



The Historian

Norfolk County Historical Society of Chesapeake, Virginia

Fall

November 2024

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Dear Members and Friends,

As the air turns crisp and the leaves paint a fabulous landscape of red, orange, brown and gold, we welcome one of the most cherished seasons of the year, Fall. Like so many, I welcome the Fall season for it ushers in cooler weather. Fall is truly a season of abundance, and this is the time of year that we take pause to reflect on all of our blessings. We are grateful for the abundance of wonderful projects we have in progress for 2024 and 2025. Of course, your support is key to our efforts in continuing our preservation, research, and education activities.

Board member, Terri Michelle Jones has initiated the NCHSC First Families of Norfolk County genealogy project that has rolled out this month. Our goal is to recognize and preserve Norfolk County family histories. You do not have to be a member of the NCHSC to participate so please pass this program on to anyone who you think may be eligible. See our website for further details and application process – www.norfolkcountyvahistory.org. We hope to receive many applications!



The Wallace Memorial History Room will host an exhibit of vintage WWII Christmas cards and pictures. The exhibit will run from December 7th through January 5th. Please stop by and take a look!

We also hope you will visit our tent at the reenactment of the Battle of Great Bridge on December 7th and 8th at Battlefield Park South. There will be Revolutionary War encampments,

Calendar of Events

November 2024

Cemetery Tour Fundraiser

2 Nov 11:00am EDT
3 Nov 11:00am EST

Closed

5 & 11 Nov

NCHSC Board Meeting via ZOOM

12 Nov 7:00pm

NCHSC Membership Meeting

17 Nov 2:00pm

Closed

27 Nov – 1 Dec

December 2024

Battle of Great Bridge Reenactment

7 Dec 10am – 4pm
8 Dec 10am – 2pm

Closed

24 Dec 2024 – 2 Jan 2025

January 2025

Closed

1, 2, & 17 Jan

February 2025

NCHSC Board Meeting via ZOOM

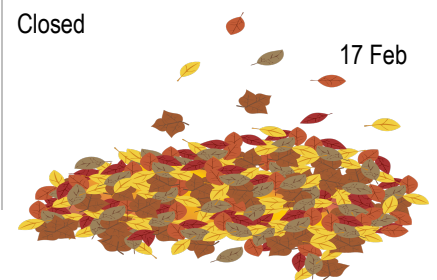
11 Feb 7:00pm

NCHSC Membership Meeting

16 Feb 2:00pm

Closed

17 Feb



Continued next page

President's Message, *Continued*

demonstrations, character portrayals, historical displays and lectures, skilled artisans demonstrating early American trades, and children's crafts and activities.

If you would like to join our volunteer team, please contact Kay Ziegler, our Wallace Room Manager. We'd love to have you join us! We are always looking for more volunteers to help in the Wallace History Room or on our many NCHSC committees.

Here in the Wallace Memorial History Room, we give thanks for the many gifts of books, rare maps, and old photographs of Norfolk County given with love by so many individuals near and far. It's these small gifts and the support and hard work of our board members and volunteers that make our Wallace History Room special.

Wishing you all a beautiful, bountiful and blessed Fall season!

Robert B. Hitchings, NCHSC President

Brandan Adams of the Mariners Museum & Park to Speak at November Membership Meeting

Please join us for our membership meeting on Sunday, November 17, 2024, at 2:00pm. Our guest speaker, Brandan Adams of the Mariners Museum and Park, will present "Blackbeard in the Americas." Blackbeard, one of the most feared pirates of the 18th century, wreaked havoc up and down the

eastern seaboard of North America. But little is known about this historic figure. Brandan Adams addresses the man, myth, and legend surrounding Blackbeard and his ties to Virginia and North Carolina.

Brandan Adams is the Senior Educator of History at The Mariners Museum and Park. She has been with the museum for 5 years. Prior to moving into the museum field, Brandan worked as a middle school social studies teacher with Norfolk Public Schools for 9 years. Her philosophy of teaching centers on student engagement, and she loves bringing passion and enthusiasm to students through social studies.

We look forward to seeing you at the Chesapeake Central Library for this fun and informative presentation. Light refreshments will be served as always. Don't forget to bring your friends!



Brandan Adams,
Senior Educator of History,
Mariners Museum and Park



Image of Edward Teach, aka
Blackbeard, from *A General
History of the Pyrate*, (1725) by
Charles Johnson

By Jane Norris Evans,
Wallace Room Volunteer

In 1900, through the initiative of Norfolk Mayor C. Brooks Johnston, Norfolk secured Craney Island from the federal government as a detention station and a hospital for contagious diseases. In March of 1900 Norfolk County sent contagious disease patients from Great Bridge to Craney Island. It was stated that “The greatest danger was from infection from Norfolk County and contiguous territory, where the health regulations are insufficient.” All patients that had been kept at the county pest house were transferred to Craney Island so any danger of contagion reaching the city would be minimized.

Certificate of Death.

TO THE BOARD OF HEALTH, NORFOLK, VA.

