

VOLUME 48, NUMBERS 1 & 2 Preserving Amherst County History Winter/Spring 2023

Half of 2023 is almost gone. It has been great seeing visitors in the galleries and researchers occupying the Research Library during this time. We have had so many wonderful compliments on our exhibits and the resources in our Library. I wish you all could come visit, but since that's not possible, check out this 2-minute video that the County put on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AiqOjR4dWFY I loved the idea and think I will do a longer video, showing more of our exhibits and collection for our members. Be sure to check out the Museum's YouTube station as I will be uploading several more programs in the upcoming weeks. https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6u0jNXgTGSEdmU1azRa4AQ

Thomas Jefferson, portrayed by Bill Barker of Monticello, visited in January, meeting with Dr. Bill Trout of the Batteau House (Madison Heights) to answer questions on batteaux and canals posed by Moderator Jeff Taylor.



In a co-sponsored program with the Historical Society of Nelson County in March, Dick

Whitehead (HSNC member, below right) talked about the life of Parson Robert Rose, who came to the Virginia Colony at the age of 21, just after being ordained in England. Preaching was his calling, but he developed other areas of expertise, such as surveying,



inventing (double canoe for transporting tobacco), medical treatments, and land development. In what became Amherst County (1761), he had 80,700 acres in land grants. He also had land in Orange and Essex Counties. The epitaph on his tombstone (Saint John's Church, Richmond) says,



(continued on page 6)

THE AMHERST FIRE DEPARTMENT ARCHIVES

By

Fred Loving, Archivist

The Archives at the Amherst Fire Department has been an ongoing project since around 2006. Nobody was doing work in this area, and I requested Chief Walter Turner to put me in charge of it. I was handed keys to two locked cabinets and went to work not knowing what I would find.

Going by the example of my parents, I knew people from that Great Depression/ World War II generation saved most everything. I found that to be true at the fire station.

I discovered barely readable, hand written records going back to the late 1920s. By around 1930, they turned into very readable typewritten records. I had business meeting minutes, fire reports, business receipts for purchases or services, and general correspondence. Business meeting minutes and fire reports were in hardback ledgers. Receipts were in all shapes and sizes; correspondence was in standard business-size pages as well as legal-size pages. None of the loose pages or

aucherd Fin Department OK JP angle and out 26 . (17) Win Jameson October 26, 1926 **Receipt for Labor**

receipts were in any sort of order. I might find 1930s mixed in with 1960s. I started making little stacks per decade and sorted by way of receipts or general correspondence.

I also started finding lots of old photographs, most of which I had never seen



vote, the membership allocated me \$500.00 for photofinishing, Photoshop, and frames.

before. Some were snapshots, others done by professional-grade cameras. Also crammed into nooks and crannies all over the station were examples of old outdated fire equipment, such as coats, helmets, and boots. I started collecting these and cleaning them. There were also obviously unused examples of the early smoke masks. In time I became aware I had enough material for a miniature museum.

In anticipation of our 100th anniversary in 2017, I started making copies of the old photographs. By



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AMHERST FIRE DEPARTMENT ARCHIVES

I started making laser copies of old documents.

This work was being done in a room where the air bottles were filled. The room had poor lighting, was cold in the winter, and hot in the summer. At times I would take stacks of material with me to Barnes & Noble where I could get coffee and have an actual table to work from.

As we got closer to the 100th anniversary, we terminated the lease with the dance school that rented the upstairs in the old section and redid that space for our new community room. Now I had sufficient walls to mount

	33 THORNHILL FARM LUMBER AND STREET ABSOLUTE	HILL HARDWARE CORPORATION DEALERS IN WAGONS Hardware, Furniture, Building Material, Implements Stoves, Ranges, Roofing, Paint, Varnishes, Etc.	SURREYS, PHAETONS, CARTS AND JERSEYS
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copies of framed pictures. Chief Tom Martin found used glass display cases for artifacts.

A small office to the side that was intended for the secretary was made into the archive room where I can have all paper records and original photographs in one place. A citizen requesting information on a fire, or the Chief of the Department requesting information from the minutes, can now be handled by quick and easy research.

