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# The Northern Neck of Virginia Historical Society

15482 Kings Highway  
804-493-1862  
Email: nnvhs@live.com

P.O. Box 716  
Montross, VA 22520  
Website: www.NNVHS.org

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Kathryn Shepherd, Editor

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## President's Letter

I found two recent conversations interesting:

A member's friend from Stafford thought the Society didn't pay much attention to that county. A second gentleman from White Stone thought the Society was for folks in the "northern part of the Neck...not down here in lower Lancaster."

The comments are well taken. Since 1951 we've defined the Northern Neck as six counties. Our brochure notes the birth of each: Northumberland in 1648, Lancaster 1651, Westmoreland 1653, Stafford 1664, Richmond 1692, and King George 1721. Our Calendar and Tour Guide stretches from Falmouth to Reedville and Irvington.

Our first *Magazine* 59 years ago had articles on the "Courthouses of Lancaster" and "Four George Masons of Stafford." The 2001 *Magazine* was devoted entirely to Lancaster on its 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The 2014 issue should be devoted to Stafford's 350<sup>th</sup>.

Our headquarters is in Montross, following the vision of founding president Robert O. Norris Jr. of Lively, because Montross is the geographic center of the six counties.

The historic definition of Fairfax's Northern Neck Proprietary stretches to today's West Virginia. Some now say the Northern Neck "starts only after you cross over U. S. 301." We say: the Northern Neck is between the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers. Less than 20 miles wide, it runs inland for about 100 miles until the rivers almost join.

It is our goal to have activities and *Magazine* articles covering all six counties. We welcome your ideas and your participation.

*Steve Walker*

## Living History on February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010! *Leedstown Resolutions, Tappahannock Demonstration*

History will come to life along the streets of Tappahannock as NNVHS and the Essex County Museum and Historical Society combine to present dramatic reenactments of the famous 1766 Tappahannock Demonstrations to enforce the Leedstown Resolutions, against the wealthy and insolent Archibald Ritchie and the Scotsman Stamp Collector, Archibald McCall, who was tarred and feathered for his refusal to comply.

Relying upon historic documents and correspondence, docents and living history interpreters will provide reenactments of the dramatic events leading up to America's Revolution, ten years before the Declaration of Independence. On Saturday February 27, special tours will take about 40 minutes each and will commence at 1:15 pm, 2:15 pm, and 3:15pm. Light refreshments will be served at the Museum. Admission is free.



Richard Henry Lee, portrayed by NNVHS member Ted Borek (photo © Ronald Hilton)

Students of Virginia and Northern Neck history are familiar with the story of Richard Henry Lee, Francis Lightfoot Lee and George Washington's three brothers who signed the Leedstown Resolutions on February 27, 1766 in defiance of the detested British Stamp Act. In 1765, the Westmoreland Civil Court and other courts in Virginia refused to use stamped paper. Business ground to a halt in Virginia and the British found themselves impeded in their attempts to enforce collection of debts against planters. By 1766, several of the colonies were passing such resolutions in defiance of the Stamp Act. These resolutions were precursors to the Declaration of Independence a decade later. One day after signing at Leedstown, four hundred men gathered across the Rappahannock to put force behind the resolutions they had signed.

This reenactment is a historic first, appropriately led by two dynamic historical societies. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Kat Shepherd, Executive Director NNVHS, by email at nnvhs@live.com.

### President

Steve Walker

### First Vice President

Page Henley

Secretary – Craig Kilby

### Executive Director & Treasurer

Kathryn Shepherd

### Immediate Past President

Virginia Brown

### County Vice Presidents

Frances Simmons – Lancaster

Betty Homer – Westmoreland

Bill Elliott – Stafford

Patricia Pugh – Richmond

Anita Churchill – King George

Mary Kier – Northumberland

### Committee Chairs

Russell Brown – Publications

Bill King – Finance

Lynn McFadden – Publicity

Bill McCarty – Scholarship

Ammon Dunton – Easements

Susan Christopher – Membership

## New Member Profiles

### *A Periodic Focus on \Our New NNVHS Members*

**Ann Boston**—Fellows of Lebanon, MO is a new 2010 member of the Society. Ann notes that “like a good retiree she started dabbling in things”— genealogy, photo-restoration and playing keyboard. Badminton is still on her list of dabble-worthiness.

