pitched roof, classical entablature, and one or two-story porches that had either round brick or square wooden columns. Doorways have elaborate door surrounds, windows and transom lights, and often have pilasters supporting pediments or flat tops over the door.

See: Roane-Wright House (Essex Inn), *Gresham House*, *St. Margaret's Hall* (main part), *Derieux House*, *Wheatland*, *Oakalona*, *Edenetta* (modifications done mid-1850s), *Hundley Hall*, *Colnbrooke*, *Rose Hill* (Hundley).

Queen Anne

Queen Anne is another important American style that benefited from the abundance of wood in the late 19th century. Queen Ann houses often had cross gables, or a hipped roof with lower cross gables, patterned shingles, a one-story porch that extends along the front and one side. Shape is important, and is usually asymmetrical. The second variation is in decoration, with four principal types; Spindlework, Free Classic, Half-Timbered, and Patterned (if masonry)

While Essex County does not have any of the magnificent Queen Anne's found in San Francisco or large cities, we do have a few simple examples. The house at the corner of Marsh and Queen Streets, where the Crying Shame shop is located, the (now destroyed) Taliaferro-Wilkerson House that stood next door, and Beulah Baptist Church

at Minor and the former St. John Baptist Church in Desha. Both churches were built in the cross gable with central tower style.

Second Empire

Second Empire takes its name from France's Second Empire during the reign of Napoleon III (1852-1870). The very distinctive roof takes its name for François Mansart, a French architect in the 17th century. It became an important style in public buildings all over the county; many are found in Washington D.C. It was also the dominant style for houses between the 1860s and 1880. Most popular in the northeast and Midwest, it was relatively rare in the south.

The mansard roof design gave a full extra story of living or attic space. There are five different styles of roof; straight, straight with flare (at the bottom), concave, convex, and S-curve. There are also different style of dormers and cornices.

See: the Bagby Hotel.

Somewhere under the building there today is the old Pitts Store ca. 1840. This became Stone's Store, and was bought by W.J. Reamy in 1893. He put the third story with its mansard roof on in the 1895, and

re-opened as The Hotel Bagby. This building formerly housed the Essex 5 and 10, and now has the Art Guild Gallery.

Craftsman

Craftsman was very popular in the midwest and west in the early twentieth century. One or one-and one-half stories, with a low pitched roof having overhanging eaves, this style had four principal roof subtypes; front-gabled, cross-gabled, side-gabled or hipped. Front porches could be full or partial-width, the porch supports often flared to porch level or to ground.

See: Java Jack's building, several houses in Tanyard and Wakefield.

Art Moderne

Art Moderne is a rare style for a small rural community. A late form of Art Deco, which had emphasized vertical lines and sharp angles, Art Moderne emerged in the 1930s with a horizontal focus. The clean precise style emphasized long horizontal lines and rounded edges, walls often made of translucent glass bricks, and flat roofs. It grew from an ultra-modern streamline ideal, influenced by speed and motion, reflected in the long lines

and curves. It was a favorite of commercial builders in the 1930s, who wanted the most up-to-date building they could get.

See: The Bareford Building, the building on the northwest corner of Prince Street and Queen Street, originally built as Gaines' Esso, and the building now housing Acme Antiques.

Contemporary Modern

The original *Kinloch* was built in the 1840s: when it burned in the 1940s, the owners looked at rebuilding, but the cost would have been astronomical. They hired a Washington D.C. architect named Charles Morton Godwin, a disciple of Frank Lloyd Wright to design a new house. Godwin took the old kitchen of *Kinloch* and built a **Contemporary Modern** house around it.

There are five low-pitched roof subtypes of this style; front-gabled, side-gabled, gable-variations, flat or slant. All have wide overhanging eaves, with the roof beams sometimes exposed. Usually built of natural materials, the main door may be recessed or obstructed. Staircases are open, and often has walls of windows.

These are not the only house styles in Essex. There are Colonial Revivals, Ranch houses, Folk Victorians and others, but the buildings named above stand out as examples of some of the more important architectural stylings in the county.

Suzanne Derieux was born, raised, and currently resides in Tappahannock, VA. She graduated from St. Margaret's School in Tappahannock and Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg. She is a professional genealogist, and can be often found doing research in the Essex County Courthouse. She has co-compiled (with Wesley Pippenger) two books on Essex County Cemeteries: Volume 1 – County Church Cemeteries and Volume 2 – Tappahannock Cemeteries. In her spare time, she enjoys refereeing women's lacrosse and field hockey at the high school and collegiate level.

Fall Meeting 2017

September 22, 2017 · 6 p.m.
Cherry Walk, Millers Tavern, Virginia
Walter and Beverley Wellford Rowland, owners



by Beverley Rowland

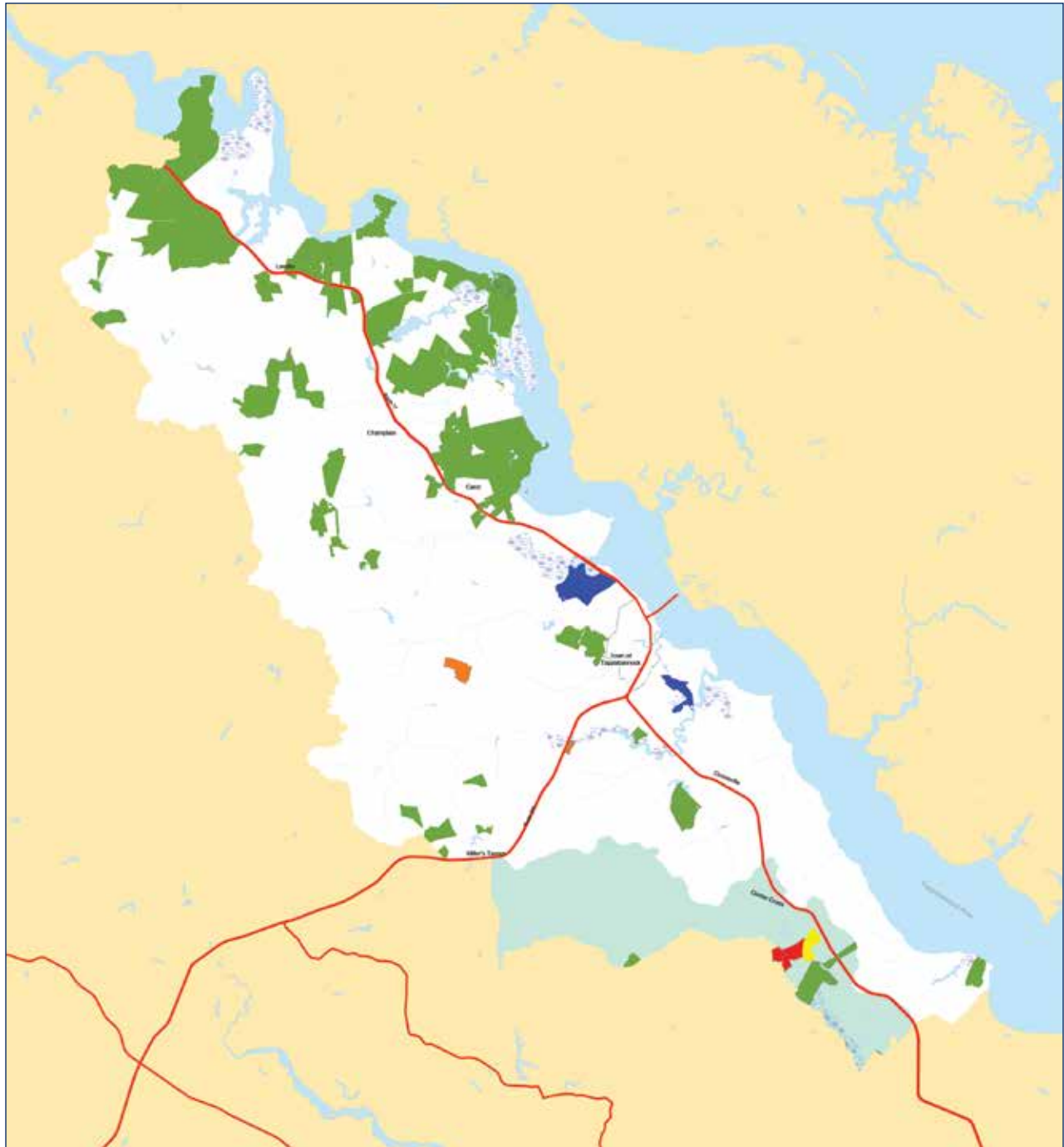
Cherry Walk is a rare example of an early intact eastern Virginia plantation complex. First patented in 1650, the present house was built c. 1780 by Carter Croxton of Revolutionary War fame. The property remained in the same family until 1982 when it was purchased by its present owners. The house is a four-bay, brick dwelling with a dormered steep gambrel roof atop a high English basement. American antiques, some made at Cherry Walk, and English antiques, period wallpapers, eighteenth-century prints and watercolors, and other collected

pieces grace all of the rooms, together with the owner's artwork. Of particular interest are the eight supporting outbuildings, which have also been carefully restored: two dairies, a smokehouse, a summer kitchen/guest house, a four holed privy, an enlarged early barn, a plank corncrib, and a late nineteenth-century blacksmith's shop. In 1998 the owner designed a formal period garden, fenced behind the house. An entrance arbor leads to a central oyster shell walk and cross-walk that divides the area into four symmetrical gardens, each with a designated purpose: a swimming

pool with surrounding perennial beds; a vegetable garden; an area for small and large fruits; and a herb/native plant garden. The wide variety of old native trees and shrubs that surround the house, as well as the gardens and evolving meadows, hum with the activity of birds, butterflies, bees, and other pollinators. Cherry Walk and its land are listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register, and the National Register of Historic Places. The entire ninety-five-acre property has been placed under a conservation easement with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