Page 1 and 2 of Chaw the October 25, as the finace con 1926 minutes of the Amherst raise money. Fire Departany way shape ment. for, Comitte opp Page 3 of the minutes on next page. WW Hill, a. C. finan Comitte serve of refered

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AMHERST FIRE DEPARTMENT ARCHIVES

Page 3 of Minutes

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Transcription of the Minutes of the October 25, 1926, Amherst Fire Department:

"General discussion on house for fire engine and equipping, and a committee know(n) as the finance committee to raise money in any way shape or form. Committee O. B. Ross, Reid Williams, E. W. Gentry, W. W. Hill, A.C. Joyner & J. B. Vaughan.

Move[d] and Seconded that Finance Committee shall serve for one year.

Matter of initiation fees be referred to Finance Committee and they shall report at the next meeting.

The Fire Co. shall meet again Monday Nov. 1, 1926 at 7:30 P.M.

The Finance Committee shall [go] ahead and build a building for the fire truck. The building of this house shall begin at once."

Labor Receipt Fire defailment, gl. Jurgory for work 1 Lo Gregary Worked The tons of 60 2 1 1 1 1 1 8/2 " " Dec 450 11 " 510 11 11 11 8 11 11 480 11 4 1/ 8 h h 480 9 « 1, 311 A 12 1 180 11 11 10 11 11 1 11 160 11 14 11 4 a 8/2 4 11 310 11 16 · · · 2 / / 120 17 61/2 " 11 11 11 390 11 • 11 6 11 0 360 1. 11 8/2 " " 21 310 22 · · · 8/2 · 510 11 23 390 6/2 11 50 Dec 14 " " 8/2 Jon 30 235 60 11 16 11 11

The Muse Winter/Spring 2023 Page 4 (continued on page 5)

AMHERST FIRE DEPARTMENT ARCHIVES

(continued from page 4)

Amount.

\$85.00

3.38

41.84

1.00

Record of disbursements of the funds of the Amherst Volunteer Fire Departmen

Date. For what purpose spent,

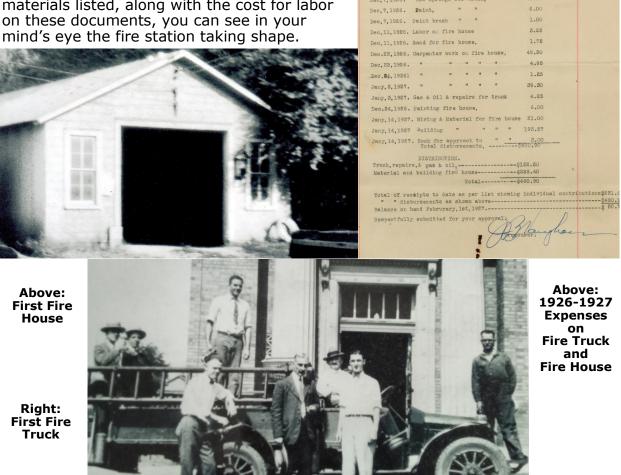
Sept.13, 1926. Labor on truck,

Oct, 2, 1926. Gas and oil,

Nov.26,1926 Labor on truck, Dec.5.1926. Labor on fire house, Dec.7.1926. New springs for truck,

Sept.4, 1926. Truck,

The images of the documents in this article show the story of how the original fire station was built in late 1926-early 1927. The materials were bought at Hill Hardware and carried across the street to the vacant lot owned by the Masonic Lodge. By looking at the date, the materials listed, along with the cost for labor on these documents, you can see in your



I actually have a desk to work from and sufficient lighting and file cabinet space. Now that I am retired from the job that actually paid me, I will look into applying for a grant with the Library of Virginia to have material digitalized so it can be made available on the World Wide Web.

