



# Goochland County Historical Society Newsletter

FOUNDED MAY 1, 1968

VOLUME 43 • NUMBER 4 • NOVEMBER 2019

## SOCIETY RECEIVES IMPORTANT DONATION

The Society received a major donation of decorative items from a descendant of Joseph R. Anderson. Mr. Anderson was an American civil engineer, industrialist, soldier, and a founder of Tredegar Iron Works. In 1862, Anderson acquired 938 acres in Goochland that he turned into a stock farm for horses. His son,

Joseph Anderson, Jr. moved to Goochland in 1883 and began building a mansion that he would call "Thorncliff". In 1925, the mansion fell victim to a devastating fire. Newspaper accounts tell that inmates from the nearby prison emptied the house of its contents, but lack of a fire department led to the complete loss of the house. Anderson, Jr. would live the remainder of his life in a small house on the grounds. He passed away in 1930.



This donation, a collection of 19th century artifacts, includes 31 items from the family. These will be evaluated and documented in anticipation of a future exhibit on "Thorncliff" and the Anderson family.

This effort is no minor undertaking for our staff and volunteers. This gift is the largest collection of furniture the Historical Society has ever received. The craftsmanship of this collection will make our upcoming exhibit a must-see for our members and visitors.

Left: Mid-nineteenth century sewing cabinet.  
Right: Zouave statue, signed "Cornelius & Baker," Philadelphia, PA., ca. 1857. Patinated zinc, wood. H. 16 1/4 in.



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



## Goochland County Historical Society

**James Richmond**

*Executive Director*

**Catherine Southworth**

*Office Administrator*

### Board of Directors 2019

Christina Dunn, President

Bruce Venter, 1st Vice President

Vernon Fleming, 2nd Vice President

Virginia Olsen, Secretary

Kathleen Kimmel, Treasurer

Louise Chapman, Cheryl Childress,  
Laura Meadows, William Quarles,

Dave Southworth, Richard Toler,

Linda Weistroffer, Erin Yearout-Patton

## Visit the Goochland Historical Society

The Society's History Center is located one half mile east of the Goochland Courthouse at 2875 River Road West (Route 6)

### Office hours:

Wednesday–Friday, 10:00–3:00

2nd Saturday of the month, 10:00–3:00

Note: Those travelling long distances should call the society to confirm it will be open the date of your visit. Phone (804) 556-3966.

### Email the Society:

[goochlandhistory@comcast.net](mailto:goochlandhistory@comcast.net)

### Visit us online:

[www.goochlandhistory.org](http://www.goochlandhistory.org)

[www.goochlandhistory.wordpress.com](http://www.goochlandhistory.wordpress.com)

[www.twitter.com/GoochlandCHS](https://www.twitter.com/GoochlandCHS)

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Dear Historical Society Members,

Despite the extreme heat of this summer, your historical society staff and volunteers have been busy, busy, busy and we will continue in that vein throughout the remainder of the year. To recap our activities:

✿ In May, we exhibited at Rassawek Spring Jubilee, with our largest exhibit yet, showcasing World War II and the men from Goochland who served in all branches of the U.S. military. The exhibit featured everything from uniforms, photos, and posters to personal artifacts. Also, we sponsored a workshop, held at the Goochland Public Library, on the use of DNA in genealogical research.


✿ In June, Rita Dandridge, a professor at Virginia State University, introduced participants to a little known Goochlander, Josephine Turpin Washington (1861-1949), a newspaper journalist, teacher, and social reformer; and the subject of her new book *The Collected Essays of Josephine J. Turpin Washington*, published by the University of Virginia Press. (Note: The Goochland County Historical Society contributed information for the book.) The presentation was held at Central High Cultural and Educational Complex. In addition, the World War II exhibit was well received at the Jackson Blacksmith Shop Annual Event on June 8. Another genealogical workshop was held at Grace Church Fellowship Hall on June 22; "Researching African American Ancestors" focused on accessing records prior to the Civil War.

✿ In July, in cooperation with the Friends of Goochland Library, we presented a book talk by Robin Traywick Williams at the Goochland Public Library. Robin, a longtime resident of the county, humor writer, and horse racing enthusiast—she served for six years as chairman of the Virginia Racing Commission—recently released her latest book *The Key to the Quarter Pole*, a behind-the-scenes story that takes the reader from the race track's backstretch to the winner's circle.