Protected Lands 2017

Essex County, Virginia



Protected Lands as of June 2016

- Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge
- VA Department of Forestry
- Middle Peninsula Chesapeake Bay Public Access Authority
- Land Protected as of 2016
- Protected Parcels June 2016 to June 2017
- Dragon Run Watershed

Data for the map provided by Essex County, the Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation's protected lands database, Virginia Outdoors Foundation & The Nature Conservancy.

MIDDLE PENINSULA PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

Although this data has been used by the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission (MPPDC), no warranty, expressed or implied, is made by the MPPDC as to the accuracy or applicability of the database and related materials, nor shall the fact of distribution constitute any such warranty, and no responsibility is assumed by the MPPDC in connection therewith.

Miles

Virginia Counties with the Highest Percentage of Acres in Easement

County	Acres under Easement	Total Acres	% in Easement
Clarke	24,688.23	113,036.62	21.84
Fauquier	91,594.09	449,699.00	20.37
Albemarle	92,971.08	462,469.68	20.10

Non Tidal Counties Along the Rappahannock River

County	Acres under Easement	Total Acres	% in Easement
Fauquier	91,594.09	449,699.00	20.37
Albemarle	92,971.08	462,469.68	20.10
Rappahannock	32,142.56	170,604.53	18.84
Orange	31,729.88	204,425.72	15.52
Greene	10,019.66	97,920.00	10.23
Madison	15,501.89	204,937.78	7.56
Culpeper	17,920.78	238,692.00	7.51
Warren	8,394.55	139,514.66	6.02
Stafford	4,053.60	177,280.00	2.29
Page	2,835.56	193,306.00	1.47
Rockingham	7,070.20	543,360.00	1.30

Tital Counties Along the Rappahannock River

County	Acres under Easement	Total Acres	% in Easement
Essex	23,278.12	164,972.54	14.11
King and Queen	22,508.46	202,406.08	11.12
King George	7,974.28	115,199.82	6.92
Richmond	6,994.27	122,534.21	5.71
Westmoreland	7,990.26	146,674.97	5.45
Northumberland	5,587.26	123,071.81	4.54
Lancaster	3,336.41	85,208.47	3.92
Middlesex	3,182.83	83,391.87	3.82
City of Fredericksburg	254.80	6,711.00	3.80
Spotsylvania	5,094.07	263,180.83	1.94



Some 200 years ago, T'town penned a different picture and featured a typical butcher-baker-and-candlestick-maker variety of specialty shops. Due to the loss of most of the town's early newspapers, many daily details are unknown. Few local craftsmen are among those whose works are left behind.

A tall clock with its face signed "B. Moss/ Tappahannock," that probably descended in the Brockenbrough Family and can be found in the Brockenbrough House, St. Margaret's School, Tappahannock.

Crafted in Tappahannock

by Wesley E. Pippenger

Commerce in Tappahannock only recently has been with department stores or all-inclusive megavendors. Some 200 years ago, T'town penned a different picture and featured a typical butcher-baker-and-candlestick-maker variety of specialty shops. Due to the loss of most of the town's early newspapers, many daily details are unknown. Few local craftsmen are among those whose works are left behind.

Barnet Moss (c. 1790/4–1841), a silversmith, started his career in Richmond and was active in Tappahannock from about 1830¹ to 1838. He was a native of Great Britain, and was living in Richmond when he was married by bond dated June 19, 1812, to Jane Clopton.² The couple raised their only child, Charles B. "Charley" Moss (b. c. 1815) there.³

Original portrait of David Pitts Wright, 1804–1855.

A Hildeburn & Watson silver teaspoon with monogram “D.W.P.” for David Pitts Wright.



Barnett's wife Jane died⁴ and he remarried Leonora before June 1839 when they signed a deed in Essex County. He died at his residence in Salem, Fauquier County, on Friday, September 10, 1841, of a pulmonary affection, which had confined him to his bed for the last eighteen months.⁵ Moss's work has survived through the local Brockenbrough, Garnett, Lewis, and Motley families, including several groups of teaspoons, and fiddle serving spoons, ladles, sugar tongs, and a spectacular tall clock!

Moss rented the ground floor of a three-story house on Main Street in Richmond. His watchmaking and jewelry shop expanded with some articles of dry goods and millinery that would have been attended to by his wife. He signed a deed of trust with an “X” as his mark in 1815, indicating that he was illiterate or in ill health.⁶

In 1816 Barnett Moss used his personal property as security for a debt due in a year to Edward Cahill & Co. of Richmond, listing a brindle cow, two feather beds, a pine table, a mahogany table, a chest of drawers, a cupboard, a half dozen Windsor chairs, a dozen silver teaspoons, nine silver tablespoons, and a silver cream pot.⁷

Historian Catherine B. Hollan questions whether the silver in the list was personal or business stock used as collateral. If business stock, the lack of jewelry and watch materials suggests he specialized in silver and related repairs, perhaps as a corner of a larger dry goods business. “If personal silverware, he stands apart from his fellow silversmiths, few of whom personally owned the luxury commodity they sold to others, whether it was inherited, dower silver, or silver of their own making. The consistency of pieces suggests this was personal silver and the variety of furniture, including a table of imported mahogany, indicates the family lived comfortably in a well-furnished home.”⁸

Several of the local elite bought their silver elsewhere. Judge Muscoe Garnett Sr. (1808–1880) of “Ben Lomond,” Dunnsville, was a customer of silversmith Charles Platt Adriance, who operated in Richmond between 1816 and 1831.⁹ David Pitts Wright (1804–1855), of “Wrightsville,” King and Queen County, owned teaspoons crafted by Samuel Hildeburn and James Watson, under the mark Hildeburn & Watson, who dissolved their Philadelphia partnership in January



Sketch of buildings on Lot 20 from a Mutual Assurance Society policy, taken out in 1801 by John Croxton Jr. to secure the Scots Arms Tavern. While also owning property in Lot 12, a street south (now Duke Street), Barnett Moss owned buildings on the north side of Prince Street, between the property of Benjamin Blake, corner Lot 19, and property of Lawrence Muse. Moss was in mercantile partnership with Capt. William Fisher, as Fisher & Moss. Before Fisher died in 1835, the two were renovating a building's chimney, door and gutters, to be leased out as a tavern. Moss knew the decaying buildings should be sold without delay, and filed suit in 1838 against his son Charles B. to clear title in order to sell the property to provide for the expense of unfinished repairs. Moss's buildings burned c. 1840 in the same fire that burned the Scots Arms Tavern.