Fred Loving has been a Volunteer with the Fire Department since 1980. He began in the role of handling membership applications, then moved to working with the Archives. Having retired from Parker Integrated Seals in 2022, Fred continues to work in the Archives Department. He is a local historian, serves on the Activities Committee at the Museum, and is a favorite on the Museum's Annual Ghost Walk. His makeup injuries were so real one year that a 911 Dispatch worker offered to call 911 when she saw him in the Courtyard! For Archive information, Fred can be reached through the Fire Department, 434-946-7915, P.O. Box 711 Amherst, VA 24521, https://www.amherstfireva.org

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body of Robert Rose, Rector of Albemarle Parish. His extraordinary Genius and Capacity, in all the polite and usefull Arts of Life, tho equaled by few were yet exceeded by the great Goodness of his Heart Humanity Benevolence and Charity ran through the whole course of his Life and were exerted with uncommon Penetration and Judgement upon their proper Object, without Noise or Ostentation. In his Friendships, he was warm and steady, in his Manners gentle and easy, in his Conversation entertaining and instructive, With the most tender piety he discharged all domestick Duties of Husband, Father, Son and Brother. In short He was a friend to the whole human Race and upon that principle a strenuous Assertor and Defender of Liberty. He died in the 47th year of his age.

The April field trip to Athlone Farm allowed us a look at its history and its future. We explored the grounds, which included several preserved outbuildings: a fieldstone ash house, corncrib, hay barns, and the smokehouse (now guest

house lodgings). The farm is located on a tract of land that was part of Rev. Robert Rose's 23,700 acres patented in 1744. The current house (1998) is a reproduction of the old "spyglass" original house owners are fourth transformed the





house that once stood there. The burned on April 12, 1996. The current generation Powell family and have home into an elegant Airbnb. We were

most graciously welcomed, and delighted to see original furniture and reproduction portraits of the house and family. We send our robust thanks and well wishes to them.



Special thanks to local architectural historian Sandi Esposito (above) who toured the group, and to Cindy Ferguson, Property Manager, who made the arrangements with the family for our visit.

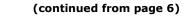
This spring we started a series of programs called "Vanishing Villages" that will be presented throughout the next year. Our first program was on **Dearborn and Pedlar Mills** on May 28. Nancy McDearmon resurrected Dearborn during her Powerpoint presentation. The image (left) is Old Man Smith's store, which was demolished in 1992. Nancy took this photograph in 1991 (silver gelatin print). Do you know where Dearborn was located? The first correct email answer will receive a free membership renewal in September. Attendees at the program cannot participate. Send answer to: staff@amherstcountymuseum.org

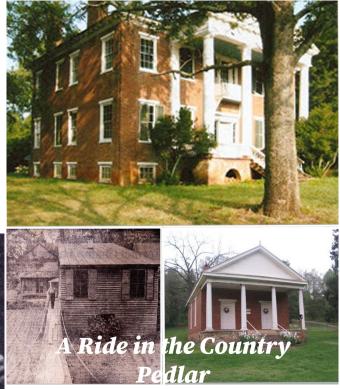
Lee Wood has been engaged in producing a documentary on Pedlar Mills, entitled "A Ride in the Country, Pedlar.

(continued on page 7)

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The Museum was pleased to have the premiere in the Hamble Center following Ms. McDearmon's talk. The images on right shows (clockwise), Red Hill Farm, St. Luke's Church, and George T. "Bud" Pleasants walking on the swinging footbridge beside Jones' Store over Horsley's Creek. An old brick store building can be seen in the background. Mr. Wood used many photographs from the Pedlar Mills Home Demonstration Club Scrapbook in the Museum's Archives. The image below is the Pedlar Mills Post Office -- the building still stands today and is painted red.







As we go to press with this newsletter, Mr. Wood has let me know it is already up on YouTube: <u>https://youtu.be/wxBugZgwKRE</u>

The Museum now has in its Collection the Whitehead Colonial Bed which was donated by Asa Carter Whitehead, Jr., daughter Ellen Whitehead Provenzano, and other family members. We know that the bed was in the family home "Mountain View" prior to the house being sold and torn down for a shopping center. Family lore has the bed being in the home of Colonel Samuel Meredith who married Jane Henry, daughter of Sarah Winston Henry and sister of Patrick Henry. It appears that the bed was generally passed down the maternal line from generation to generation. I've had many delightful conversations with Asa. He passed on the account, living in Roanoke after "Mountain View" was sold, of a conversation with a large hotel owner, who wanted to set the bed up in the lobby and tell everyone that Patrick Henry was born in and slept in the bed, hoping to bring in more business! Asa told him absolutely not, as there was no evidence that Mr. Henry slept in the bed. The man continued to plague Asa. Research is ongoing as to the age of the bed. We'll keep you posted. Special thanks to Elvira, Alice, and Paul Whitehead for making arrangements to get the bed back to Amherst.



