



The Historian

Norfolk County Historical Society of Chesapeake, Virginia

Winter

February 2022

Volume 27, Issue 1

Dear Members & Friends,

As we bid farewell to the year 2021, I want to thank each and every one of you for your support and I especially want to thank our dedicated NCHSC volunteers. Because of our volunteers' commitment to our members and patrons, we were able to keep the Wallace History Room open. Our visitors continued to be welcomed and assisted in their research during the Covid crisis.

While many libraries in our area have either shut down or shortened their operating hours, our Chesapeake library system and Wallace History Room remained open for its patrons. This, my friends, speaks volumes to our volunteers and to our Chesapeake library system!

In spite of the pandemic, the year 2021 turned out to be a great year for our Wallace History Room. We are thankful for the many fine donations that were added to our growing archives, especially the many family genealogies. Believe me, these collections kept us quite busy! As I told a few fellow librarians, we are building a library that the citizens of Chesapeake will be mighty proud of in the coming years.

As your president, I'd like to extend my gratitude once again to all those who made 2021 a successful year for the NCHSC. Our volunteer staff showed the Tidewater area that we were not afraid to be open. I am also appreciative of the support from our board members and their many e-mails and phone calls. Believe me, it meant so much to me. It's not easy being your top man!

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Calendar of Events

February 2022

NCHSC Board Meeting	8 Feb 6:00pm
Closed	15 Feb
NCHSC Membership Meeting	20 Feb 2:00pm
Closed	21 Feb

March 2022

Closed	18 Mar
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April 2022

Closed	17 Apr
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May 2022

NCHSC Board Meeting	10 May 6:00pm
NCHSC Membership Meeting	15 May 2:00pm
Closed	30 May



President's Letter, *Continued*

As we now welcome in the New Year 2022, we are already planning projects, events, and fundraisers. Be sure to check our web site and follow us on Facebook for updates. We are always looking for volunteers to assist us. If you are interested in volunteering, contact us.

Be sure to join us for an interesting presentation at our membership meeting on Sunday, February 20th at 2:00 pm at the Central Library. Mr. Frederick Taylor will be discussing daguerreotypes, the first commercially successful photographic process.

As always, I look forward to working with all of you. Thank you for being there for me!
HAPPY NEW YEAR 2022!

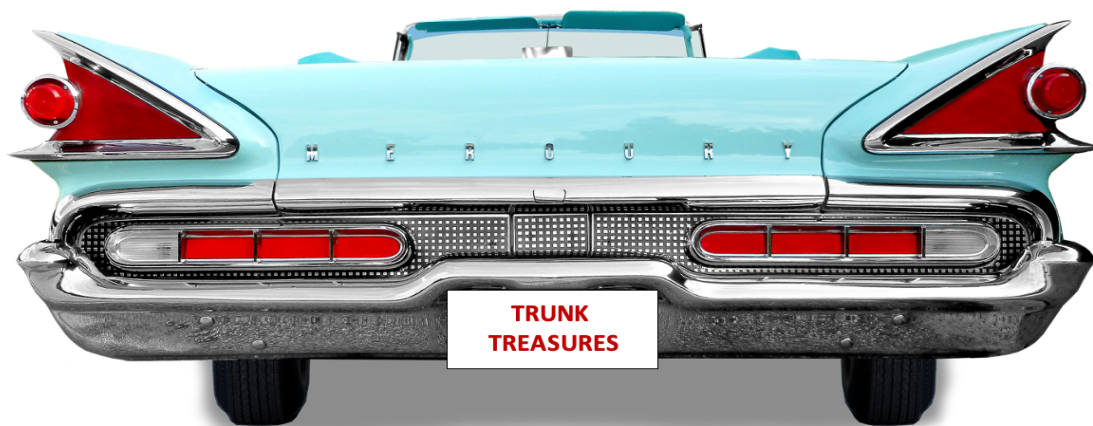
Robert B. Hitchings, President

"Trunk Treasures" Fundraiser

We're Planning a "Trunk Treasures Sale" Fundraiser!

Tentative Date: May 14, 2022

Sell your new, used, or antique treasures from
the trunk (or tailgate) of your vehicle.



Details will be posted on the NCHSC web page, emailed to members,
and shared on Facebook.

Contact Lori Pickett in the Wallace Room to volunteer for this event.

STAY TUNED, Everyone!

Battle of Great Bridge Diorama Donated to the Wallace Room

By Kay Ziegler,
Wallace Room Manager, NCHSC Board
Member

You never know when someone will present you with an unexpected gift. During the recent Battle of Great Bridge Reenactment, Mr. Wilmer "Will" Aygarn stopped by our exhibit and saw our diorama. He mentioned he had made a diorama of the Battle of Great Bridge, only on a smaller scale, some 20 years ago. He asked if we would like to have his diorama and, of course, we said yes! Mr. Aygarn's diorama is now part of our collection.



Diorama Made by Wilmer Aygarn

Mr. Aygarn is a native of old Princess Anne County and has been a land surveyor and a bridge tender for the City of Chesapeake since the mid-90s. Mr. Aygarn said he always had an interest in local history and enjoyed making models. About 20 years ago he became interested in dioramas and thought it would be fun to create one of the Battle of Great Bridge.