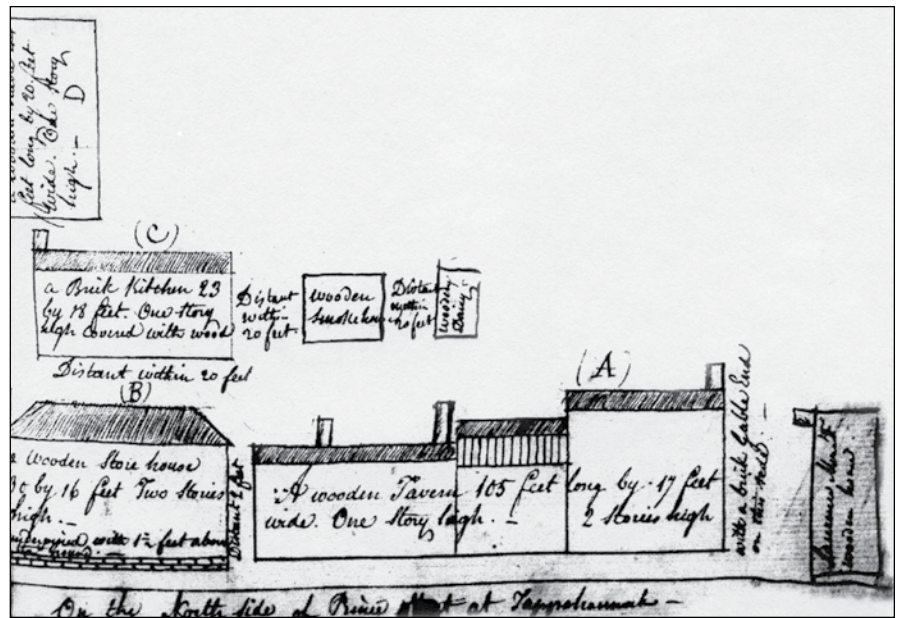
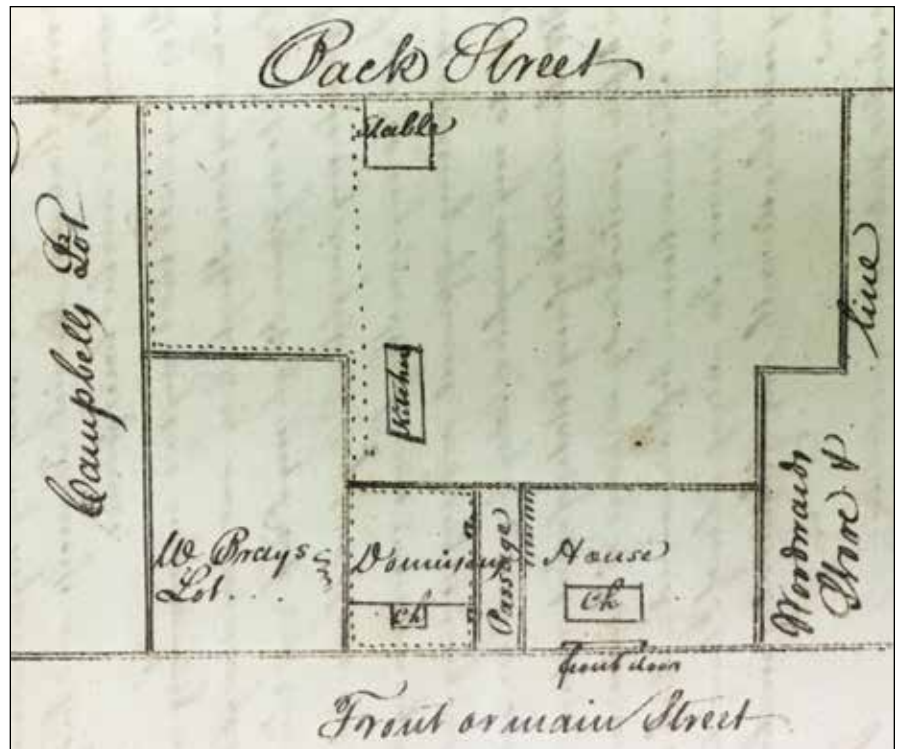


Diagram of Lot 12, showing clock- and watchmaker Joseph "Donnison's House," with passage, chimneys, and front door. Donnison died in 1808 and the house was later purchased by Barnett Moss. Front (or Main Street) is now Duke Street, and the Rappahannock River is to the right.



1834.¹⁰ The Smith grandparents of Sheriff Sydney Smith Newbill (1887-1953) used spoons supplied by Gotlieb A. Mayer, a German silversmith and jeweler of Norfolk, after 1835.¹¹

A fire in February 1821 destroyed the three-story house on Main Street, reported as occupied by Mr. Moss, watchmaker, in the lower tenement.¹² After two years he was still having difficulties paying his debts. On May 9, 1823, he executed a trust deed to Elias Noah, secured by his household furniture, being "all the furniture now in the tenement occupied by me in Richmond" to secure \$165 lent

at sundry times.¹³ The trust noted that Barnett Moss, "having been unfortunate in business, finds his property insufficient to pay his debts" to David Judah (trading as David Judah & Co.), to Alva Spear, to L. Jones, to William Tazewell, and to Samuel Hawkins. James M. Johnston and Benjamin L. Wallace (trading as Benjamin L. Wallace & Co.) were named as trustees and were deeded

as security: "all [the] stock of goods, consisting of a variety of articles, dry goods, millinery, and jewelry, also a Jersey wagon, horse, and harness, and any other property."

Sometime in the late 1820s, Barnett Moss moved from Richmond to Tappahannock and lived there throughout much of the 1830s. On September 19, 1831, Barnett Moss of Tappahannock bought from Richard



Nineteenth-century silver marks by B. Moss, Hildeburn & Watson, and Charles Platt Adriance.

SELLING OFF AT COST.

Being desirous of closing my business, I offer the whole of my stock at cost, for cash. The stock consists of the following articles: Gold and silver lever watches, English and French; plain, ditto; gold chains, seals, and keys. Jewellery, consisting of ear-rings, finger rings, breast-pins, lockets, &c. Silver spoons, of every description. Silver spectacles, pencils, thimbles, scissors, chains, hooks, slides, and buckles. Plated Ware, such as cake-baskets, castors, candlesticks, snuffers, trays, &c.; razors, knives, &c. Besides a great many articles too numerous to mention, and a few very handsome clocks.

B. MOSS.

N.B. All those indebted to me are requested to make immediate payment.

B.M.

fy 15-tf

Advertisement of 1840 by Barnet Moss to liquidate his Warrenton Store.

Croxtan (1788–1848) and wife, Frances G. Ware, for \$600, Lot 12, with houses [on Duke Street] that earlier had belonged to clock- and watchmaker Joseph Donnison (c. 1759–1808), and Lot 20 on Prince Street.¹⁴ Donnison operated in the 1790s in Port Tobacco, Charles County, Maryland,¹⁵ but was known in Tappahannock from c. 1798 until his death, intestate, in April 1808.¹⁶ In May 1832, Moss became a citizen of the United States, giving up his allegiance to his native Great Britain.¹⁷ Several teaspoons survive that show the “B. Moss” and Philadelphia eagle mark.¹⁸

Barnet had taken his son Charley¹⁹ into partnership c. 1838 as B. Moss & Son in Tappahannock,²⁰ but soon left him in Tappahannock and moved to Warrenton²¹ where he opened another store that had for sale ready-made goods from Fellows, Wadsworth & Co. of New York City, and from Baltimore firms such as R. & A. Campbell and Canfield &

Brothers. By June 18, 1839, Barnet Moss and wife, Leonora, of Fauquier County, executed a deed of trust to Samuel Chilton to secure debts his son Charles B. owed to the firm Fellows, Wadsworth & Co., merchants and partners of New York City, and the deed was filed in Essex since that is where the related business was conducted. Barnet Moss used two Tappahannock properties as collateral: Lots 12 and 20 with their buildings.²²

Apparently son Charles B. Moss had a problem spending too much of his and his wife’s money. In a suit brought by Ann L. Moss²³ to request that the Essex County court grant her a divorce, she described that at the time of her marriage, her husband was “himself in utter poverty and brought nothing to her but misery and shame, occasioned by his wanton and abandoned course of conduct.” She added that the two of them continued to live together until 1840 when Charles B. left the

county and state and never returned; that soon after their marriage he commenced a system of the most profligate and wasteful extravagance; and that by November 1839, Charles B. had already squandered and exhausted as much of her fortune as he could readily reduce in his possession. The couple had a son, Fielding D. Moss.

Back in Fauquier County, Barnet Moss initially prospered in Warrenton, as he was named as a creditor of fellow watchmaker John M. Jacobs in January 1840.²⁴ Moss bought a house and lot on Main Street on the southeast corner with 3rd Street, from Robert Eden Lee, for which he pledged as security notes endorsed by him in January 1840.²⁵ He secured an insurance policy from the Mutual Assurance Society for the Main Street property.²⁶ By March 1840, Moss advertised that he was selling off at cost his stock of watches, jewelry, spoons, and spectacles and wanted to close his business.²⁷

Unsurprisingly, customers were asked to pay off their outstanding accounts. Soon thereafter, son Charles B. Moss executed a deed of trust to protect his household effects to be used by his mother, Leonora Moss, and not for the benefit of his father, Barnet, or his creditors.²⁸ Barnet Moss stayed in business as late as January 1841 in Warrenton.²⁹ No estate papers have been found for him or his wife.