✿ In August, another genealogy workshop was held at the Goochland Public Library which introduced FamilySearch.org, a free resource that includes U.S. Census data—essential information used by genealogists searching family roots. Also, in August, we displayed selected items from the World War II exhibit at the Goochland Public Library. In early September, the exhibit was displayed at Goochland's American Legion Post 215. Then the exhibit was redesigned for our Field Day of the Past display at the Rocketts Voting Precinct building, from September 20 - 22. Within the next few months, it will be reconfigured again into several exhibits for display at the County Administration Building.

Articles about our most recent, as well as upcoming, events, appear herein, so be sure to check them out. As you will see, staff and volunteers continue to be busy. We cannot stress enough how important our volunteers are to our success. Wouldn't you like to become a volunteer? If so, please contact us.

We look forward to seeing you at forthcoming events.

  
Executive Director

  
President

## FALL MEETING at PROVIDENCE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Fall meeting will be held at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 17 at the historic Providence Presbyterian Church in Gum Spring. Karen Chase, author of *Carrying Independence*, will be our guest speaker. Ms. Chase is a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Commonwealth Chapter, a photographer; and a member of the James River Writers.

In this fact-based, Revolutionary War novel, Nathaniel Marten, an

intrepid Post rider is hired by Congress to carry the Declaration of Independence to collect the final signatures on the one document that will unite the colonies.

According to its website, Providence Presbyterian Church, built in 1747, is the oldest Presbyterian Church in continual use in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the oldest south or west of Pennsylvania. It is also the only remaining example of the seven "Meeting Houses" built by dissenters of Hanover and Louisa when the Church of England was the established church in the early 1740's.



### Directions to the church:

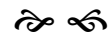
3388 Three Chopt Road, Gum Spring, VA 23065

From I64 West, take the 522 exit (Exit 159) toward Gum Spring/Mineral.

Turn left onto Cross County Road (522 South).

Turn right onto Broad Street (Rt 250).

Take the first right onto Three Chopt Road.



## DECEMBER GATHERING at VALLAMBROSA

This year, the December Gathering will be held on December 1, at 3:00 p.m., at Vallambrosa. The *Goochland County Historical Society Magazine* (Vol. 5) describes Vallambrosa as "a simple cottage built in the early 1870s by Dr. Charles Guerrant Massie." The Guerrants were early Huguenot settlers of Goochland. Dr. Massie was the great-grandson of John Guerrant, Jr., who was born in 1760 at nearby "Ceres." Dr. Massie married in Goochland and practiced medicine after the Civil War.

The magazine continues, "According to family records, the original house was comprised of four rooms, two upstairs and two downstairs, with a central hall running from front to back." One of the more interesting aspects of the



home is the roof rafters which are simple round peeled saplings. Much of the original furniture is still at Vallambrosa.

The Society would like to thank Evie Massie Scott and Molly Massie, descendants of the Massie and Guerrant families, for allowing us to visit their beautiful home.



### Directions:

From I-64 traveling west take the Oilville exit. Take a left off of the ramp and then turn right on Rt. 250. Go about 2½ miles and turn right on Rt. 635, Perkinsville Road. Immediately after crossing the interstate bridge turn right between the brick posts.

From I-64 traveling east, take the Gum Spring exit. Take a right off of the ramp and then turn left on Rt. 250. Go about 5 miles and turn left on Rt. 635, Perkinsville Road. Immediately after crossing the interstate bridge, turn right between the brick posts.

From Broad St. Rd. at Oilville, go west about 2½ miles, then turn right on Rt. 635, Perkinsville Rd. Immediately after crossing the interstate bridge, turn right between the brick posts.

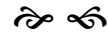
## RECENT VISITORS



On Thursday, October 25, the Society welcomed Kirk Nawrotzky, Richmond ABC Channel 8 weekend sports anchor. Kirk was researching star pitcher Justin Verlander, who was pitching in the 2019 World Series games. He was able to look through yearbooks, *The Goochland Gazette* and our library for articles on Justin.

May through October, staff and volunteers assisted more than 50 researchers at our history center. They came not only from Virginia, but also Arizona, Arkansas,

California, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.