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The other exciting donation came from the extended family of Thomas and Alice Howell of "Athlone Farm" – a circa 1870 Victorian taxidermy bird habitat diorama, set within its original glass cloche. The display is of seven brightly-co9lored birds and bugs and butterflies set in a naturalistic setting. This is an antique example from the golden age of Victorian taxidermy when mounted birds and animals were a popular part of Victorian interior décor.

The diorama was on display at the family home, Athlone Farm in Clifford. Thomas, at the age of 17, came to America with his father. He became a successful merchant tailor in New Jersey. When he was 34 he returned to England, married his childhood sweetheart, and would move his family in November 1893 to the farm he bought. A possible theory is that this elaborate diorama was a wedding present given to Thomas and Alice in England, and they likely traveled the cherished diorama with them from England to New Jersey and then on to Athlone Farm.

Once again, we placed in the Top Ten Endangered Artifacts hosted by the Virginia Associ-

ation of Museums and have been awarded \$250.00 toward the conservation of the 1867 Mt. Moriah Church Pulpit Bible. This Bible is inscribed on the cover, "Presented to the Members of the Mt. Moriah Church June 1867 by J. D. Richeson".

Established in Amherst County in 1745 by Rev. John Duncan, Mt. Moriah underwent several name and building changes through the centuries. The original building was a hand-hewn log structure built by Mr. Duncan's slaves. This building was replaced by a brick structure and replaced again around 1850 as the congregation continued to grow.



Mt. Moriah is often referred to as the "mother of churches" in Amherst County as at least 10 other churches were formed from this one. Mt. Moriah – the building – still



stands in an extremely rural part of the County. The building is owned and used as a Lodge by the Masons.

You may recall that our first win was for the wooden leg of Edwin Spotswood Ware (see page 12).

Thank you VAM!



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(continued on page 9)

The Duckbill Farm one room Log School, also known as the Tyler School, is in trouble and we need your help. I wrote a grant for conservation needs for the cabin in the amount of \$10,500.00 (an estimate based on 2 conservators' reports), but our grant proposal was rejected. We really thought we had a great proposal, but I suppose the first Amherst County school house doesn't mean as much to outsiders as it does to all Amherst County history lovers, near and far. We are going to approach some of the larger businesses in Amherst County with this need, so if you have any connections or know some of the major players, please put in a word for this need. We are hopeful that 11 businesses will step forward with a donation of \$1,000.00 each.

This Log School structure was built about 1885 by Fielden B. Tyler. Due to historicallyminded citizens, it escaped the threat of commercial development three decades ago when the Duckbill house was abandoned, stripped, and finally demolished.

It has been almost 30 years since the cabin was moved to the Museum (1995). Its enemy



now is time and the elements. A number of the logs have started to significantly deteriorate. This insidious process will continue until it is stopped by treatment or until it falls apart. The recommendation is to repair the small rotted sections with a filler product, similar to the chinking present now and apply a wood preservative to the remainder of the structure.

As you can tell we have been quite busy this year. I didn't

even mention the 45 kindergarteners (plus 24 teachers/chaperons) who participated in a 2hour learning experience in May and who thought the log school was cool.

Warm regards for the rest of the year.