After Moss's departure from Tappahannock, his industry was followed by Francis S. Butler, a native of England, who, as a jeweler and watchmaker, had been in Lynchburg but operated here from

1850 to 1851.³⁰ Next on the scene was Samuel W. Meenley (c. 1816–1867) who operated in Richmond as a watchmaker and jeweler, c. 1835 to c. 1856, and in Tappahannock from c. 1857 to 1867. Meenley was first married in 1835³¹ to Julia Ann Carter (1815–1855³²) and second in 1858³³ to Mrs. Martha A. Fisher Hearn (c. 1820–1872), widow of Thomas R. Hearn (c. 1819–1857³⁴) of Tappahannock. Meenley's Tappahannock business was succeeded by his son, George Leander Meenley (1838–1900), who in 1872, "publicly thanked the citizens of Essex, Middlesex,

and adjacent counties for their very liberal patronage during his residence in Tappahannock and asked for a continuance of the same, offering to repair chronometers and watches. All work sent by boat and mail carrier would be promptly attended to."³⁵ In 1884 George L. Meenley purchased from Sperry W. Hearn, interest in Tappahannock town Lots 39 and 42 at Duke Street and Church Lane,³⁶ and George conveyed the same to his wife four years later.³⁷ G. L. Meenley lived here through the 1890s,³⁸ but it is not known when he closed his business.

With appreciation for their assistance,

I thank Carolyn M. Anderson, Frances H. Ellis and Catherine B. Hollan.

SOURCE CITATIONS

¹ US Federal 1830 Census, Essex Co., no date or page, Barney Moss's household contained 2 white males (one age 20-29, another age 40-49), two white females (one age 40-49, another age 50-59), and 3 slaves.

² Michael E. Pollock, "Marriage Bonds of Henrico County, Virginia, 1782-1853" (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1984), p. 117; Essex Co. Circuit Court Orders, Bk. 47, p. 459, dated 24 MAY 1832.

³ US Federal 1820 Census, 7 AUG 1820, Barnet Moss's household contains 2 white males (one under age 10, another age 26-44), a white female aged 26-44, and 1 female slave aged 14-25.

⁴ Constitutional Whig (Richmond), 25 SEP 1832, reported that Barnet (or Barret) Moss had died of cholera in Richmond. It is unclear whether this is intended for Barnet's wife Jane.

⁵ Alexandria Gazette and Virginia Advertiser (Alexandria), 21 SEP 1841, "The deceased had moved from Tappahannock in Va., to the county of Fauquier some three years since, and until his confinement had been engaged in mercantile business in the town of Warrenton."

⁶ Richmond Hustings Court Deeds, Bk. 10, pp. 245-247, dated 16 NOV 1815, between Barret [sic] Moss of the City of Richmond and William Patterson, using as collateral the same personal property in deed of 6 MAY 1816.

⁷ Henrico Co. Deeds, Bk. 12, pp. 502-503, dated 6 MAY 1816, between Barrett [sic] Moss and Edward Cahill & Co.

⁸ Catherine B. Hollan, "Virginia Silversmiths, Jewelers, Watch- and Clock-makers, 1607-1760, Their Lives and Marks" (McLean, Va.: Hollan Press, 2010), pp. 550-551. Many thanks to my friend Cathy who developed the base sketch of the silversmith Barnet Moss.

⁹ Hollan, "Virginia Silversmiths ...", p. 15.

¹⁰ Email from Catherine B. Hollan to Wesley Pippenger, 12 JAN 2017, that references Miss Hollan's work "Philadelphia Silversmiths & Related Artisans to 1861" (McLean, Va.: Hollan Press, 2013).

¹¹ Hollan, "Virginia Silversmiths ...", p. 517.

¹² George Barton Cutten, "Silversmiths of Virginia" (By the Author, 1952), pp. 177-178.

¹³ Richmond Hustings Court Deeds, Bk. 21, pp. 210-214, dated 10 MAY 1823; at p. 213 the creditors of Barnett Moss are listed and release demands against Moss.

¹⁴ Essex Co. Deeds, Bk. 43, p. 448, dated 19 SEP 1831, Richard Croxton to Barnet Moss, the lots and houses whereof Joseph Donnison died seized, subject to dower of Sarah Drinkwater, late Donnison [widow Sally remarried 22 JAN 1811 to Daniel Drinkwater]; the same lot and houses sold by Thomas Gresham and wife and George Wright, commissioner, in a suit of Donnison v. Muse & Brockenbrough, and the same purchased by Richard Croxton in 1831 from Wright and Gresham. Lot 12 is located on the north side of Duke Street and adjacent to Slip 75, whereon for many years stood the public storehouses and the later the house of Gordon Lewis. Lot 20, is located on the north side of Prince Street, adjacent to Slip 77, on which once stood the Scots Arms Tavern. In 1801, John Croxton, Jr. took out a policy No. 451 with the Mutual Assurance Society for various structures on the lot, and it contains a sketch of the several buildings on the lot. See Essex Co. Deeds, Bk. 39, p. 701, 10 JUN 1819, that describes that Lot 12 fronted 18 feet on Front or Main Street and ran back 57 feet, and was located between William Bray and Mr. Woodward. Will Bk. 17, p. 97, dated 29 JUL 1808, is estate inventory for Joseph Donnison, and shows significant supplies for his former business, including 285 watch crystals, watchmaker's tools, etc.

¹⁵ Hollan, "Virginia Silversmiths ...", p. 229.

¹⁶ Richmond Enquirer, 14 MAY 1808, p. 3, col. 5, obituary: "Died—At his seat in the town of Tappahannock, on the 20th April, Joseph Donison [sic], after a short illness ..." Essex Co. Wills, Bk. 17, pp. 97-98, estate inventory by administrator Thomas Brockenbrough, shows considerable clock- and watchmaking goods and tools. At Wills, Bk. 21, pp. 100-103, estate account by Thomas Brockenbrough, shows 9 dollars cash paid April 8 for digging grave and making coffin for Donnison. Was this an advance arrangement, since he died on April 20?

¹⁷ Essex Co. Orders, Bk. 47, p. 459, court session of 24 MAY 1832, it is his intention to become a citizen of the United States.

¹⁸ Catherine B. Hollan notes that the "B. Moss with the Philadelphia Eagle" mark indicates Moss was retailing silver from Philadelphia. The eagle was possibly the mark of a large manufacturer such as R. & W. Wilson (most likely) or possibly used by a number of silversmiths as a city mark (less likely). See my Eagle Marks on American Silver for large section on this mark and its use especially in Philadelphia and the South.

¹⁹ Wesley E. Pippenger, "Essex County, Virginia Marriage Bonds, 1804-1850" (Tappahannock, Va.: By the Author, 2015), p. 122, Charles B. Moss was married by bond dated 22 MAY 1837 in Essex Co. to Mrs. Mary Ann