Full Name of Deceased *Mollie Scott - {Norfo. Co.}*
Date of Death *May 25th* 1900. No. Permit: _____
Age *about 35* Years, _____ Months, _____ Days. Sex *Female*.
Color *ed* Occupation _____
Married, Single, Widow or Widower. Birthplace _____
Name of Father _____ Name of Mother _____
Duration of Residence in City of Norfolk _____
Nativity of Father _____ Nativity of Mother _____
Place of Death [Give Street and Number] *Craney Island Hospital*
Cause of Death { First (Primary) *Suicide - by* *Camphor*
Second (Immediate) *Exhaustion*
Duration of Last Sickness *Ten (10) days*
All of the above information should be furnished by the Physician.
In case of death by synoptic disease, please state what, if any, local cause exists to produce the same.
Place of Burial *Craney Island*
Date of Burial *May 26 1900* *Edward P. O'Connell* M.
{ Undertaker *Norfolk City* Address *Craney Island Hospital*
{ Place of Business _____

Craney Island Hospital Death Certificate
Issued May 25, 1900,
for Mollie Scott of Norfolk County, VA

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Craney Island Hospital, *Continued*

flies from the flagpole on the island. When more than an ordinary number of patients are receiving treatment guards are posted to prevent any of them from escaping in boats or by trying to swim the channel." The article stated not a single patient in the eleven years had "made a successful get-away." There were also several pictures posted of the detention facilities including one for white patients and one for blacks. There is also a picture of the superintendent's/keeper's children who also lived on the island.

According to the January 25, 1914, Richmond Times Dispatch, there were only 42 cases of smallpox on the island as reported by the Health Commissioner. By this time, they were receiving patients from Norfolk, Portsmouth, Norfolk County, Princess Anne County and the U.S. Navy.

In all my research, I never found an obituary indicating any person was buried in a cemetery on Craney Island. The only thing close was an article about a young man who was to be married who had died there and they were sad that his bride-to-be would not be able to care for his grave.

In 1917 the Navy Department turned over Craney Island to the Public Health Service to be used as a federal quarantine station.

Update on Hanbury Family Cemetery at Peaceful Road, Chesapeake

By Suzy Ward Fleming,
NCHSC Board Member & Wallace Room Volunteer

The NCHSC Cemetery Committee received a written response on the ground-penetrating radar and preservation plans for the Hanbury Cemetery. The response was sent to us by Jessica Cosmos of Chesapeake Parks and Recreation Department and came from Joseph Pulley of Home Associates of Virginia. This response included the following information:

The ground penetrating radar was completed on July 17, 2024, and 5 graves were flagged. During the development of the new Ashburn Meadows the graves will be protected with tree protection fencing. After all the heavy equipment activity is completed, the exposed vaults will be repaired, and the broken stones will be evaluated for possible repair. The developer plans to put in masonry columns at four corners to protect the site and they will install a fence to encompass the graves.

Thanks to the cooperation and generosity of Joseph Pulley of Home Associates of Virginia the Hanbury Cemetery will be preserved and taken care of into the future!

Mystery Photo

Wallace Room volunteer Amy Williamson Jonak asked us to share a mystery photo she recently discovered among some of Amy's mother's papers. Amy wrote:

It is inscribed in white: "GBHS 1919," "Taylor Studio Norfolk Va." My grandfather, John Hall Williamson, went to Great Bridge High School. According to Mom, he was in the first graduating class from the new building (built about 1924). Born in November 1907, he would have been 11 or 12 in this photo. The setting looks like the old entrance to the original Great Bridge High School built in 1906. I'm unsure exactly which boy is my grandfather, but I think he is the second boy from the left in the back row. John Hall (as he was called) went on to attend William & Mary for several years, including 1925/26. He and his wife raised their family in the two-story white house on the northwest corner of Cedar Road and Battlefield Blvd., 201 Cedar Rd. The house is now dark gray, tucked behind tall bushes.

The mystery is, who are all these other people?

Do you know of someone who attended Great Bridge High School between 1917 and 1924? Let us know if you recognize them!

Contact us if you have photos of people, places, or events in Norfolk County and/or the City of Chesapeake you'd like to share!

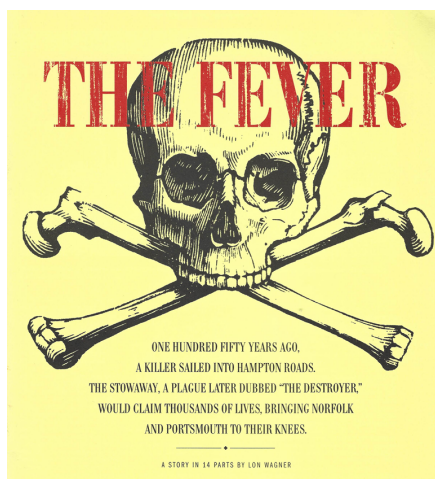


1919 Great Bridge High School Photograph from the Mary L. Williamson Collection,
Courtesy of Amy Williamson Jonak

NCHSC Member Donna Bluemink Praised for Research on the Yellow Fever Epidemic

By Suzy Ward Fleming,
NCHSC Board Member & Wallace Room Volunteer

Lon Wagner, author and guest speaker at our September 2024 membership meeting, recently released his new book on the Yellow Fever epidemic that struck Norfolk and Portsmouth in the summer of 1855. At our meeting Lon gave an interesting background on the research for his new book, *The Fever*. He started his research while working for the *Virginian-Pilot* and in 2005 wrote a 14-part series on the Yellow Fever which was published in the newspaper. The *Virginian-Pilot* later released it again as a special reprint in booklet form.