But it is her interest in genealogy that drew her to NNVHS. She thinks we are “awesome.” Ann’s Northern Neck roots are with the Boston family. She documented the marriage of Robert Boston to Margaret Thornton (daughter of the Sheriff of Richmond County) on September 14, 1727 in North Farnham Parish, Richmond County. She is now the group administrator for the Boston surname DNA website on FamilyTree.com. Ann reports that there are two separate and diverse lines of descent for Robert Boston. The matching results are a good basis for future testing. Ann is probably a very good source for understanding DNA testing—a good resource for the Society.

While still tracing Boston family records in Richmond County, Ann plans to add maps of the region to enrich her knowledge of the Boston migration between the Northern Neck and Somerset County, Maryland. She also plans to pursue research on the Thornton family line.

Welcome Ann!

**Suzanne Collins Matson**, though a South Carolina native, has lived in North Carolina (“a vale of humility”) for the past 28 years with husband John, and now even has “one absolutely perfect granddaughter.”

Suzanne is an active member of the Liberty Hall Chapter of the National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR), which celebrated its 100th birthday last year. Currently she serves as an officer both for her local and state chapters, and as a certified Genealogy Consultant for NSDAR, having attended their school in Washington. Having an avid interest in history and in genealogy, Suzanne serves on the Historic Preservation Committee and on the Cemetery Committee of Providence Presbyterian Church, established 1767. Both the sanctuary and the cemetery are on the National Register of Historic Places.

Among her Virginia ties is her DAR Patriot ancestor, Catherine James Holtzclaw of Fauquier County VA. Her possible connections to the “real” NN are the Duff family and the Green family. But her husband’s direct connections are the Triggers/Trickers of Westmoreland and King George Counties, the Greens of Westmoreland County, and the Fishers of Westmoreland and King George Counties. Welcome to Suzanne!

#### **Meet the Society’s new roster of executive officers, who join Immediate Past President Virginia Brown on the Executive Committee.**

**Steve Walker** is a retired corporate executive and former president of a state trade association. He is past treasurer of Cople Parish and current trustee of Menokin Foundation. Steve served NNVHS as newsletter editor and chairman of the capital campaign to raise fund for our new headquarters.

**Page Henley** is a retired attorney and corporate executive. As a teenager in 1951, he was a NNVHS charter member and has written articles for our annual *Magazine*. Page is current president of the Northern Neck Land Conservancy and member of the vestry at **St. Mary’s White Chapel**.

**Craig Kilby** is a former member of the Missouri House of Representatives and a real estate broker in St. Louis. A professional genealogist, he was honored as 2009 “Volunteer of the Year” by Mary Ball Washington Museum & Library. Craig is a member of NNVHS Publications Committee and a contributing writer to the *Magazine*.

## *Kilmarnock Holly Ball*

*A Northern Neck debutante steps into the Holly Ball spotlight for the 114<sup>th</sup> year. NNVHS Executive Director Kathryn Shepherd attended the event, a fundraiser for the Tidewater Foundation. Many thanks to our benefactor The Tidewater Foundation for their continuing support of NNVHS activities.*

## A Helping Hand

### **Thank You, Bob Fountain**

For the past decade, the Society has had the benefit of incredible participation by Admiral Robert R. Fountain. At the end of 2009, the Admiral’s term on the NNVHS Board of Directors ended.

Bob served as Vice President for Westmoreland County, then 1st Vice President and NNVHS President in 2004-2005. But he didn’t stop after that. He continued as a member of both the Board and the Executive Committee for four years as Immediate Past President. He also was chairman of the Building Committee.

No task was too large or too small for Bob. His counsel, wisdom, and leadership have left a wonderful legacy. We thank Bob and wife Betsy for their support.

### **Thank You, Ed White**

Members who see our new headquarters will be impressed by the beautiful cherry wood tables created by Ed White of Kinsale, a long-standing member and bon vivant, who has remarkable skills as a cabinetmaker. Thank you for the beautiful donation of your skills and time.

### **Thank You, Members...**

... you are priceless.

While gratitude is being expressed, the Society wants to thank all of our volunteers and contributors who are part of the story. We have a wonderful membership that enriches our mission with contributions of time, knowledge, skills and financial support. Those involved in the day-to-day management of the Society are grateful for the thoughtful, sometimes hilarious, correspondence and conversations with the membership. In fact, it is priceless compensation.



## Fall Luncheon Notes

The Fall Membership Luncheon at Indian Creek Yacht and Country Club on a beautiful October day acknowledged major donors Steve Thorne, Al Smith of Dominion Power, Ed White and Bob and Betsey Fountain.