- Lowry Clements Fisher (d. 1870), widow of Capt. William Fisher (d. 1835), and daughter of Ewen Clements, Jr. (d. 1831).
- 20 Essex Co. Deeds, Bk. 46, p. 338, dated 18 JUL 1839.
- 21 Fauquier Co. Deeds, Bk. 39, p. 364, dated 31 JAN 1840.
- 22 Essex Co. Co. Deeds, Bk. 46, pp. 338-339, dated 18 JUN 1839, the deed notes that the buildings are decaying and should be sold without delay; the house and lot on the east side of the main street is occupied by George H. Dobyns; also the lot near the store house and lot of Dr. Austin Brockenbrough (1782-1858) and formerly the property of Benjamin Blake (c.1773-1831) on which Blake resides, which was not long since purchased by Moss under a decree and is the same that belonged at the time of sale to the late firm of Fisher & Moss. Essex Co. Deeds, Bk. 49, p. 421. On 9 OCT 1841, Samuel Chilton was appointed commissioner by decree in cause *Motley v. Moss*, to collect benefits from a Mutual Assurance Society policy after portions of the buildings had burned.
- 23 Essex Co. Chancery Causes, 1856-014, the divorce of *Moss v. Moss* is filed in with another case.
- 24 Fauquier Co. Deeds, Bk. 39, pp. 309-310, dated 30 JAN 1840, John M. Jacobs to Hamden A. White. Hollan, "Silversmiths of Virginia ...," p. 403. Jacobs, who started his business as a clock and watchmaker in Baltimore, operated in Warrenton between 1839 and 1844. He removed to Chillicothe, Ohio then St. Louis, Mo.
- 25 Fauquier Co. Deeds, Bk. 39, pp. 363-366, dated 31 JAN 1840; pp. 404-405, dated 2 APR 1840.
- 26 Mutual Assurance Society policies, Library of Virginia, Film #4136, index reels 776-780; Vol. 103, policy #11149, dated 20 NOV 1840, by Barnet Moss, for the southwest corner of Main and 2nd streets, for \$2,000, based on earlier policy #9201 taken out in 1837 by Robert E. Lee [Vol. 97] that traces to policy #8218 taken out by Nathaniel Tyler in 1833 [Vol. 94], that is based in policy #5384 taken held in 1824 by Lucy Marshall [Vol. 84].
- 27 Library of Virginia, Film #353, Jeffersonian (Warrenton), 21 MAR 1840, p. 3, col. 4, "Selling Off at Cost," cited in Cutten, p. 178.
- 28 Fauquier Co. Deeds, Bk. 39, p. 402, dated 31 MAR 1840.
- 29 Library of Congress, Virginia Times (Warrenton), 9 MAY 1840; Cutten, p. 178.
- 30 US Federal 1850 Census, Essex Co., Tappahannock, 6 NOV 1850, p. 106a, dwelling 3, headed by Francis Butler, age 44, jeweler, b. England, and Mary Butler, age 44, b. New York. Butler was enumerated two houses down from James Roy Micou, clerk of court. The whereabouts of Butler after this time is unknown. Hollan, "Silversmiths of Virginia ...," p. 123.
- 31 Richmond Compiler, 31 MAR 1835, p. 3, col. 1, by Rev. J.T. Hinton, married on the 12th inst. Also Richmond Enquirer, 24 MAR 1835, p. 3, col. 6. Anne Waller Reddy and Andrew Lewis Riffe IV, "Richmond City, Virginia Marriage Bonds, 1797-1853" (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1976), p. 54, bond dated 9 MAR 1835 for Samuel W. Meenley to Julia Ann Carter, daughter of Wm. B. and Jane L. Carter.
- 32 Records of Shockoe Hill Cemetery, Richmond, Va., show burial for Julia Ann Meenley, b. 1815, d. 30 JUN 1855, age 40. George L. Meenley [sic], b. Richmond, died 27 JAN 1900 in Richmond, was buried 29 JAN 1900.
- He served as corporal in Co. D, First Virginia Volunteers (Kemper's Brigade), was wounded in 1865 at Five Forks, and at his death was an honored member of the Wright-Latane Camp, Confederate Veterans, Tappahannock. An Act of Assembly was approved 3 MAR 1898 for his benefit as a wounded Confederate soldier. He secured a pension for his service, and record of it can be found online at the Library of Virginia, Confederate Pension records.
- 33 Suzanne P. Derieux and Wesley E. Pippenger, "Essex County, Virginia Marriage Records: Transcripts of Consents, Affidavits, Minister Returns and Marriage Licenses, Volume 1: 1850-1872" (Tappahannock: By the Authors, 2011), p. 77, Samuel W. Mienly, age 43, widower, b. King William Co., res. Tappahannock, s/o John Mienly and Philadelphia Walker, married 23 DEC 1858 in Tappahannock to Mrs. Martha A. Hearne, age 39, widow, b. and res. Essex Co., d/o Isaac Fisher and Nancy Mullins.
- 34 James R. Hearn, b. c.1819 in New Jersey, was also a jeweler and watchmaker. He was son of Thomas and Sarah Hearn, and was probably buried in the Hearn-Meinley Family Cemetery that was once located in Tappahannock on Lot 39, located at Virginia Avenue and Church Lane. James R. died intestate in 1857 in Essex Co. Essex Co. Wills, Bk. 27, p. 688, administration bond. Also see Suzanne P. Derieux and Wesley E. Pippenger, "Essex County, Virginia Cemeteries, Volume 2—Tappahannock Cemeteries" (Tappahannock: By the Authors, 2012), p. 139.
- 35 Hollan, "Virginia Silversmiths ...," p. 961, footnote 124, taken from an unidentified Tappahannock newspaper dated 12 JUL 1872
- 36 Essex Co. Deeds, Bk. 54, p. 274, dated 8 FEB 1884, S.W. Hearn, of Richland Co., S.C., to George L. Meenley, interest in parts of lots 39 and 42 on the tax books to the estate of Martha A. Meenley.
- 37 Essex Co. Deeds, Bk. 55, pp. 398-399, dated 10 AUG 1888, George L. Meenley to Willie Annetta Meenley, interest in Lots 39 and 42, for the purpose of erecting a new building.
- 38 Essex Co. Chancery Causes, 1894-042, Library of Virginia, Reel 395, frame 73, local box 94, A.N. Deacon v. George L. Meenley and wife, is about payment for Meenley's house alterations by Deacon. George's business was located at 24 Prince Street in Tappahannock. George was married to Willie Annetta Taylor (d. 1910) on 7 DEC 1875 at Old Church in King and Queen Co., Va. In October 1901, George's widow Willie A. sold her real estate, including a two-story frame dwelling on Lot 39 after she had removed to Richmond. Willie was buried 1 OCT 1910 next to her husband in Shockhoe Hill Cemetery. See Essex Co. Deeds, Bk. 60, p. 186, dated 11 JUL 1900, Mrs. Willie A. Meenley executes a trust deed to William D. Carter, describing the lot with two-story frame dwelling thereon formerly known as the Sperry Hearn House lot, situated at the southwest corner of Church Lane, diagonally opposite to the livery stable of A.F. Bagby and across the street in a southerly direction from the lot of Dr. W.B. Robinson—the whole of the said lot belonging to W.A. Meenley, running through to the street south of street being hereby conveyed, together with buildings; grantor covenants to keep the dwelling house on the lot insured for \$250 until debt is paid. In Deed Bk. 60, p. 466, dated 21 OCT 1901, Mrs. Willie A. Meenley conveys the above to William D. Carter and William B. Robinson.

Wesley E. Pippenger was raised in Littleton, Colorado where he was in the first class graduated from Columbine High School. He retired from NASA's Office of Inspector General in Washington, D.C. in 2011.

Of his nearly 100 publications and articles, he is widely known for compiling, for the Virginia Genealogical Society, ten volumes of "Index to Virginia Estates, 1800-1865."

His accolades include S.A.R.'s Bronze Good Citizenship Medal, and the City of Alexandria's history award. He served as the 22nd president of the Virginia Genealogical Society, and was Secretary of Oak Hill Cemetery's Board of Managers in Georgetown.

Mr. Pippenger resides at historic Little Egypt, in Tappahannock, amidst his personal research library and thousands of documents and photographs. He enthusiastically helps other researchers and continues to collect, organize and preserve data that would be helpful to others.



Early Turned Chairs

from the Vicinity of Tappahannock, Virginia

by Mark R. Wenger



Fig. 1. Adult chair with hybrid seat and coved foot.

In 1998, Ron Hurst and Jon Prown first identified these chairs in their massive volume, *Southern Furniture*, suggesting that the group originated somewhere on Virginia's middle peninsula.¹ That assertion appears to have been correct—a number of examples have since turned up in or near the town of Tappahannock. While it is possible that some of these were made in the town, known examples seem to represent the work of several different artisans or shops. That suggests that manufacture was distributed over a wider area along the south side of the Rappahannock. Most examples appear to date from the first half of the 19th century.

The side chair in Fig. 1 illustrates several features common to the Essex-Tappahannock group—a double-orb finial, and also a coved foot (the latter resembling those of certain Halifax County, NC chairs). Adult-sized examples invariably display three slats. Like all chairs in the group, this one has front and rear stretchers standing lower than corresponding stretchers on the sides. Unlike any other member of the group, however, it boasts a hybrid seat, composed partly of splints and partly of rush cords. In 14 years of looking at VA and NC chairs, the writer has seen no other instance of this construction.

The youth-sized side chair in Fig. 2 illustrates another of the forms that were available when these chairs were in production. All three slats have been replaced and/or inverted. As seen on the previous chair, these slats are closely set, with the rear stiles and finials extending well above the top member. The front feet are gone, but those in the rear, with their squat taper, allow us to imagine the chair in its original state.

The rocking chair illustrated in Fig. 3 appears to have been made by the same artisan as the child's chair. Now held in the collection of Colonial Williamsburg,

Rocking chairs first appear in Virginia probate records after c. 1830, so this example—and the corresponding side chair—were surely made sometime after that date.



it displays the same tall finials and compressed back as the side chair, but with all the original slats surviving. The arms bow outward slightly, running out beyond the supports and terminating in circular hand-holds. The supports are unadorned, being simply choked-down extensions of the front legs.

There can be no doubt that this example was made as a rocking chair—the turned-down feet dowl into broad rockers laid flat—typically a late detail. (Examples appear on Boston-style rockers which are unlikely to date before 1830). Rocking chairs first appear in Virginia probate records after c. 1830, so this example—and the corresponding side chair—were surely made sometime after that date.

The finials of this and the preceding chair are distinctive, having a vertically elongated orb above a reel and compressed orb. Also distinctive in the case of the present rocking chair is the single front stretcher, and the absence of verge lines on the legs. Added to the late-style rockers, this latter attribute suggests that the rocker may date to the second half of the 19th century—and thus the side chair, as well. On the other hand, the aero foil shape of the seat lists—a pre-industrial attribute, would suggest that the chairs were made prior to the 20th century.



Photo credit Mark R. Wenger

Fig. 2. Youth-sized side chair.



