



The Historian

Norfolk County Historical Society of Chesapeake, Virginia

Spring

May 2020

Volume 25, Issue 2

My Dear Friends,

For the last several weeks I have been sitting at home shut off from friends and family just like all of you. We are living in unprecedented times. Our Wallace History room is CLOSED. However, I can report we are doing fine as a society and as a library. Our Valentine exhibit was a huge success and we had many nice compliments of little Laverne Miller's Valentine cards. We've also received contributions towards binding some of our rare books, not to mention adding old photographs and more books to our collection.

As a historian, I cannot help but think of the hard times our ancestors went through with the yellow fever epidemics, typhoid fever, measles epidemics, tuberculosis, the 1918 influenza and how so many people in those days were quarantined because of these deadly diseases. I remembered how my mother and grandmother talked about how city and county officials had quarantined sections of the city (city blocks) and county to prevent these dreaded diseases from spreading. We are now confronted with the coronavirus and we, like our ancestors, are home doing our part to prevent this new disease from spreading. Yes, we are taking precautions, washing hands, self-distancing and most importantly staying at home.

Music has always been part of my life. I was raised in a household with lots of music and remembered my grandmother in Ghent winding up that old Victrola with an uplifting song. The other day a song came to mind, a song that I have not thought about in ages. I remember many family

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Calendar of Events

**Wallace Room Closed
Until Further Notice**

May 2020

NCHSC Board Meeting Canceled

NCHSC Membership Meeting Canceled

June 2020

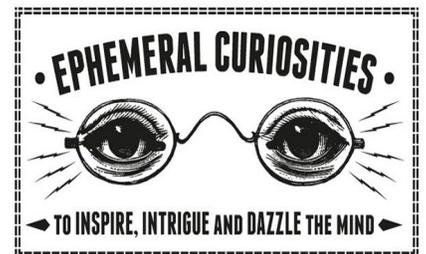
July 2020

August 2020

September 2020

NCHSC Board Meeting To Be Announced

NCHSC Membership Meeting To Be Announced



Wallace Memorial Room

Volunteer Spotlight, June Rose Hudgins

The NCHSC would like to welcome June Rose Hudgins as a volunteer in the Wallace Memorial History Room. June is a lifelong resident of Chesapeake. She grew up in South Norfolk and Portlock, graduating from Oscar Smith High School in 1965. June is married to her high school sweetheart, Elton, and lives in Great Bridge. June spends much of her time working at her church of 50 years, Rosemont Christian in Portlock. Her favorite pastimes are quilting, piano, violin and researching family history. She is thrilled to be a part of the Norfolk County Historical Society and looks forward to seeing and learning more about her beloved city's rich heritage in our nation's history.



Early 1900s Norfolk County Police Equipment Discovered

By Terry L. Riggs,
NCHSC Board Member, Wallace Room Volunteer

Early in the year, I was contacted by Phil Foster, a good friend, life-long Chesapeake resident, and Virginia State Police retiree. He asked if the Chesapeake Police Department (CPD) would be interested in some old artifacts from the Norfolk County Police Department. I was very quick to answer "Yes- Yes -Yes!"



G. B. Pendleton Donates
Norfolk County Police Items to CPD
(Photo Courtesy of Ken Teller,
CPD Photographer)

Ken Teller, CPD Photographer, and I went to southern Chesapeake and met with Mr. G. B. Pendleton. Mr. Pendleton is a retired life-long farmer. He showed us a collection of items from the early 1900s which belonged to his grandfather, George Washington Pendleton. G. W. came from Pasquotank County to Norfolk County by barge boat around 1900. He settled in lower Norfolk County (Chesapeake), VA and became a Special Police Officer in Norfolk County some time between 1910 and 1930.

G.B. Pendleton was too young to remember his grandfather's police experience. These items may be the oldest Norfolk County Police items that we have to date. They include a Smith & Wesson .32 caliber revolver, an ALFA .32 caliber revolver (manufactured in 1920), two pairs of handcuffs, a blackjack (police baton), and a Norfolk County "Special Police" badge. I turned these items over to Chief K.L. Wright to be displayed in the Chesapeake Police Department history cabinet.

Memories of Riverdale Manor

Story and Photographs

By June Rose Hudgins, Wallace Room Volunteer

Much has been written about Riverdale Manor over the past decades. It was, indeed, built in the early 1940s as military housing during World War II. Over the years, it housed hundreds of families that worked civilian jobs, the Ford plant, and those who needed affordable housing of that era. We moved to 3009 Fireside Road in 1947 not long after I was born. Those were the days of people living in close quarters in long cinderblock row housing with common attics. If a family at one end of the block had a problem with pests, everyone did; however, it was a friendly group of folks who all helped one another through the difficult times. We paid \$29.00 a month for rent. We cut our own little patch of grass with scissors. The summers were hot, and the winters were cold.



Baby June Rose in Riverdale Manor

I remember when we got the first television in 1953. It was in a mahogany cabinet that was as big as the heater sitting in the living room. The neighborhood children would come over, and we'd all sit on the sofa looking at a black and white test pattern while waiting for the Howdy Doody Show to come on.