Octavia

GET INVOLVED WITH THE MEMBERSHIP

Renew

Invite someone to join

Give a gift membership



Annual Dues (September to September)

- Regular (Individual) \$30_____ Regular (Household) \$35
- Student \$10

\$100

- ¢10_
- Senior 55+ \$30____

Business

CONTRIBUTIONS IN REMEMBRANCE

(November 2022 — April 2023)

In Loving Memory of William (Bill) McLeRoy

Octavia and Greg Starbuck

In Loving Memory of Marjorie Selvage Stone

Glenn and Priscilla Stone Octavia Starbuck

In Loving Memory of Gregory Smith

Faye Brown

In Loving Memory of W. A. Ogden

Mary Landon Brugh

In Loving Memory of Robert McLanahan Smith Jr.

Mason and Jen Brugh

In Loving Memory of Julia Warner

Lourine Massie

In Loving Memory of Margaret (Peggy) Myers

Anonymous Faye Brown Mary Landon Brugh Leah Settle Gibbs Carol Hallberg Betty and William Hopkins W. Richard Jeter Cynthia Krahn John Marks JoAnne Rodgers Belle Saddler Barbara Schuler Octavia Starbuck Sharon and Marvin Tinsley Rosemary Urban Jessica and Peter Ward Josephine Woods

(continued on page 10)

CONTRIBUTIONS (November 2022 — April 2023)

Benefactor

Amherst County Town of Amherst Greater Lynchburg Community Fdn.

Sponsor

Anonymous William M. Cage Library Trust Janie and Thomas Hall Elvira Whitehead Morse and Alice Morse Claudia and Bill Tucker

Patron

Ramona Akins Carol and Rick Anderson Mary and Jack Bailey Judy and Scott Barnes-Morris Orchard Mary Margaret and Louis Basten Faye Brown Jen and Mason Brugh Ellen Craig Carrie and Jose Davila Jo Dobbins Sandi and Michael Esposito Leah Settle Gibbs Dr. and Mrs. H. L. Hansberry III Dr. Joanna Harris Cynthia Krahn Mr. and Mrs. Robert Leslie Carl H. Leonard Mallory Mantiply Nancy B. McDearmon Peggy* and Sammy Myers JoAnne Rodgers Octavia and Greg Starbuck Glenn and Pricilla Stone Ieke and Mark Scully Kevin Taylor Sharlene Tenaglia Sharon and Marvin Tinsley Colonel Joseph Ware Emily and Chris Webster Elizabeth Whitley

Donor

Amherst Retired Teachers Association Monica and Bruce Bowman Mary Brugh Gail and Bruce Curtin Helen Ferneyhough James Flint, Jr. Betty and William Hopkins W. Richard Jeter John Marks Belle Saddler Melissa and Charles Thompson Jessica and Peter Ward Linda White Josephine Woods

Friend

Virginia Campbell Carolyn and Barry Cole Carol Hallberg Richard Timothy Jordan Lourine Massie Barbara Schuler Rosemary Urban Kathleen Whitehead

IN-KIND PARTNERS

Amherst County Public Schools Amherst Fire Department Amherst Lancers Tech Club Bill Barker Church of the Epiphany Cindy Ferguson Foxtail Lilies LLC Hill House Elvira and Alice Morse Morris Orchard Jeff Taylor Dr. William (Bill) Trout SHARE Solar's Custom Arbor Care Village Garden Club Whitehall Framing LLC

*deceased

(continued on page 12)

CONTRIBUTIONS

(November 2022 — April 2023)

(continued from page 11)

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Yvonne Beverly Blair Family Bryant Family Connie Erikson Emily Erikson Carol Hallberg Elaine and Alvin Hatter Susan Holton Dr. Bill Kershner Phil Komorski Cynthia Krahn John Marks Lilly Masnaghetti Miller-Richards Wealth Management LLC Gail Mitchell Laura Naills Cookie Ogden Brandon Payne JoAnne Rodgers Belle Saddler Barbara Schuler George Sherman Steve Walker Beth and Rick Villwock

In Honor of

Elvira Morse's 97th Birthday

Alice M. Morse Virginia Campbell Octavia and Greg Starbuck Kathleen Whitehead

In Honor of Midge and Jerry Elliott

Nancy McDearmon

In Honor and Memory of Edwin Spotswood Ware

James Flint, Jr.