Photo credit Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

Fig. 3. Armed rocker – late.
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Acc. No. 1993-119



Fig. 4. Adult chair with original, hipped miter seat.



Fig 5. Youth-sized side chair, made as a rocker.

A well-wrought side chair, appearing in the illustration above, shares the elongated upper orb in the finials of the two previous examples, and also the short, rapidly tapering (rear) foot—perhaps it was made in the same shop. (Fig. 4). The upper sphere of the finial is adorned at its equator with two scribed lines. The chair seems to be composed of soft maple, with hickory stretchers—a frequent combination of woods. The rush seat is woven in a hipped miter configuration, a significant detail, since it appears to be original. The wood bears no evidence of paint and may have been delivered to the original patron “in the white.” The chair was purchased in Tappahannock.

Like the rocking chair in Fig. 3, the youth-sized example appearing in Fig. 5 began life as a rocker, judging from the neatly clipped feet and the bottom tier of verge lines, which served to locate front mortises for the rockers. The finials resemble those of the arm chair in Fig. 6. On the front legs of this chair, paired verge lines were scribed in at the seat and also at the stretchers below—an attribute that seems to have been associated with 19th-century chair-making practice. Each line centers on a stretcher or seat list. At the seat, a wide separation of these lines indicates that the tenons of adjacent seat lists did not interlock—the wider this spacing, the more warped the plane of the splint seat. Like most chairs of the Tappahannock group, this one has very heavy stretchers.



Photo credit Mark R. Wenger

Fig. 6. Youth-sized arm chair.

Youth-sized chairs were available with arms. This one (Fig. 6) bears an inscription supposedly dating the chair to 1697. It is spurious, of course—the chair probably dates no earlier than the first half of the 19th century. The hand-holds are circular, extending well beyond the supports, and both arms cope around the stiles. Each of the arms attaches to its support with a handmade screw, suggesting manufacture sometime before 1848, when machinery for cutting sharp, “gimlet”-tip screws with centered slots was patented. The arm supports are simply unadorned extensions of the front legs. Again, the stretchers are quite heavy, and only the top slat is pegged. Judging from the finials, this example may have come from the same shop as the chair in Figure 5. Traces of



Photo credit Tom Newbern, Aulander, NC

**Fig. 7. Identified child's side chair.
Tom and Margaret Newbern**

green paint remain; the seat is a modern replacement.

The chair in Fig. 7 was associated with Thomas Burke Garnett (1811-1881) of Kalamazoo, Plantation, Essex County, VA. Judging from Garnett's dates, the chair is likely to have been made sometime around 1814-16. It is a rare attribute of children's chairs that they can be dated with some precision when the original occupant is known.

Note the angled shoulders on the stretchers where they enter the mortises. The upper slat is carved with Garnett's initials, “T.G.” The original brown paint remains. It is evident that the slat bearing those initials has been inverted. This diminutive chair helps build the case for manufacture in Tappahannock or the surrounding region.



Photo credit Victoria Auctions, Victoria, VA

Fig. 8. Another ID'd child's chair. Victoria Auctions

Smaller still is this tiny child's chair (Fig. 8), which bears two inscriptions: "St John" and "Fannie."

On November 7, 1825, Frances St. John married Lewis Seward Bristow in Middlesex County, Virginia.

Smaller still is this tiny child's chair (Fig. 8), which bears two inscriptions: "St John" and "Fannie." On November 7, 1825, Frances St. John married Lewis Seward Bristow in Middlesex County, Virginia. (Marriage Bonds, 7 November 1825, p. 93). Frances, or "Fannie" had been born in Middlesex County in 1805. This might suggest that the chair bearing her name was made sometime between 1807 and 1810, but it is clear that Fannie's name was added to "St. John," so it may have belonged first to an older sibling. Here, then, is

another of those rare things—a chair that offers textual information concerning the time and place of its manufacture.

The child-sized side chair in Fig. 9 exhibits turned enrichments on all four legs, those on the front legs differing from those on the rear. Among the chairs of the Tappahannock group, this is the best-appointed example yet found. Owing to its small scale, there is only one tier of stretchers. Like other chairs in the group, this one has pegs in the upper slat only. The date of the splint seat is uncertain. This chair descended in the Gwathmey family of Burlington, in King William County, where it remained until acquired by Colonial Williamsburg in 1988.² King William Courthouse lies about 22 miles from Tappahannock, traveling cross-country. Figure 9 may tell us something about the geographic range of the Tappahannock chairs, then.

Taking our cue from the dates of the two previous chairs, it seems likely that this example was also made around 1800. Apart from its elaborate programme of turnings, nothing in its detailing rules out that possibility—and even that circumstance is explained by the wealthy client for whom it was made. If all of this is true, who was the first occupant? Dr. William Gwathmey was



The remarkable concurrence of two documented chairs in this group allows us to better understand what chairs of this sort looked like around 1800.

born at Burlington in 1794, and so would have been three years old in 1797—old enough to walk about nimbly, and sit up in a chair without assistance.

The remarkable concurrence of two documented chairs in this group allows us to better understand what seating furniture of this sort looked like around 1800, while the Gwathmey chair helps to establish the geography of this intriguing group.



Photo credit Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

Fig. 9. Enriched Child's Side Chair.
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Acc. No. G1988-439

SOURCE CITATIONS

¹ Ronald Hurst and Jonathan Prown, *Southern Furniture: The Colonial Williamsburg Collection* (Williamsburg: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1998), pp. 59-61.

² This chair was a gift of the Burlington-Gwathmey Foundation.

Mark R. Wenger is a historian in Williamsburg, Virginia, where he works with an architectural firm in the restoration of historic buildings. Over a period of years, he has surveyed early slat-back chairs in southeastern Virginia and eastern North Carolina. He is now co-curating an exhibition of more than seventy North Carolina chairs, scheduled to run from June 9 to September 9 at the North Carolina History Center, in New Bern. His focus in the pursuit of these early chairs has been to define coherent groups of examples, and to determine the geographic origin of those groups. The so-called "Tappahannock group" of Virginia chairs is well-suited to this endeavor. The goal is to "map" early chair-making traditions in eastern Virginia and North Carolina.



Hoskins Creek at sunrise from the sunroom.



by Howard Reisinger

I want to relate to you a few of my more recent discoveries right here in our beautiful Essex County in the hope that you might be inspired to take a fresh look at the beauty that surrounds you right here at home.

Today it seems everyone has some interest in photography and some means of capturing digital images of the world to share. I very much enjoy the fine photographs of beautiful nearby scenes that many skillful local photographers regularly offer up in magazines and newsletters. They continue to inspire me. This article is not intended for these local artists. Rather, I hope it might speak to those of us who may have less than a full appreciation of the beauty close at hand. I know, because I was one of them.

Some of you may have seen a 1999 Stanley Kubrick film starring Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman entitled *Eyes Wide Shut*. I borrowed the title for this article from that film, but it's not the movie that I wish to evoke here. Rather, what I mean to convey to you, my readers, is that many of us go through life a bit like a somnambulist with our eyes wide open but shut to the wonders all around us. We are, in varying degrees, blind to the splendid panoply that

nature offers up to us right at our very doorstep. We look, but we simply do not see. It's a palette ranging from the splendors of a sunset that paints the sky in shades of color that challenge the brush of an artist to the beauty of a field of flowers, to the microcosm of the insect world or the inner folds of a flower. We literally stumble across and through such beauty nearly every day right here at home without really *seeing*. I am reminded of the effort we make when first hanging a new picture on our living room wall. We take care to position it just so, perhaps employing a ruler to assure its exact height and lateral positioning. For a very short time, we admire our exquisite new acquisition whenever we enter the room. But, lo and behold, after a scant few months have passed, we no longer even see the picture that took central stage but a short time ago.

Now, I don't mean to imply that travel to far-flung and exotic places does not answer a real and deep need within many of us, a wanderlust that begs to be satisfied. No one loves to travel more than I do, and I do so swinging my camera around my neck as everyman tourist does, looking agape at the awesome and unique wonders that all but slap me in the face, and seeking to capture scenes of unparalleled beauty on my camera's SD card so I can later review and relive these wonders and think, *I was right there!*

You may be disappointed that you won't find in Essex County a tiger or an elephant to photograph. You won't find the breathtaking view of a waterfall with its continuously foaming torrents falling seventy or eighty feet or a 5,000-foot, multihued chasm in the earth's crust. You won't find the allure of different people with foreign cultures speaking different tongues,

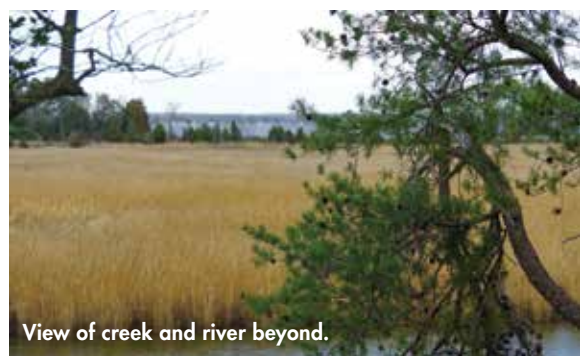
or warm islands with palm trees lapped by turquoise waters.

