



Tales from the Tavern

For Friends of the King and Queen Courthouse Tavern Museum
and Members of the King and Queen County Historical Society

2024 Volume 1

Celebrating the 250th Anniversary of the United States

by Page McLemore and Dawn Shank

The Henricopolis Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution is celebrating the upcoming 250th Anniversary of the United States by fashioning a quilt that commemorates a person, place, or thing that contributed to the revolutionary cause within each of the nine counties represented in that chapter: Essex, Hanover, Henrico, King & Queen, King William, Lancaster, Northumberland, Richmond, Westmoreland. The quilt is approximately 50" x 50" with a 12" x 12" block for each county. Each block is an ink transfer placed within a star. The quilt was made by members of the Henricopolis Chapter with a block design provided by a representative from each county.

King & Queen County Courthouse Tavern Museum contributed a block design commemorating the "Todd's Bridge Crossing in 1781." The design was created by volunteer Dawn Shank and a text was written by Museum Council member Page McLemore. The story behind the design: Generals George Washington and Count de Rochambeau with their staff officers left Mount Vernon on September 12, 1781, then proceeded toward Williamsburg where the Continental and French armies would marshal before facing Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown. A cavalry escort of 300 Hussars from Lauzun's Legion accompanied the generals. When they departed from northern Virginia, a Continental and French armies supply train took the same route south. The generals turned off the army's planned route at Bowling Green traveling through Sparta along the path through Newtown which General Washington had used many times in previous years when heading to Williamsburg as a Burgess. The Hussars accompanied them as far as Todd's Bridge on the Mattaponi River in King & Queen County, then proceeded through King & Queen toward Gloucester while the generals, with their men, crossed into King William County via the bridge. The supply train followed the original plan, continuing on from Bowling Green toward Hanover Courthouse. It was composed of drivers, 175 empty supply wagons, and 1000 horses. The supplies and more than 6,000 Continental and French troops had been loaded previously onto small boats in Maryland destined for delivery to a landing on the James River near Williamsburg.

The quilt is currently on exhibit, traveling throughout the counties represented. It will be exhibited at the Courthouse Tavern Museum during its Holiday Open House in December 2024. A booklet with the story portrayed on each block accompanies the exhibit. Please be sure to come and see it!



K&Q design for DAR Quilt:
Todd's Bridge Crossing in 1781

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Contributors: Bidy Walker,
Page McLemore, Dawn Shank,
Nancy Herman-Thompson
Editor: Biddie Shelor

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Save The Date

King & Queen County Historical
Society Meeting - Sunday
October 27, 2024 at 3:00pm

The October meeting will be held at historic Smithfield, built circa 1781 by William Hill, and since 1832 the home of James Smith and his descendants. Richard Rumrill, the 3rd great grandson of James Smith, will talk about stabilization and reanimation work done on the house and dependencies. Smithfield is near St. Stephens Church. More details in upcoming announcements.

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Society Awards Scholarships

by Bidy Walker

The King & Queen County Historical Society is pleased to announce that the 2024 scholarships have been awarded to Ms. Haley Asbury and Ms. Aaliyah Owens. Haley, from Mascot in Shackelfords, has maintained a high scholastic average while working to save money for college. She was a pharmacy tech intern and plans to continue her studies locally in that field. Aaliyah Owens, from St. Stephens Church, was an outstanding student and involved in a variety of school activities: National Honor Society, Scholastic Bowl, volleyball and basketball manager. She was Salutatorian of her class and plans to attend Howard University in the fall. The King & Queen County Historical Society annually offers a \$2000 scholarship to each of two new graduates of King & Queen Central High School for the first year in a college, university, or technical school.



Haley Asbury



Aaliyah Owens

Vanessa Porter - Thank you!

from an interview by Nancy Herman-Thompson

Ms. Vanessa Porter retired from her position as Clerk of the Circuit Court, King & Queen County, VA at the end of 2023. She had been working in the Circuit Court Clerk's office for almost 27 years; first as a Deputy Clerk and then as Clerk of the Circuit Court, elected in 2016. She has always been a strong supporter of the Courthouse Tavern Museum and promoter of the history of King & Queen County. I wanted to do this interview and to thank her on behalf of the Courthouse Tavern Museum for her years of service and support.

Ms. Porter provided a brief overview of the Circuit Court's role in the County. She noted that the Clerk of the Court is responsible for over 800 duties. The Clerk ensures that the Court facilities, employees, and documentation required to serve the Circuit Court Judge are always well prepared. Vanessa is a 'Master Circuit Court Clerk' as certified by the Virginia Circuit Court Association (VCCA). It takes numerous classes and at least a year to attain this designation, which she received in 2016. She encouraged her Deputy Clerks to complete training for the 'Master Deputy' designation. This is a standard that few counties of our size can attain. The Clerk must be re-certified every 3 years and have 2 years of clean audits to keep the Certification.