Cemetery Mystery Solved

By Susan Fleming,
Wallace Room Volunteer

On Friday November 3, 2021, I went in search of cemeteries in Chesapeake with friends Kay Ziegler and Patty and Jim Hamilton. We were doing research for the NCHSC Cemetery Committee.

Patty spotted two stones in a soybean field off of Centerville Turnpike, not visible from street. They were for two Silvester children, William, who died in 1793 and his sister, Dorcas, who died in 1800. They were children of David and Frances Bartee Silvester. I could not help but wonder, what happened to their parents as there were no other stones to be found?



NCHSC Lifetime Member
Patty Hamilton Pictured
with Silvester Headstone

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Cemetery Mystery Solved, *Continued*

The search led me to a journal in the Library of Congress for John Owen on his removal from Virginia to Alabama in 1818. John married Ann Keeling Silvester, daughter of David and Frances. In his journal he recorded the birth and death dates for David Silvester. David died in March 1797, the same month that his wife Frances gave birth to Ann. Frances remarried in 1801 to Joseph Nimmo who died in 1816 and is buried in Elmwood Cemetery in Norfolk. Widow Frances traveled to Tuscaloosa Alabama in an oxcart with her daughter, son-in-law, their two small children and three or four slaves. The trip took nine weeks and the journal spoke of the hardships of the journey including their encounter with Cherokees.

Using the information in John's journal and David's will that was put to record on July 17, 1797, I felt confident enough to also record David Silvester in the Silvester Cemetery located in the field beside 911 Centerville Turnpike.

Newest Additions to the Wallace History Room

By Kay Ziegler,
Wallace Room Manager, NCHSC Board Member



Scrapbooks on Display

What is a scrapbook? They come in many shapes and sizes. They are keepsakes of bygone days. Scrapbooks are a method of preserving our past, especially memorabilia of family events of long ago. Each scrapbook is a time capsule, full of surprises.

Our scrapbook collection has been relocated to the shelves of the Wallace Room for the use of our patrons. Our oldest scrapbook, from 1910, contains newspaper clippings of Deep Creek and the Great Dismal Swamp. All are security-coded, and an index is on the shelf to help patrons find what they are looking for.

Another addition to our room is our collection of Genealogical Family Binders. These are family genealogies that have been donated by people who have researched their family histories and now want to share them with others who have a common ancestor. Like the scrapbooks, they are security-coded with an index on the shelf to help locate a specific family binder. As always, volunteers are available to assist you.



Genealogical
Family Binders

Annual Holiday Dinner

By Amy Williamson Jonak,
Wallace Room Volunteer

The NCHSC kicked off the 2021 holiday season on December 1st with friends, food and song. Members gathered at Traditions in Las Gaviotas to greet long-time friends and meet some special guests. Fellow history lovers from the Great Bridge Battlefield and Waterways History Museum and the Sons of Norway joined in the festivities.

Amy Ferebee, a favorite Hampton Roads musician, and her colleague Connie Smith, set the tone with lovely guitar and mandolin melodies. After dinner, when everyone was full and voices were warmed up, the duo led us in a whirlwind catalogue of Christmas carols. Though we were no match for the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, our songs included many more chuckles. Thanks to Robert, Kay, Laura and many others for creating a delightful night. Happy New Year everyone!



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

**Annual membership dues are due by May 31st.
Dues will increase to \$20 per year beginning June 1, 2022.**

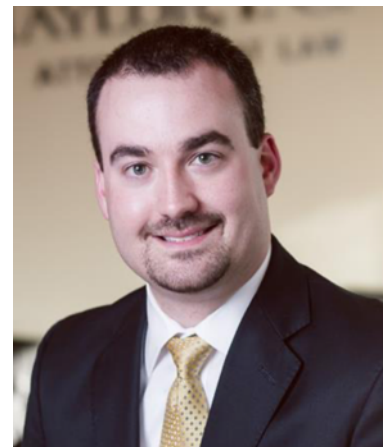
Questions or suggestions? Email us at nchs.wallaceroom@gmail.com, call us at (757) 410-7152, or visit our site NorfolkCountyVAHistory.org. Date submitted (for your records) _____

Mr. Frederick Taylor to Present “The Mirror Image: Daguerreotypes” at February Meeting

Join us on Sunday, February 20, 2022, for our membership meeting. Mr. Frederick Taylor will give a presentation on the daguerreotype, the first commercially successful photographic process (1839-1860) in the history of photography. Named after the inventor, Louis Daguerre, each daguerreotype is a unique image on a silvered copper plate.

Mr. Taylor is an attorney and history lover. He serves on the board of directors for several local non-profit organizations, including Preservation of Historic Suffolk and Riddick’s Folly House Museum. He is a former President of the Suffolk-Nansemond Historical Society.

Please come and support the NCHSC with your presence. Our general meeting will be held at the Chesapeake Central Library on February 20th at 2:00 p.m. Light refreshments will be served.



Mr. Frederick Taylor,
February Guest Speaker