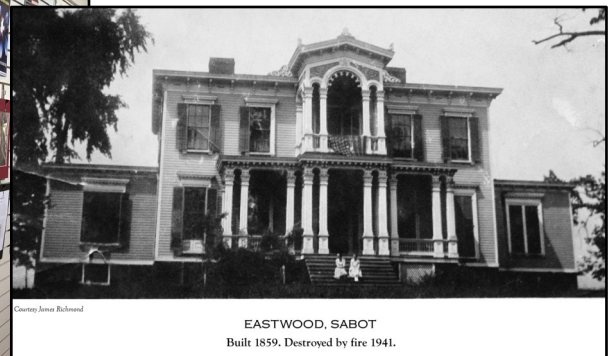
## Welcome New Members

Beverly Whittington, Texas  
Gordon E. Dudley, Arizona  
Sharon & Michael Garber, Virginia  
Julia Murphy, Virginia  
Dorian Rivers, Virginia  
Jay Schmitz, Virginia  
Midwest Genealogical Center

## EXHIBITIONS at the LIBRARY



The Society has had two very successful exhibitions at the Goochland Public Library this year. Our first was on **World War II soldiers** and the second was on **Lost Architecture of Goochland**. Library staff have said that both were well received by the public and we look forward to more!



## FamilySearch RESEARCH SESSION

On November 9 at 1:00 p.m., the Society is hosting representatives from FamilySearch.org at the Goochland Public Library. In this session, research methods for family trees submitted by members will be discussed. This session will be a live, real-time presentation of the FamilySearch.org database. The speaker will search for ancestors that attendees are having trouble finding. Please bring a list of your ances-



tors that you want FamilySearch to help you find.

We want to get to as many of your ancestors as possible. The Meeting Room has been reserved until 3:00 p.m. in case we need to go that long. And please invite a friend! Come and learn.



## BOOK TALK with BILL LOHMANN

On September 28 at 1:00 p.m., the Friends of the Goochland Library and the Goochland County Historical Society hosted Bill Lohmann at the Goochland branch of the Pamunkey Regional Library. Bill is a columnist for the *Richmond*

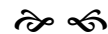
*Times-Dispatch*. He was born and raised in Richmond, and has been in the news business for 40 years. He is the author of *Backroads and Byways of Virginia*, a travel guide of the state, and *Back Roads: People, Places and Pie Around Virginia*, the sequel. All of these books are collaborations with his colleague, Bob Brown, longtime photographer for *The Times-Dispatch*.

For an hour, he related stories about some of the more interesting and unusual sites and people he and Bob Brown met in their trek across the state.

His newest book is *DR COPTR: The Flying Physician Who Kept His Promise to Tangier Island*. It's the story of Dr. David



Nichols, a Northern Neck physician, and his undying devotion to Tangier Island, that small island of fewer than 500 residents in the Chesapeake Bay. He took us through the beginning of Dr. Nichols' time in Tangier until the doctor's death.



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## GOOCHLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY HISTORY TALK with TROOP VA-2019

Troop VA-2019 of the Trail Life USA organization, a group sponsored by Ragland Memorial Baptist Church, trekked to the end of Lee Road on Saturday, September 28 to hear a talk by Society volunteer Richard Toler. He spoke on the history of Goochland County canals. For the month of September, the troop worked on their Heritage Badge, and as part of this process, they learned about the history of the James River and the Kanawha Canal. The canal was built through the county in the first half of the 1800s along the James River. It spurred trade and commerce with all of the counties it passed through, or close to, and with the cities of Lynchburg



and Buchanan to the west. This commerce contributed significantly to making Richmond the largest industrial city in the southern United States just prior to the Civil War. The canal survived until 1880 when it was replaced by the Richmond and Alleghany Railroad. This railroad

system became the C&O Railway, which today is CSX. After 1880, the canal unfortunately was drained for most of its length. Today, only a short section retains water and that section is at the end of Lee Road.