The Clerk sets the civil docket for the court, schedules

the juries, and records the proceedings, which can have quite an emotional impact. The Court continues to operate regardless of a national crisis such as COVID. The Court also is responsible for non-judicial records important to county residents; such as wills, deeds, marriage licenses, deeds of trust, concealed handgun permits, appointments of ministers and notaries. Imagine having to ensure that all this information is archived. In her opinion, "the responsibility of the Clerk's Office is to help the people of the County; respect what they need and the questions they are asking." Ms. Porter found the biggest concern of the public is information on heirs property issues. She advises that the first thing people need to do is research their family tree so they know all names that might be involved. Often heirs do not know all the other multi-generational heirs. She took many questions by phone and dutifully tried to answer long distance requests. She became an expert in researching deeds, plats and the will books, besides old court cases. And she enjoyed it!



Clerk of The Court Ms. Vanessa Porter

Before the Museum was created, as deputies Vanessa and her co-worker, Betty Watkins, kept the books *Land And Heritage In The Virginia Tidewater: A History of King and Queen County* and *Old Houses of King and Queen County, Virginia*, various maps, and booklets on local history available in their office so they could help people look up information on geographic places or families. And of course being King & Queen natives they knew everyone, and could pass on information that wasn't found in a recorded document and County history in general, such as the locations of the cemeteries.

When the Courthouse Tavern Museum was first being developed and the old tavern building was being remodeled, she often came over from her office next door to see what had been found and how the construction was

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going. Once the Museum was opened, the Clerk's office would always direct visitors/the public to the Museum and its archives and library for research. In her position as Clerk of the Court, Ms. Porter kindly participated in many Museum activities such as a tour for high school students, a tour for the Central High School teachers, a presentation for the Virginia Association of Counties (VACO) in their tour of King & Queen County, tours of the Courthouse Green Historic District for various groups, and many others. She also arranged for her Zion Church congregation to visit the Museum on a Sunday after church. She never said no when asked if she could help the Museum.

“Ms. Porter always liked helping people, has a love of history and working on the puzzles of land records and family connections. Her work at the Clerk's Office has prompted her to work on her family's genealogy and she has met cousins all over the state.

We wish her the best in the next chapter of her life!”

Back In The Day - A Special Event

by Biddie Shelor

Today many of the daily routine activities of over 100 years ago are no longer known or understood. What was it like to go to school in a one room schoolhouse with one teacher for grades 1-7? Without electricity and automatic washers and dryers, how were clothes kept clean? In rural areas there was little access to ready made clothing, so how were materials for clothes made? How were quilts to keep people warm made? Today, we buy butter at the grocery store, but back then butter was made at home: how? How did people travel before cars/trucks were available? Where were post offices? Why are there marine fossils in the county and how can you find them? The Courthouse Tavern Museum Council offered visitors a trip back in time on Saturday, July 20 to find the answers. Extra fun was writing with a quill pen, having your photograph taken in a picture board, and a visit by George Washington. The Museum Council thanks all of the volunteers who made this event successful.



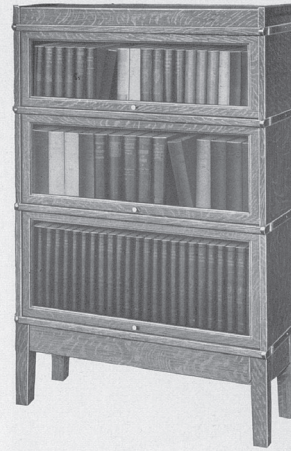
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A New Display Case

A recent accession to the Museum is an old barrister's glass fronted bookcase which will be used as an exhibit case. It was in poor shape, but volunteer Jen Shelor cleaned it up and put the pieces back together. In looking at this bookcase it never occurred to me that it could be bought as modular when it was originally purchased. Modular is definitely a term that is used today so individuals can "mix and match" according to their likes. What is unique is that this is a 86 year old barrister's bookcase which is modular in those same terms.

It was produced by the Globe-Wernicke firm and the model was patented as the "elastic bookcase." These stackable bookcases had a patented interlocking metal strip, came in standard widths of oak, walnut and mahogany. They are still popular today. If only the price was the same as the catalog dated 1938 where the highest end combination in real mahogany for the same three row case was \$24.00.

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PATTERN NUMBERS AND DIMENSIONS

Pattern Number	Description	OUTSIDE DIMENSIONS			INSIDE DIMENSIONS		
		High	Wide	Deep	High	Wide	Deep
141-D	Square Top	31½"	34"	11½"			
108-D-8½"	Book Section	10½"	34"	11½"	8½"	32"	9½"
110-D-10¼"	Book Section	12½"	34"	11½"	10¼"	32"	9½"
112-D-12½"	Book Section	14½"	34"	11½"	12½"	32"	9½"
143-D	Leg Base	10½"	34"	11½"			

The bookcase section shown above consists of one each of the sections listed.
To order this case as shown, specify library case No. 1261.

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