



# The Historian

Norfolk County Historical Society of Chesapeake, Virginia

Spring May 2022 Volume 27, Issue 2

Dear Members & Friends,

The story of Virginia and Virginians has been told since 1607. Each story is unique, beginning with the first settlers, Native Americans, African Americans, and the counties that were created in 1634 by King Charles I. Norfolk County was one of the first shires (counties) created by the colonial General Assembly in Jamestown and our history of Norfolk County (Chesapeake) is as colorful as any. In fact, it is as colorful a mosaic as the land we call America.

If you are interested and mining for a glimpse of Virginia’s rich history, the best place to start is our own Wallace Memorial History Room. Here you will find rare books, maps, photographs, and fabulous stories of our area. Step into the past and enjoy our rich history in our spacious room. Yes, members and friends, this is our story and I have been telling this story since I became your President. It’s a simple story, like many stories of our area, but it is our story.

When I enter into our Wallace History Room, I look around at the beautiful color scheme of our room. I see the fresh, warm sunlight shining into this room and the message written above the windows. I view those words by William Murtagh (1923-2018), who was the first “Keeper” of the National Register of Historic Places, which reads:

*“It has been said that, at its best, preservation engages the past in a conversation with the present over a mutual concern for the future.”*

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## Calendar of Events

### May 2022

NCHSC Board Meeting  
10 May 6:00pm

### Trunk Treasures Sale

14 May 8:30am - 1:30pm  
(7:00am – 8:30am seller setup)

### NCHSC Membership Meeting

15 May 2:00pm

Closed

30 May

### June 2022

Closed

20 Jun

### July 2022

Closed

4 Jul

### August 2022

### September 2022

Closed

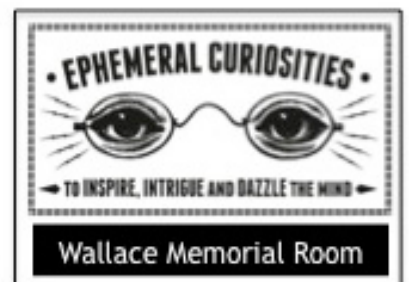
5 Sep

NCHSC Board Meeting

13 Sep 6:00pm

### NCHSC Membership Meeting

18 Sep 2:00pm



## President's Letter, *Continued*

We, as members of the NCHSC, have lots to be grateful for, and we must never forget those past men and women that pulled this Wallace Room together for the citizens of Chesapeake in 1963. We have a welcoming room with a devoted staff of fantastic volunteers who are here to help. To all who are seeking history -- Virginia history, North Carolina or history of Norfolk County -- the best place to start is our very own Wallace Memorial Room.

So, tell your friends and family about us, and be sure to stop by and visit us. We look forward to meeting you and helping you in your research needs. You will not regret it!

Thank you for your support!

Robert B. Hitchings, NCHSC President

## "Trunk Treasures" Community Garage Sale – May 14<sup>th</sup> in the Central Library Parking Lot

Have you heard? We're hosting the Trunk Treasures Sale, a community garage sale fundraiser. We need YOUR support! For a \$20 donation to the NCHSC, you can sell your new, used and antique items from the trunk or tailgate of your vehicle! YOU keep the proceeds from your sales.

**Sellers**, call the Wallace Room to reserve your seller space today! See our website for details, terms and conditions: [norfolkcountyvahistory.org](http://norfolkcountyvahistory.org)

**Shoppers**, come out and support us with your presence! You might find a bargain or two!

**Where:** Chesapeake Central Library Parking Lot, 298 Cedar Road, Chesapeake VA 23322

**When:** May 14, 2022, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (Seller setup from 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.)



**Community Garage Sale Fundraiser to Benefit  
the Norfolk County Historical Society of Chesapeake, VA**

## Celebrating the Future Historic Village at the Dismal Swamp

By Lori Pickett,  
NCHSC Board Member

On Thursday, March 24, 2022, there was a gathering at the future site of the Dismal Swamp Canal Historic Village. Although rain threatened, the weather did not stop the 60 or more people from attending.



Attendees Stayed Dry under the Tent at the Historic Village at the Dismal Swamp



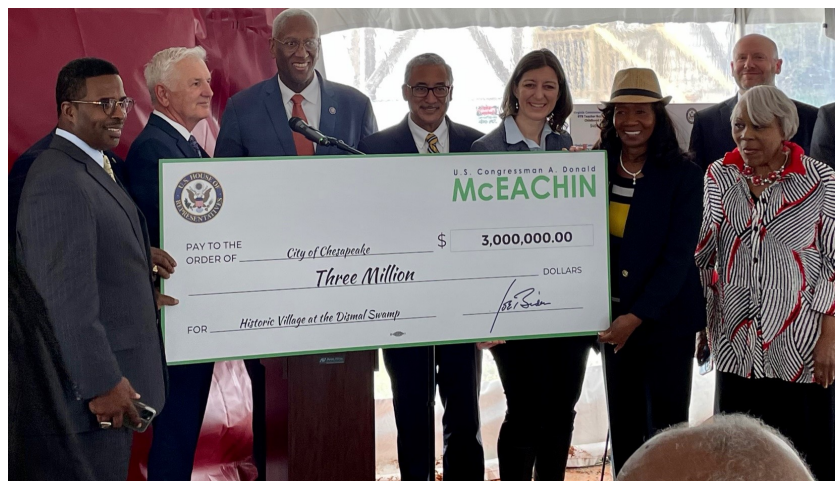
U.S. Congressman  
A. Donald McEachin

Local, state and national leaders were present to commemorate this exciting development and celebrate the allocation of city, state and federal funds towards the creation of the Historic Village at the Dismal Swamp. Those in attendance included Chesapeake City Mayor Rick West, Chesapeake City Councilwoman Dr. Ella Ward, U.S. Congressmen Bobby Scott and Donald McEachin, U.S. Congresswoman Elaine Luria, and Director of Chesapeake Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Mike Barber just to name a few.