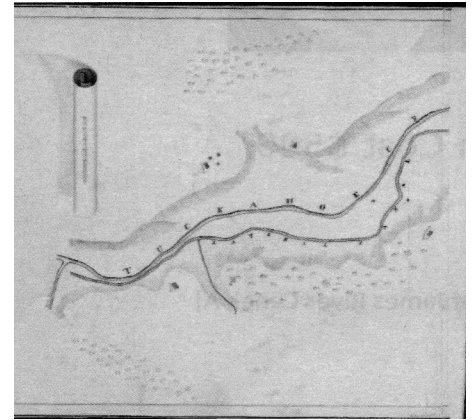


## LIBRARY of VIRGINIA MAP RESTORATION



Conservator, Leslie Courtois

In September 2019, a member of the Goochland County Historical Society, on behalf of the Society's Board of Directors, made a donation to the Library of Virginia to be used for the conservation and preservation of "A Map of Tuckahoe Creek, North of James River Canal. Goochland County, VA." [ca. 1825.] This donation will ensure that the map is cleaned, rejoined, and relined. Once the restoration is complete, the Library will provide the Society with a copy of the map.



## GIFTS to the SOCIETY

The family of Frank Dunn Jr., a long-time member and volunteer at the Society, made a contribution in his memory. Mr. Dunn, who grew up in Goochland, passed away from cancer in June.



Goochland County  
Virginia

Court Order Book



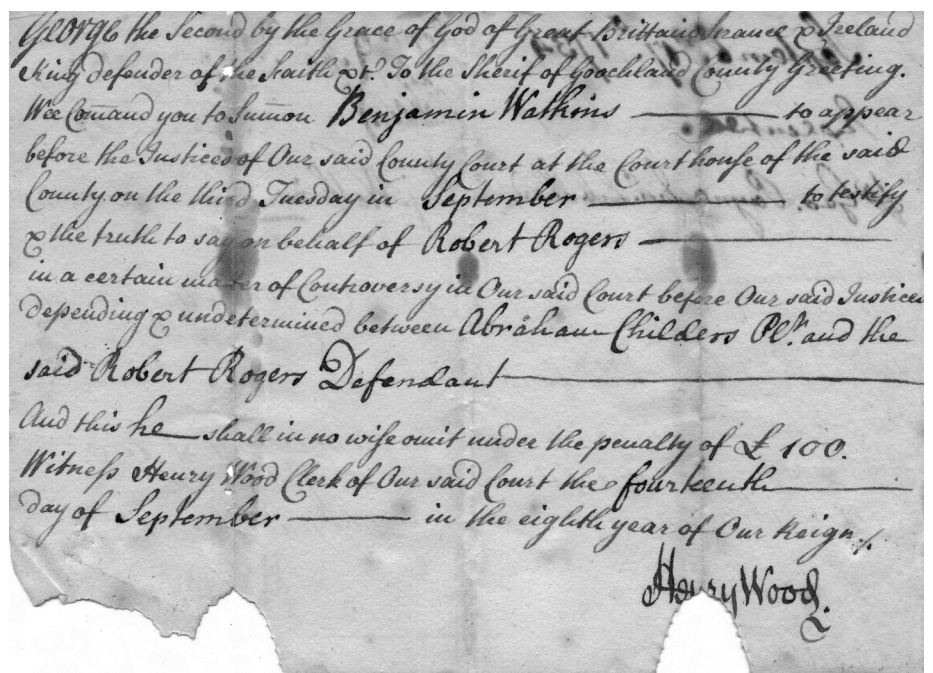
1735-1741

Ann R. Bloomquist

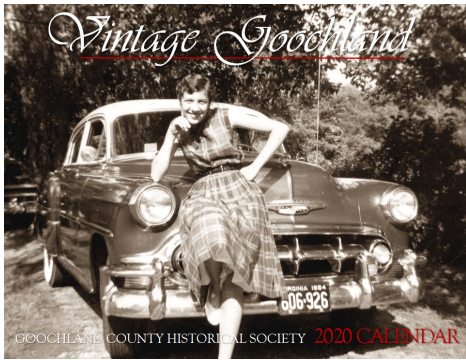
Mr. & Mrs. Gordon Dudley donated a copy of Volume 4 of the Goochland County Virginia Court Order Book. The Society had been trying to locate this volume, so this is a welcome gift. The Dudleys, from Scottsdale, Arizona, are new members of the Society.

## FROM the ARCHIVES

The document shown here is a summons issued in 1734 to Benjamin Watkins and is signed by Henry Wood, first Clerk of the Court for Goochland County. This type of document is part of our daily work. Handwritten documents like this one need to be transcribed and indexed. Volunteers transcribe a variety of old documents to make their contents more accessible to researchers. Our upcoming magazine includes several articles based on transcriptions. The Society is always looking for volunteers who can read cursive writing. If you would like to help, please contact the Society and join our team. You can do the work in-house or we will make digital copies available to you, so you can work from home.

