

# Mathews County Historical Society, Inc.

## Winter 2021 Newsletter

P.O. Box 855 | Mathews, VA 23109-0855  
mathewscounthistoricalociety.org



### CONNECTING PEOPLE TO THE PAST

---

#### President's Message

Reed Lawson

Welcome to 2021, everyone! As we begin this second year in the new decade with all its challenges, I am encouraged that it will be better for those of us tucked away in Mathew County as well as for the Commonwealth and the nation.

Due to restrictions on gathering that still control our lives, the society will not hold its Annual Meeting in person. And, rather than try to have a Zoom meeting of such a potentially large group, the Board of Directors has decided to email this issue of the newsletter to disseminate information to the membership including all reports that would otherwise be given at such an in-person meeting. For actions that require a vote, i.e. approval of the 2020 Annual Meeting minutes, approval of the 2021 budget proposal and election of the new board members and officers, we will ask for a reply either by email or snail mail as soon as you can. Thanks so much for your indulgence as we try to carry on the business of the society.



I have many to thank for work that has been accomplished this past year. The BOD and officers have Zoomed their way through each month. My thanks to each for their dedication in this trying time. Although stymied by state restrictions, Tompkins Cottage and Thomas James Store opened to the public in late June. With the dedication of Curator Becky Barnhardt and the team of docents, the cottage welcomed visitors thus beginning the 2020 season. The Editorial Committee led by Martha McCartney launched that day the latest volume of *Historic Homes and Properties*, masking and safely distancing. Under the guidance of Bobbi Hatton, the faithful MCHS Tabernacle Road Cleanup Crew scoured the roadside and ditches twice during the year. Trish Reed, aside from secretarial duties, ran herd on publications and ornaments inventory and storage and dealt with smile.Amazon.com, no easy task! Linda Bradford tried to schedule lectures and plan social events, but the virus kept getting in the way. And Treasurer Hunt Thompson kept us out of jail... Thanks to all!

Late spring and summer, the society had the opportunity to apply for federal funding to raise the cottage and James Store to mitigate further damage from flooding. As previously reported Tompkins Cottage was denied funding but the store is still being considered. Fingers are crossed for a favorable outcome. Thank you to Martha McCartney for writing the grant applications and for overseeing the gathering of information and photographs to support the requests.

And, most definitely, I want to thank Becky Barnhardt for the generosity of her time and expertise in being the research arm of the society in her work with Mathews Archives and *Historic Homes and Properties* analysis of deeds and other public and private records. So many hats she wears! Becky is the society webmaster and Facebook manager AND newsletter editor. Thank you, Becky. We are certainly indebted!

Sandy Warhol is chairman of the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee of Tompkins Cottage and Thomas James Store. The plans have been placed on hold until the pandemic eases, but new historic markers were ordered and affixed to each structure. Thanks to you, Sandy, for your many years of service to the society. Your ideas and enthusiasm were ever-present and contagious!

Thanks also to Nancy Twigg for her work as nominations chair. Please review her report on the slate for the new Class of 2023 and the one vacancy in the Class of 2022 and the nominees for officers.

## President's Message... *continued*

Looking ahead, the Editorial Committee will resume working on the last in the series of volumes on historic homes and properties. Progress has been delayed by the virus but the launching of Book 5 is planned for this year.

Also on the horizon is the completion of the restoration of New Point Comfort Lighthouse. This decades-long project was the inspiration of the late Earl L. Soles, Jr. In 2001 he initiated for MCHS a five-year plan with the county – the New Point Comfort Lighthouse Preservation Task Force and was instrumental in the publication and funding of *New Point Comfort Lighthouse Its History and Preservation* that was launched in 2013. Stay tuned for information on the commemoration, celebration and promotion of this treasure from Mathews County's past.

2021 promises to be a good year for Mathews County and the society. Thank you, the membership, for your support, validation and confidence in the work we are trying to do.

### 2021 MCHS Museum Calendar

#### **Tompkins Cottage Museum & Thomas James Store**

Saturdays, April 3rd until October 30th

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Saturday, November 20th & December 11th

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.



**MCHS belongs to:**



**VIRGINIA**  
ASSOCIATION  
of MUSEUMS

### **MCHS BOARD**

Reed Lawson, *President*  
Sandy Warhol, *Vice President*  
Trish Reed, *Secretary*  
Hunt Thompson, *Treasurer*

### **Class of 2020**

Linda Bradford  
Tom Karow  
Nancy Twigg  
Sandy Warhol

### **Class of 2021**

Al DeWitt  
Hunt Thompson  
Trish Reed  
Ray Stubblebine

### **Class of 2022**

Bobbi Hatton  
Reed Lawson  
Martha McCartney

### **Standing Committees**

Tom Karow, *Education*  
Ray Stubblebine, *Buildings & Grounds*  
Becky Barnhardt, *Market Days*  
Hunt Thompson, *Membership*  
Nancy Twigg, *Nominating*  
Linda Bradford, *Programs*  
Bobbi Hatton & Trish Reed, *Publications*  
TBD, *Publicity*

### **Ad Hoc Committees**

Martha McCartney, *Editorial Board*  
Reed Lawson, *Joint Archival*  
Kathy Yent, *Ornaments*  
Linda Bradford, *Social*

### **Positions**

Reed Lawson, *Archivist*  
Becky Barnhardt, *Curator*  
Reed Lawson, *Docent Coordinator*  
Becky Barnhardt, *Newsletter*  
Hunt Thompson, *Registered Agent*  
Becky Barnhardt, *Webmaster*

## Nominations Committee

The slate of nominees for the Class of 2023 is Linda Bradford, Tom Karow, Mary Elaine Pope and Nancy Twigg. The nominee for the vacancy in the Class of 2022 is Liz Bateman. The slate of officers for 2021 is President – Reed Lawson, Vice-president - Martha McCartney, Secretary - Trish Reed, and Treasurer – Hunt Thompson.