Yet, we have extraordinary beauty of a different sort without traveling beyond our county. I want to relate to you a few of my more recent discoveries right here in our beautiful Essex County in the hope that you might be inspired to take a fresh look at the beauty that surrounds you right here at home and, if you are at all interested in photography, you maybe inclined to pick up that camera lying idle, awaiting your next grand tour to capture some of this local beauty literally at your fingertips.

With April has come spring, and the birds everywhere are busy building their nests. Every year the ospreys return to construct their heavy and complex nests atop what seems to be every available buoy or pole. My wife, Joyce, and I always look forward to the return of these interesting hawks. We regularly watch them from our sunroom on Hoskins Creek as they swoop down from their flight over the creek and arise from beneath the murky waters with a fish now held fast in their claws. But for some reason, this year, the nest-building endeavors of a particular osprey caught our attention in a special way. We spent an hour or more on several successive days watching in fascination an osprey making what seemed like endless round trips between the buoy at the mouth of Hoskins Creek and the large oak tree that stands close, between our sunroom and the creek. We would catch sight of this bird in the distance as it lifted itself from the buoy and flew toward our home, describing a broad arc as it flew down the creek in search of that perfect next branch for its nest. For a few seconds, the osprey disappeared from sight. Then, suddenly, a shadow



Winter fields and sky.



View of creek and river beyond.



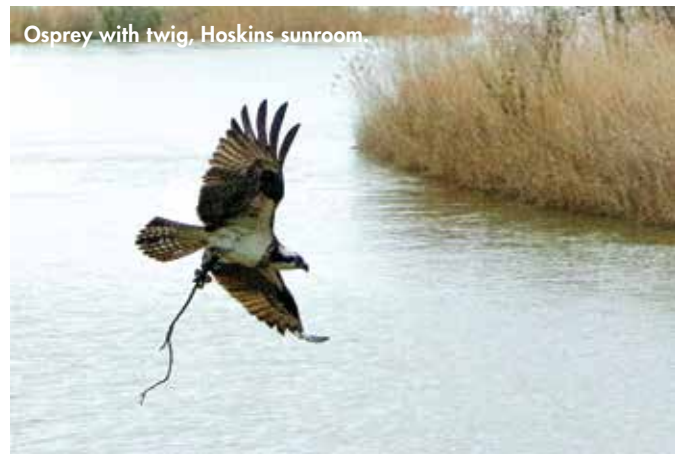
View of river and marsh.

All pictures on this page were taken at Hutchinson Tract in the Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

passed across our windows as the large bird wheeled around, almost touching the window with its wide brown and white wings outstretched, and made its way toward a favored branch high up in the oak tree. The landing in the tree was but a brief moment in this ballet when the hawk seemed to use its wings and beak to break off a branch often longer than its body, grasp it in its claws, and fly off to add this treasure to the growing nest.



Nesting pair of ospreys, Hutchinson Tract.



Osprey with twig, Hoskins sunroom.



Entrance to Hutchinson Tract.



View over creek, Hutchinson Tract.



Shadbush blossom, Hutchinson Tract.

The Hutchinson Tract is a wonderful piece of land set aside and protected for our enjoyment.

In contrast to the osprey's busy nest-building routine, my wife and I have sat in this same sunroom many nights "feeling" the pervasive serenity of a huge moon rising above the marshes, spilling its reflected light to create a sparkling golden pathway across the river and creek. Our sunroom has been the platform from which we have spent many hours observing nature: a muskrat or an otter crossing the creek, deer standing almost as still as statues at marsh's edge to savor a drink of water, several species of wild ducks languidly swimming upstream, or thousands of blackbirds swirling through the sky at dawn and sunset in a routine flight from their busy daily activities to the quiet of nighttime repose in the marshes.

Opportunities for equally absorbing observations beyond our sunroom abound throughout the county. One recent discovery for me was the Hutchinson Tract, Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge just north of Tappahannock. How fortunate we are to have this wonderful piece of land set aside and protected for our enjoyment! The reserve is entirely free to the public and open daily from sunrise to sunset.

I always find beauty and interest in visiting the Hutchinson Tract.

My first trip this year was on an uncharacteristically warm day in late February. My wife and I virtually had the nature reserve to ourselves, other than a pleasant brief encounter with Mr. Elton Reamy and family from Westmoreland County, whom we met along the trail. Most of the reserve was still asleep in its tawny cloak of wintering fields, but one beautiful tree stood out as a spot of color, astonishing in its contrast to the still somnolent surroundings. It was a shadbush, that earliest harbinger of spring, fully abloom with beautiful white blossoms. Some might find in this reawakening of a seemingly dead tree a reflection of Christ's promise of resurrection from death to eternal life.

In addition to enjoying the beauty of this microcosm of local nature, visiting the Hutchinson tract is a true learning experience. Signs abound throughout the reserve that helps to open our eyes to the variety of flora and fauna protected within its bounds. I am particularly impressed with the often-overlooked truism stated on one of these interpretive signs: "How easy it is to celebrate large spectacular forms of wildlife such as the bald eagle. Yet there are thousands and perhaps millions of vital wildlife species on this refuge each of which could easily fit in a teaspoon."

I want to share with you just one recent “awakening” for me to one of the smaller wildlife species on the Hutchinson Tract. On a return trip to the reserve on a warm April day, the tract was literally abuzz with life. While reading a sign explaining the value of pollinators, I was most fortunate to meet by chance Alice Wellford, whose extensive knowledge of pollinating bees and insects really brought the scene before me to life. Alice introduced me to a carpet of golden Alexanders flowers near the entrance to the reserve. Their lovely and delicate heads were bobbing merrily in the warm breeze and, already, there were several kinds of bees and butterflies visiting their pretty blossoms. Alice explained how this patch of golden Alexanders flowers was planted to be a part of the fascinating life cycle of mason bees. While most of us know the vital importance of honeybees in pollinating crops, and some believe the honeybee population is in serious decline nationwide, many people do not know that there are other important insect pollinators, including the solitary native mason bees. Alice informed me of the hugely valuable role the gentle little mason bees can play in pollination. I have read that a single female mason bee can visit 300,000 or more flowers in her short lifespan of only a few weeks,



making her an amazingly productive pollinator. In fact, the mason bee is a better pollinator of native plants than the honeybee. Whether or not the honeybee will ever be on the pathway to extinction, it only makes sense to raise or encourage mason bees to supplement the honeybee that is under stress due to the acknowledged decline of other species of native pollinating bees and insects. Propagation of mason bees has been encouraged on this tract by placing adjacent to the golden Alexanders flowers a bee house constructed of logs drilled with holes into which the female bees will lay eggs. From these eggs, the next generation of mason bees will emerge the following spring for their very brief, busy, and useful

life. Always so much to learn and enjoy! I hope you will visit this Essex County reserve many times, as I do, to continue a lifetime of opportunities to learn and uncover evermore beauty in our very midst.

While I still love to travel, in some ways I have come to understand that I experience a deeper, more lasting satisfaction in discovering the marvels of nature in my own back yard than chasing the spectacular across the globe. Maybe, you will too. From this short article, I hope that you will take up my invitation to see and savor the beauty all around you. Wake up! Live and enjoy the beauty of your county. It's there, free for the taking.

A native of Essex and Richmond counties, Howard W. Reisinger, Jr. holds a BA degree from UVA, studied at the Alliance Française in Paris, and received his MA degree in French from the University of Maryland. He taught French on the college level. Retiring from a second career with the Virginia State Department of Social Services, he resides at “Little Edge Hill” on Hoskins Creek in Tappahannock. Howard is Chairman of the Essex County Airport Authority, a board member of the Essex County Museum and Historical Society, and is actively involved in various ministries with St. John’s Episcopal Church. With his wife, Joyce, he enjoys international travel, sailing and photography.