Incoming President Steve Walker announced the dues increase (see renewal notice, page 4). Susan Christopher introduced new members in attendance: Tom Baker, Penelope Saffer, Bill and Barbara Cole and Mirian McCarthy Bell.

John Feuerstein talked about the work accomplished by Preservation Virginia in its 120<sup>th</sup> year in preserving historical sites and sponsoring educational programs.

The nominating committee, chaired by Robert Fountain, announced the slate of new officers that were approved by acclamation: Steve Walker, president, Page Henley, vice president, Craig M. Kilby, secretary (see profiles, p. 2). The county chairs continue in office.

Thea Marshall, author of Tales of the Northern Neck and NPR commentator,

spoke on the ordinary and extraordinary patriot of the Northern Neck on the 275<sup>th</sup> birthday of Francis Lightfoot Lee. She delighted guests with Mark Twain's accolades bestowed on Francis Lightfoot Lee's political career. .. A man who dealt in no shams, loved books and library and talked over walnuts and port. In short a gentleman. Went thither when called and reluctantly; retired unblemished when his work was done. No one dreamed of investigating him.

Sarah Dillard Pope, Executive Director of the Menokin Foundation to preserve Francis Lightfoot Lee's home, raised a toast to the man's memory. She also announced the publication of a new book, "The Lees of Menokin."

Adm. Tom Bass, former Executive Director of Stratford Hall introduced keynote speaker, Daniel Jordan, PhD in history from UVA, long time director of Monticello, "Outstanding Teacher of the Year" at VCU, 2006 Virginian of the Year. Jordan is responsible for teacher's seminar at Stratford Hall from 1985-2008 at

Stratford Hall that has done so much to improve history education. Jordan said the experience was transformational for him.

Jordan, who has spent 40 years in historic preservation, gave a stirring speech on the importance of history and why it is more important now, than ever. He made three observations: 1) History is at risk if information is confused with knowledge; 2) historical places connect with American people more than anything else as they are the repositories of our national consciousness, and 3) history is worth fighting for. The fundamental freedoms are inculcated in history—religion, expression, freedom of the mind, open society and education. He asked, "How can you defend what you don't understand?"

Members bid a fond farewell to our outgoing president, the ever-sparkling Virginia F. Brown, who did so much for the Society for so many years.

*Be part of the story: You can now follow NNVHS on Facebook and Twitter!*



### Rappahannock Tribe Chief to Address Spring Luncheon

At the NNVHS Spring Luncheon, our very special guest speaker is Chief of the Rappahannock Indian Tribe Anne Richardson. Stratford Hall, May 10, 2010. Members Meeting begins at 10:30am. Cost of luncheon is \$22.00, please use reservation form on page 4 of this newsletter. Hope to see you there!



### Living History: Leedstown Resolutions & Tappahannock Demonstration

See front cover story for more details. The action centers on the Essex County Museum in Historic Downtown Tappahannock, Feb. 27, 1-4 pm. Admission is free, no reservation required!



### Commemorative Brick Offering for NNVHS Legacy Walkway

Purchase a commemorative brick to be located in a Legacy Walkway at our new headquarters. The bricks are \$150 per brick and you will receive a certificate suitable for framing. Bricks can be purchased in honor/memory of a loved one or ancestor – a perfect gift for that history buff with a special connection to the Northern Neck. Send the name of your honoree to NNVHS, P.O. Box 716, Montross, VA 22520, with your check in the amount of \$150 payable to NNVHS.



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Single membership: \$35 \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting membership: \$75 \_\_\_\_\_

Joint membership: \$50 \_\_\_\_\_

Life membership: \$500 \_\_\_\_\_

Membership renewal form also available online, at [www.nnvhs.org](http://www.nnvhs.org).

### RESERVATION FORM FOR SPECIAL PROGRAMS

#### Spring Membership Luncheon at Stratford Hall, on May 10, 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Enclosed is check payable to NNVHS for \$\_\_\_\_\_ for Southern Buffet Lunch, \$22.00 per person.

Name(s) of Guest(s) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Commemorative Brick for NNVHS Legacy Walk (see article on page 3)

Enclosed is check payable to NNVHS for \$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ brick(s) @ \$150 each

Honoree Name(s) to be inscribed: \_\_\_\_\_

#### NNVHS Historic Preservation Tax-Credits Seminar: Now Available on DVD

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is check payable to NNVHS for \$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ DVD(s) @ \$25.00 each

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