With the purpose of “Bringing History to Life” in the City of Chesapeake, the Historic Village at the Dismal Swamp will stand as a living museum and cultural landmark -- a testament to the

generations of people who lived, learned, worked, played and farmed throughout our region.

The Historic Village will share the stories of these people and their descendants. Once completed and restored, the Cornland School and Historic Village in the Great Dismal Swamp will share the rich history and culture of Hampton Roads with the world.

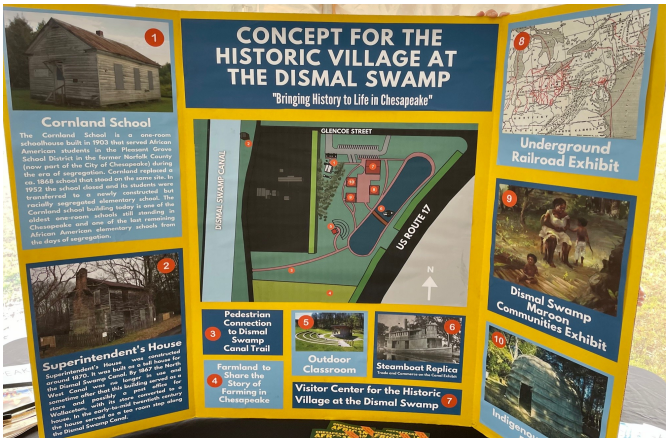


Local, State and Federal Representatives Present \$3 Million Check to the City of Chesapeake for Historic Village Development

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**Celebrating the Future Historic Village at the Dismal Swamp, *Continued***

The future Historic Village exhibits will include the Cornland School building, a one-room schoolhouse and one of the last remaining African-American, pre-Rosenwald schools in Southeastern, Virginia. The village will also include a Visitor Center, Steamboat replica, Dismal Swamp Canal Superintendent’s House, outdoor classroom as well as exhibits about the Underground Railroad, Indigenous Peoples and Dismal Swamp Maroon communities.



Planned Concept for Historic Village at Dismal Swamp



Cornland School Alumni and Foundation Members Pose for Photos with Representatives After the Ceremony

**Dues Increase May 31, 2022 – Renew Your Membership Today to Avoid the Increase**



**Remember Your Annual Dues!**

Annual NCHSC membership dues will increase to \$20 per person and \$30 per family. Lifetime membership will increase to \$200 per person.

Avoid the increase this year and renew your membership before May 31<sup>st</sup>.

## Solving the Mystery of the Silas Smith Tombstone

By Suzy Fleming,  
Wallace Room Volunteer

In February 2022, Kay Ziegler and I were recording a cemetery in southern Chesapeake with Patty and Jim Hamilton. After we completed our pictures, the property caretaker invited us into the barn to view a stone that had been brought to the property by the, now deceased, property owner. The stone was found in a business that he had purchased in Norfolk and brought to the barn in Chesapeake. The caretaker was unable to find information on the stone and asked for our help.

The name on the stone was Silas Smith. He was born in 1917 and died in 1969. After doing some research I found that Silas Smith is buried in Calvary Cemetery in Norfolk, Virginia. The stone was a military stone that was delivered to a funeral home in Norfolk, but the stone was never placed at the cemetery.

## The Petition of Bartholomew Hoskins

From *An Historical Review*,  
A Norfolk County Historical Society Publication

In 17<sup>th</sup> century Virginia, the tithables of some early colonists were waved due to their age and sometimes their celebrity. From early Norfolk County court records, Bartholomew Hoskins of Lower Norfolk County was granted an exemption from paying taxes, not just because of his age but also because of who he knew.

16 August 1647

“Upon the petition of Bartholomew Hoskins, It is ordered that he bee exempted and Cleered of the publique Levy, and allsoe from all publique service (touching his particular person) in the County, in respect the said Hoskins is aged and infirme, and allsoe did belong unto the Collony in Sir Thomas Dales Tyme.”



Portrait of Sir Thomas Dale,  
“Marshall of Virginia” from 1611 to 1616

Norfolk County Historical Society of Chesapeake, Virginia  
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](mailto:nchs.wallaceroom@gmail.com), call us at (757) 410-7152, or visit our site [NorfolkCountyVAHistory.org](http://NorfolkCountyVAHistory.org). Date submitted (for your records) \_\_\_\_\_

### May 2022 Meeting -- Jamestown Rediscovery Archeologist Shares Exciting Finds

Our May guest speaker is Mr. David M. Givens, Director of Archaeology at the Jamestown Rediscovery Project and an author of the *Jamestown Rediscovery* book series. Mr. Givens has been with the project since 2001 and is passionate about 17<sup>th</sup> century archaeology and material culture.

Mr. Givens will present the team's search for Jamestown's 1617 church. During three years of excavations, archaeologists not only discovered surprising features of the church, but also a number of burials, including one they call the "Knight's Tombstone".

Join us to learn how the Jamestown Rediscovery team seeks to understand the hidden stories of our nation's past, buried deep where it all began. Support the NCHSC with your presence at the Chesapeake Central Library on **May 15, 2022, at 2:00 p.m.** Light refreshments will be served.



David M. Givens,  
Director of Archeology,  
Jamestown Rediscovery  
Project