EDWIN SPOTSWOOD WARE LOST HIS LEG AT GETTSYBURG July 3, 1863 3rd Sergeant Company I 19th Virginia



1838-1905

2023 ACMHS PROGRAMS: "Illuminating the Past"

Schedule subject to change due to COVID.

Saturday, August 12, 10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. – Colonial Day. Take a step back in time to learn about education, entertainment, and farming in Amherst County during the Colonial Era. Colonial Interpreters will demonstrate blacksmith-



ing, silversmithing, flax dressing, carding wool, lacemaking skills and spinning. There will also be a cooper, Revolutionary War soldiers, a physician/ surgeon, civilians, a fifer and drummer, and a batteauman. Period games such as Rolling Hoops, Graces, Battledore & Shuttlecock, Quoits, and Ball & Cup will be available for both children and adults. Visitors will be able to try their hand at writing with a guill pen. Come prepared to learn and play. The event Is made possible by The Greater Lynchburg Community Foundation.



Sunday, September 24, 2:30 p.m. – Vanishing Villages: Clifford and Lowesville. Presentation by Sandi Esposito, local architectural historian and Museum volunteer.

Saturday, October 21, 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Ghost Walks. Reservations Required. Payment in advance. Adults \$12.00, Under 12 \$5.00, Walk-ups \$15.00.

Sunday, December 10, 1:30 p.m. Holiday Open House.

ALL PROGRAMS TO BE HELD AT THE MUSEUM'S HAMBLE CENTER FREE UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED

EXHIBITS

Amherst County Notables Exhibit II – Through August 2023. Learn about the many notable Amherst County citizens, including Nathaniel Hale Pryor, Roy McIvor, William Harris Crawford, Manning Long, and Peter Williams. Free admission.

The Colony: The Early Years – Takes a look at the early years of the Central Virginia Training Center. Exhibit closes September 2023. Free admission.

The Monacan People: Pre and Post-Contact Eras. Free admission. Permanent Exhibit.

> **Exhibits Open to the Public** 10 a.m. — 4 p.m. Tuesday-Friday

Research Library: Call for an Appointment 10 a.m. — 4 p.m. Tuesdav-Fridav

Amherst, VA 24521 P.O. Box 741 **Historical Society** Amherst County Museum &

Address Service Requested

Executive Board:

Kevin Taylor Newsletter Editors: Mrs. Octavia N. Starbuck, Director Mrs. Leona (Lee) Wilkins, Emeritus Mr. Steve Walker Mr. J. Paul Kilgore Rev. Darnelle W. Winston Mrs. Cynthia Hicks Mr. Jeff Bibb Mrs. Ellen Craig, Secretary & Vice Treasurer Mrs. Faye Brown, Treasurer Mrs. Mary (Midge) Elliott, Vice President Mrs. Judy Faris, President

Winter/Spring 2023

Leah Settle Gibbs

ILLUMINATING

THE PAST

Μ. rary Call for an appointment: 434-946-9068

	S: TUESDAY — FRIDAY: 10 A.M. TO 4 quired in the Galleries and Research	
	Log School House Restorati	on
Benefactor \$1000 and up	Library/Technology Fund	

Friend	\$25 to \$49
Donor	\$50 to \$99
Patron	\$100 to \$499
Sponsor	\$500 to \$999
Benefactor	r \$1000 and up

purpose, please check one of the funds below.		
Categories for Donations	Buildings & Grounds	
Operating Fund	Programming Fund	
Education Fund	Collections Fund	
Endowment	Where Needed Most	
Library/Technology Fund	dFloor Fund	
Log School House Restoration		

If you would like your donation to be used for a certain

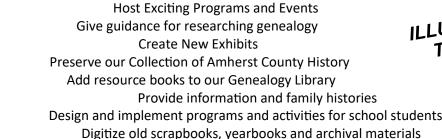
Special Contributions

PERMIT NO. 24 AV, TSA3HMA

PAID

JOATZOG .2.U BULK RATE

NON-PROFIT ORG



With your donation, we can Save our History!



The Museum can accept donations online or by mail Online just click on the **Donate** button on our homepage www.amherstcountymuseum.org