Cover of Booklet *The Fever*
Published by
The Virginian-Pilot

When Lon began his initial research, he contacted Robert Hitchings, who was the archivist in the Sergeant Memorial Room at the Norfolk Public Library. Robert introduced Lon to Donna Bluemink another Sergeant Room employee and an NCHSC member. Donna, who had already done extensive research on the epidemic, had published her findings online and shared this information with Lon.

Lon gives credit to Donna for much of his research. A copy of Lon's reprinted *Virginian-Pilot* series, "The Fever" is available for reading in the Wallace Room, at Chesapeake Central Library.

Lon Wagner's book is available at Amazon:

[The Fever: The Most Fatal Plague in American History: Wagner, Lon: 9798888244210: Amazon.com: Books](https://www.amazon.com/dp/9798888244210)

Donna Bluemink's website with information on Norfolk Cemeteries and Yellow Fever link can be found at:

[VA USGenWeb Archives \(usgwarchives.net\)](http://usgwarchives.net)



Donna Bluemink, Lon Wagner,
and Robert Hitchings at
September 2024 NCHSC Membership Meeting

Lake Drummond's Connection to Bacon's Rebellion

By Robert Hitchings,
NCHSC Archivist/Historian and President

Lake Drummond has an unusual name. It's a Scottish name, named after William Drummond, who became, in 1664, the first colonial governor of the Albemarle Sound settlement in North Carolina. In 1665, Drummond discovered the 3-acre lake that sits in the middle of the Great Dismal Swamp, while on a hunting expedition. The lake would later be named after him in honor of his discovery.

William Drummond was born in Scotland and arrived in the colony of Virginia around 1637.

Drummond became a successful planter and large land holder in the colony. He worked his way up in James City County and served as sheriff and bailiff of the Quarter Court, as well as Sergeant at Arms of the Virginia General Assembly. He and, royal appointee, Governor William Berkeley had a good relationship, until 1672, when Governor Berkeley contracted Drummond to erect a fort at Jamestown during the Third Anglo-Dutch War. Drummond clashed with the Governor and was arrested twice for not completing the job. Drummond's poor performance sealed Berkeley's dislike for this man.



Sir William Berkeley (1605-1677),
Governor of Virginia 1641-1652
and 1660-1677

Apparently, Drummond was a hot head. During Bacon's Rebellion, Nathaniel Bacon's men burned Jamestown in the autumn of 1676. In protest against royal Governor Berkeley, Drummond set fire to his own house. Drummond became one of Bacon's faithful followers.

When sudden death of dysentery killed Nathaniel Bacon, William Drummond continued to rebel against the crown, but he and his followers were defeated. Drummond attempted to escape to the Dismal Swamp, but he was later captured in the Chickahominy Swamp. Several days later soldiers of the Governor found and captured William Drummond and his followers. All were sick and half starved.

Upon being captured, William Drummond was presented to Governor Berkeley. Berkeley greeted Drummond with respect and a bow -- along with these sarcastic words, "Mr. Drummond, you are very welcome, I am more-glad to see you than any man in Virginia. Mr. Drummond, you shall be hang'd in half an hour." William Drummond was tried, convicted and hanged on January 20, 1677. Today, no one knows where William Drummond was buried.

By Terri Michelle Jones,
NCHSC Board Member & First Families Committee Chair

Does your family tree have deep roots in Tidewater? If your ancestors resided in Norfolk County from 1636 to 1876, you may be eligible for membership in our genealogy program *First Families of Norfolk County, Virginia*. The First Families Program, sponsored by the Norfolk County Historical Society of Chesapeake, Virginia, provides a way to preserve your family history research as part of our genealogy collection and to honor your Norfolk County ancestors.

The NCHSC is currently accepting First Family applications. You will need to complete a First Families application and provide primary source documents to prove that your ancestor resided in Norfolk County, Virginia, between 1636 and 1876 and to verify your lineal descent. Applications will be reviewed using uniform genealogical standards by a committee of trained family historians.

Approved applications and supporting source documents will be safely digitized and archived in our secured family history files in the Wallace Memorial History Room, located on the second floor of the Chesapeake Central Public Library at 298 Cedar Road, Chesapeake, Virginia. Members will receive a customized First Families Membership Certificate and Member Number, as well as entry on our official First Families of Norfolk County Roster. Membership presentations will be made at our quarterly membership meeting.

Go to our website www.norfolkcountyvahistory.org or contact the Wallace Memorial History Room or for an application and more information.



Find NCHSC publications for sale at our storefront on Amazon.com!

<https://www.amazon.com/s?me=A2NZFQ9MGEZ94B&marketplaceID=ATVPDKIKX0DER>