Left: Mrs. Pakulis, Mr. Pakulis, Hylah, Valda, Ivars and John Haile

Right: Midge, Foxhounds, John Haile, Mrs. Pakulis (kneeling), Mr. Pakulis, Ivars Pakulis, Valda Pakulis



The Pakulis Family: Essex Refugees from Latvia in the 1950s

by Hylah Haile Boyd

The fall 2016 issue of the *Virginia Episcopalian* quarterly magazine of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia ran an article entitled, “Ministry to Foreign Refugees.” It described the diocese’s sponsorships of refugees fleeing persecution during the mid-1950s. The magazine reported that the sponsorships “flowed from an act of Congress, the Refugee Relief Act of 1953, a part of the Cold War effort to fight the threat of communism and to aid those threatened by communist persecution.” The law was designed to allow admission to the United States of southern and eastern European families who feared persecution based on “race, religion, ethnic origin and/or political beliefs. In order to emigrate, such refugees, many of whom lived in camps for displaced persons, had to pass security screening, as well as provide evidence of the guarantee of a home and job by a U. S. citizen. It was this last requirement, the guarantee of a home and job, that opened the door to congregational ministry.”

The article lists St. John’s Episcopal Church in Tappahannock as one of the several churches in Virginia that participated in resettling the refugee families, but it was a St. Paul’s (Millers Tavern) family that actually provided a home and job to a Latvian refugee family two years before the Refugee Relief Act of 1953. In the middle of August 1951 Mr. and Mrs. John F. Haile traveled to New York City to meet the Pakulis family and bring them to Minor, Virginia, where they would

live at Elton, the Haile family home. The Hailes had moved temporarily from Elton to another house on the property in anticipation of remodeling the family home. In the meantime it remained empty and was available for the Pakulis family to move in and help with farm operations. It was generally understood that Latvians were hard working and knew a lot about farming.

In the 1950s farming was labor intensive. At Elton, seed corn was grown that required detassling and shucking by hand. Black-eyed peas, grown for Taylor and Caldwell Cannery in Walkerton, required weeding and picking, again by hand. Feed for fattening steers required grinding and shoveling. Given the Latvians’ reputation for farming, the Hailes had more than enough reason to sponsor and welcome a Latvian family. As it turned out, Mr. Pakulis knew little about farming though he was hard working. Mr. and Mrs. Pakulis had two children, an older son named Ivars (eighteen) and a younger daughter named Valda (eight).

My brother, Dr. John R. Haile, and I were very young but share a few memories of the Pakulis family. Neither of us remembers how long the Pakulis family lived at Elton. It may have been for a couple of years or even less. The requirement for the host family was to find work for a year and to provide or help with housing and meals. I remember hearing a comment that the teachers in Tappahannock were reluctant to have Ivars and Valda join their classrooms because they couldn’t

speaking English. It turns out that Ivars had learned enough of the language in the displacement camps to be conversant and Valda quickly learned. She and I entered second grade together, though she was a year older, and language was not a barrier. In fact, she soon advanced a grade. Ivars translated routinely for his parents on the farm and entered the senior class of Tappahannock High School (that was the name then). He graduated in 1952 as president of the senior class. By any measure, that was a remarkable achievement!

John remembers the family had a two-acre garden just beyond the pond at Elton that they worked constantly to keep it weed free. He wonders to this day what they did with all the vegetables they grew.

Valda and I played together often on the farm and swam in the pond where, at the time, an old horse trailer sat at the edge and was used as a changing room. Directly out from the horse trailer was a rudimentary dock from which we could dive into the pond. I remember my father being astonished that Mr. Pakulis could swim fifty laps of the length of the pond at a time.

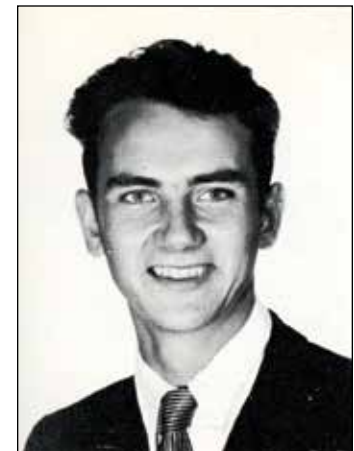
The first realization I had of just how cold Latvia must have been in the winter was when Mrs. Pakulis knitted a pair of heavy, woolen, gray socks for me that came up to above my knee. Mercifully, my mother made me wear them only once to thank Mrs. Pakulis.

Neither John nor I recall the Pakulis family ever attending St. Paul's services. After leaving Elton, the Pakulis family moved to Traveler's Rest, a farm on Howertons Road, adjacent to White Marsh, near Center Cross. They lived in a tenant house on the property, which was owned by Mrs. Jennie Clarkson. I visited and played with Valda on occasion. Soon we learned the family left the area rather hurriedly for Lincoln, Nebraska, where, we heard later, they became hospital workers. We also learned that Lincoln was where a large community of Latvians lived. Many had settled a decade earlier but some as early as 1905.

Latvia was first inhabited by Balts in the ninth century, but by the end of the eighteenth century, the Russian Empire took control of the country. Still, Latvian nationalism grew and the Latvian language and culture survived. The Russian Revolution in 1905 caused the first Latvians to emigrate to the United States. In 1918, the Republic of Latvia proclaimed its independence, which lasted until June 14, 1940, when the Soviet Union occupied the country during World War II. But, Nazi Germany also invaded and occupied Latvia between 1941 and 1944. Apparently, the



Valda Pakulis, Hylah in 2nd grade class photo Tappahannock Elementary School



Ivars Pakulis—High School Senior class President, Tappahannock High 1952

Russians were much more brutal to the Latvians than the Germans were, because many Latvians fled west to German displacement camps.

John remembers being told that Mr. Pakulis was an officer in the Russian army, which, if true, may have been a survival tactic. I remember being told there was another, older Pakulis son, who “missed the train” as the family evacuated, and they never learned his fate.

In 1944, as the Russians advanced toward Germany, about 220,000 Latvians—10 percent of the population—fled west. In the United States, President Harry Truman signed the Displaced Persons (DP) Act in 1948 and another in 1950, which allowed 600,000 DPs to come to the United States in three years. Latvia was part of the Soviet Union for decades. But in 1991, Latvia once again gained its independence.

Ivars served in the army directly after high school and later went to college and became a successful engineer. He came back to Virginia on occasion and visited Elton at least once. But sadly, in 2008, a small obituary appeared in the *Rappahannock Times* stating that Ivars E. Pakulis had died. He was seventy-five and survived by his sister.

ECCA 2016 Annual Meeting and Silent Auction

Congressman Rob Wittman



Our hostess Isabelle Welger-Merkel.



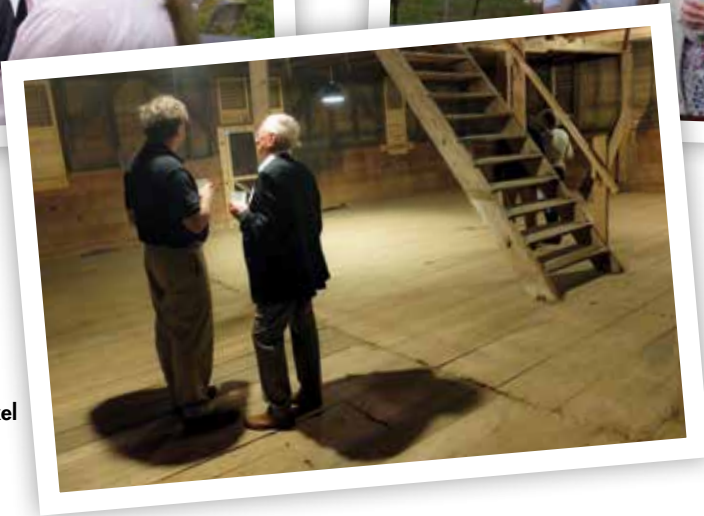
Port Micou made a beautiful setting by the Rappahannock River for our 2016 meeting.



Fleet Dillard, Alice Wellford, Tom Rubino



Lee Butler, Johanna von Walter, Ned von Walter



Our host Heinz Welger-Merkel giving a tour of the recently restored barn at Port Micou.



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Photos by Anne Weidhaas, Scenic Virginia

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Edited by William E. Palmer and D. Clay Sisson. Published by Tall Timbers Press; 160 pages; 7 x 10. Hardback: \$30.00. For more about the book and to purchase visit www.talltimbers.org.

ECCA Board Reports: **Financial**

by Margaret J. Smith, Treasurer

On behalf of the Directors, thank you for your continued generosity of the last year. The support of our members continues to allow the ECCA realize our mission of educating landowners on the options available to them through conservation easements and additional outreach aimed at preserving our natural and historic resources.

Through our collective efforts, over 23,000 acres in Essex County are now under easement. Year to date we have received \$7,150 in individual donations while securing \$8,050 in corporate donations. Additionally, fundraising for the Occupacia Rural Historic District study continues. We have applied for several grants to obtain matching funds for the project, and to date we have raised approximately \$15,000 towards the study costs.

While this is a great start to the year, we ask you to please remember the ECCA as you contemplate giving through the remainder of the year. In closing, thank you once again for your generosity and we look forward to seeing you at the annual meeting in September.

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3



4



5



6



7

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