## New Prospective MCHS Board Members

Welcoming Liz Bateman is like reliving the past for the society. The daughter-in-law of the late former president John and Pat Bateman, who now resides in Williamsburg, she is uniquely connected to Mathews County, and even though fairly new (mostly full-time) she is already contributing to the community. Liz is a psych major with a Masters of Arts in Education of the Exceptional Child and has certification for English as a Second Language. She has taught at California School for the Blind and at Northern Virginia Community College before retiring. Over the years, Liz has worked as a flight attendant for Trans International Airlines and obtained a pilot's license. She married naval aviator Jim and they raised two successful sons. Liz is a member of the DAR, Country Club View Woman's Club, a book group and enjoys bridge (sort of), mah jong, beekeeping and gardening. She's involved in the Mathews County Woman's Club and MCHS. Liz brings a wealth of experience to the board and has stories to tell!



Liz Bateman

“Mary Elaine” Callis Pope is a Mathews native and a long-time member of the Society along with her husband Steve. A graduate of Mathews High School and Riverside School of Practical Nursing, she presently is employed as the Medical Coordinator/ Nursing Secretary at RCC-Mathews. With retirement plans in the not so far future she is looking forward to “giving back” her time and energy to the community! In her own words “the love of our history runs thru my veins! There is nothing more exciting than walking thru an old home place or locating grave sites long covered by time and re-searching the family histories of our community. I can feel the energy of those who have walked the path before me. I thrive on Mathews County history and the need to document and keep it alive.”



Mary Elaine Callis Pope

## In Memoriam

Lifetime member Janice Harris Shanks passed away November 15, 2020. She had moved from Cobbs Creek to Rappahannock Westminister-Canterbury several years back but remained active in the historical society. She served as curator of Tompkins Cottage, educated herself for this role by taking courses from professional organizations in Virginia and promoted the cottage in our local area and throughout Tidewater. She was responsible for acquiring the portrait the society owns of Maria Booth Patterson Tompkins (attributed to William J. Hubard) and the digital likeness of Christopher Tompkins from the portrait owned by the Tompkins family living in New Orleans. She was dedicated, passionate and committed. Our condolences to Mary Lee, Jimmy, Whit and Taylor.



Janice Harris Shanks

## Donations to MCHS in 2020

### Friends

Annette Breingan & Tyler White  
 Susan & Tim Hill  
 Sue & Pete Jennette  
 Roney Leitner  
 Keith Lowe  
 Ruth & Tim Morgan  
 Janice Phillips  
 Ann & Alex Reeves  
 Ula Ilnytsky & Ray Stubblebine  
 Storybound Construction, Inc.  
 Amanda & Jim Taylor  
 Sandy & Bob Warren

### Benefactor

Gaylen Davis

### Historian

Julie Lachman & David Thomas

### Mathews Archives

Brenda & Dennis Baker  
 James R. Dietrich  
 John H. Dietrich  
 Richard Hollerith  
 Bill Hudgins  
 Hunter Owens  
 Mary Elaine & Steve Pope  
 Susan Lewis Powell – *In memory of  
 Nina Winder Miller & Brenda Winder  
 Whiteman*

### New Point Comfort Lighthouse

Nina Allen  
 Nancy & Paul Katsuki  
 Ruth & Tim Morgan  
 Mary & Bill Newell  
 Hunter Owens  
 Martha Ellen Traband  
 Sandy & Bob Warren

### Publications

Reed Lawson  
 Hunter Owens  
 Kathy Yent & Loyd White

### Thomas James Store

Hunter Owens  
 Nancy & Wallace Twigg  
 Sandy & Bob Warren

### Tompkins Cottage Preservation (New Fund)

Anonymous  
 Mary & Danny Hunley

### New Lifetime Members

Dale Foster  
 Brenda Ripley & Ray Blake

### Other Donations

Martha McCartney – Map case and map folders for the Herman Hollerith Archival Room  
 Storybound Construction, Inc. – Grant application estimates for Tompkins Cottage and Thomas James Store

## Mathews County Historical Society Membership Application

*A friendly reminder - Our membership dues are renewable January 1st of each year!*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in the following membership:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Individual, \$35 per year
- \_\_\_\_\_ Couple/Family, \$50 per year
- \_\_\_\_\_ Active Duty Military, \$15 per year
- \_\_\_\_\_ Student (under 18), FREE
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lifetime Membership, \$500

I would like to make an additional gift to the preservation, collection & interpretation of Mathews County history:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Researcher of MCHS, under \$100
- \_\_\_\_\_ Friend of MCHS, \$100
- \_\_\_\_\_ Benefactor of MCHS, \$250
- \_\_\_\_\_ Historian of MCHS, \$1000

To benefit:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Mathews Archives Fund
- \_\_\_\_\_ New Point Comfort Lighthouse Preservation Fund
- \_\_\_\_\_ Thomas James Store Fund
- \_\_\_\_\_ Publications Fund
- \_\_\_\_\_ General Fund
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tompkins Cottage Preservation Fund

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED

Thank you for your interest and support of the Mathews County Historical Society. Please make your check payable to MCHS and submit along with this application to:

Membership Chair | Mathews County Historical Society, Inc. | P. O. Box 855 | Mathews, VA 23109