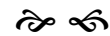


## 2020 CALENDAR—RESERVE YOURS NOW!



Get ready, because here it comes. The 2020 calendar just returned from the printers! It features some of our best vintage photographs of Goochland people and places. Along with the striking cover photo, there are historic homes, a teenage photo-shoot, a fantastic jalopy and more. These will be available at the History Center and at supporting businesses

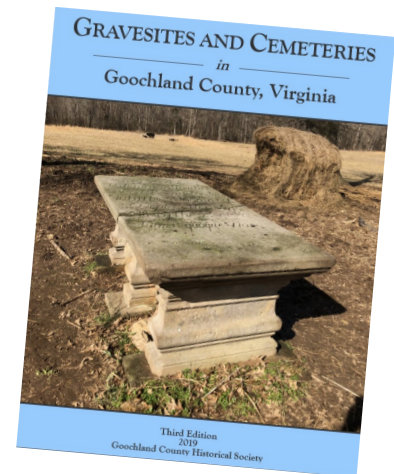
in the area. They also will be featured at our upcoming meetings and at our Snowflake Sale. These sell out quickly so don't delay! Last year's calendar sold out before the middle of December! The price is \$10.00 per copy and if you purchase five or more, the price drops to \$8.00 each.



## RELEASE of a NEW CEMETERY BOOK

The third edition of *Gravesites and Cemeteries in Goochland County* has been published! This 2019 edition has 312 pages and features 9,344 names and 361 cemeteries and grave sites. There are 17 cemeteries newly found and documented since the last edition was published in 2013! Pick up your copy today; we expect this to sell well and we don't want you to be left out! The price is \$25.00. The Society is indebted to Richard Toler,

Ginny Olson, Tom Daniels and Scott Johnson for their hard work and the many hours that it took to get this edition put together. This is by no means the final one and we are always looking for more cemeteries. If you know where one is that is not in the book, please contact us.



## THE CEMETERY CORNER—Mistake in a date?

Many beginning genealogists consider dates on tombstones to be the "gold standard" for accuracy. Usually such dates are accurate, but, on rare occasions, they may contain a mistake. One example of a mistake appears to be the birth date on the headstone of Mary Stella Alvis Drew in the cemetery at Hebron Presbyterian Church. The headstone says she was born on August 19, 1881 and died January 14, 1958. Other sources give August 19, 1880 for her birth. Her Virginia Death Certificate, available on Ancestry.com, gives August 19, 1880. The 1910 U. S. Census for the Dover District of Goochland County, VA supports a



birth year of 1880. It shows her age to be 29, but it was taken May 10, 1910 (before her birthday that year). She would have been 30 on August 19, 1910, if born in 1880.

Censuses and death certificates are both considered secondary

sources for a birth date (sources created sometime after the birth and thus, more likely to contain mistakes than primary sources which are created at the time of the birth). A birth certificate would be a primary source, but birth certificates in Virginia did not start until after 1900. A family bible giving birth dates might be a primary source, but we are not aware that one exists in this case whereupon, we cannot be absolutely sure of Mary Stella's birth year, but it appears she was born in 1880 and not 1881.



## Upcoming Events

Saturday, November 9, 1:00 p.m.



Lecture Series

**Location:** Goochland Public Library, 3075 River Rd  
West, Goochland, Virginia 23063

Sunday, November 17, 3:00 p.m.

Fall Meeting featuring Author, Karen A. Chase,  
*Carrying Independence*

**Location:** Providence Church, Gum Spring, Virginia

Sunday, December 1, 3:00 pm—5:00 pm

Holiday Gathering

**Location:** Vallambrosa



TIME to RENEW!  
MEMBERSHIPS RUN



JANUARY 1st through DECEMBER 31st

## SNOWFLAKE SALE & OPEN HOUSE

December 6 & 7  
10 a.m.—3 p.m.



Join us at the Society's History Center, for our annual open house. Meet our staff and Board of Directors while you shop. There will be refreshments and great deals, members will receive a 10% discount on all purchases made during the sale.