May Day 1954 at Riverdale Elementary

Riverdale was later renamed Glenwood Village until the Beazley Foundation bought it in the late 1950s and renamed it Foundation Park. I have encountered numerous people over the years that also got their start there in the early days. I remember the bus that Mr. Haynes used to drive around the neighborhood selling bread, milk, and peanut butter in little glasses that mama collected, along with other necessities.

I also can't forget the Dale Theater and the Riverdale Service Station, owned by Charles Bradshaw. My father, Ralph Rose, was an aircraft mechanic at the Naval Air Station. He and Charles became good friends, and he

drove the #39 Riverdale race car, which I have learned was derived from our house number, 3009. Ralph drove the car at several tracks in Tidewater, including the Peninsula Speedway, where the grandstands were located on what is now the backstretch and known as Langley Speedway. This was the beginning of a 20-year racing career in which Ralph won three consecutive NASCAR state championships and was inducted into the Chesapeake Sports Club Hall of Fame as a Legend of Honor in 2018.

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Memories of Riverdale Manor, *Continued*

Yes, my earliest memories in life were from this neighborhood of so long ago, and while many of the faces that once lived on roads named Fireside, Border, Welcome, Wagon and others are no longer with us, those memories of 73 years ago still live on today. I have passed those same values of friendship, loyalty and helping those in need to my own children and granddaughter that I once learned in a small place on Fireside Road. The area we lived on is now a long block of grass and has "No Trespassing" signs on it, but when I stand there, I can still see the children playing in the sun, riding their bicycles and laughing with the innocence of youth. I have included a couple of pictures which I hope will bring a smile to your face and a recollection of a simpler time in life, especially for those who once called "Riverdale" their home.



Riverdale Service Station Racecar #39

Our Microfilm Reader, A Welcome Addition to the Wallace Room



We are happy to share our latest addition to the Wallace Room – our very own microfilm reader. Donated by Mr. Clyde Colbert, the microfilm reader needed a little "TLC" from Terry Riggs, and it's ready for use. Unfortunately, with the Wallace Room being closed due to the governor's stay-at-home mandate, we can't use it now, but it will get lots of use once the Wallace Room re-opens.

Many thanks to Clyde Colbert and Terry Riggs for making this happen!

President's Letter, *Continued*

members humming or singing this song in hard times. It's an oldie but a goodie from the 1940s made popular by the late Judy Garland (1922-1969) called, "Look for the Silver Lining." It is an infectious tune, up-lifting with beautiful words. In this time of crisis, we face the unknown, but we keep our spirits high. My friends, soon this virus will pass, we shall get over this and we shall all be looking for that "Silver Lining."

Robert B. Hitchings,
President and Archivist/Historian, NCHSC

1912 Panoramic Photograph Sparks Curiosity

By P. S. Vredenburg,
NCHSC Board Member, Wallace Room Volunteer

A recent donation to our collections by NCHSC member Sparky Roberts triggered our curiosity. The donation of military photographs arrived with little information, except for a panoramic photo entitled *1st Brigade Inft'y. Va. Vol's. Mt. Gretna. PA July 25th -- Aug 3rd 1912*. Who were the Virginia Volunteers? Why were they in Mt. Gretna, PA in 1912?

Using HathiTrust Digital Library, we found a 1912 annual report sent by the Adjutant General of Virginia to the Governor of Virginia. As a result of the 1903 Militia Act, the Virginia Volunteers were part of what is now called the Virginia National Guard. According to the report, the First Brigade Infantry of the Virginia Volunteers consisted of the 1st Regiment from Staunton, VA; the 2nd Regiment from Luray, VA; and the 4th Regiment from Norfolk, VA. That year, the 4th Regiment included 41 officers, 568 enlisted, and 6 staff corps officers.

The Adjutant General's report described 10 days of joint maneuvers at Mt. Gretna, PA. From late July to early August 1912, units from Virginia and West Virginia gathered and participated in training and simulation combat exercises. The joint maneuvers were hosted by the U.S. Military, who provided supervision and instruction to guard units. According to reports in the *Virginian-Pilot*, the 4th Regiment from Norfolk, VA arrived at the encampment on July 25, 1912 and made a good showing during maneuvers.



Segment from Panoramic Photo
First Brigade Infantry, Virginia Volunteers at Mt. Gretna PA July 2, 1912 -- August 3, 1912

Norfolk County Historical Society of Chesapeake
298 Cedar Road
Chesapeake, VA 23322

Please check the date on your mailing label above to make sure your membership is current. Membership dues are due by May 31st.

Questions or suggestions? Email us at nchs.wallaceroom@gmail.com, call us at (757) 410-7152, or visit our site NorfolkCountyVAHistory.org. Date submitted (for your records) _____

Our May Meetings Have Been Canceled! Stay Home – Stay Safe!

In compliance with Governor Northam's temporary stay-at-home order to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, we are canceling both our NCHSC board meeting and our general membership meeting. Additionally, the Wallace Room will remain closed until further notice.

In the meantime, we will continue to monitor email and Facebook requests. We will also continue to post updates and items from our collection on Facebook and our web site.

We hope to see everyone happy and healthy at our general membership meeting on September 20, 2020! Until then, stay home and stay safe, friends!



Poster Published by the *Illustrated Current News* in 1918, from the U.S. National Library of Medicine