

# Mathews County Historical Society, Inc.

## Fall 2023 Newsletter

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

mathewscounthistoricalociety.org | info@mathewscounthistoricalociety.org



### CONNECTING PEOPLE TO THE PAST

#### Orozimbo, of Baltimore

The 524-ton, three-masted ship *Orozimbo*, built circa 1805 by Hunley Gayle in Mathews, Virginia, was the largest vessel ever constructed in the county. Named for a fictional Inca chief in Richard Sheridan's popular play *Pizarro* (1799), the ship, constructed of pitch-pine and sheathed with copper, was 119-feet in length, 34-feet beam, and 17-foot draft.

She sailed in the Baltimore to Liverpool trade until 1818, and at least one voyage was from Liverpool to China. Between 1832 and 1860 the *Orozimbo* made eleven voyages as a whaleship out of New Bedford, Massachusetts. At least seven of the whaling voyages from 1832 to 1851 were over three years in duration and her cargoes were recorded as more than 4,00 barrels of oil and up to 37,000 pounds of bone.

The *Orozimbo* ended her long career under British registry in the transatlantic lumber trade.



"OROZIMBO, of BALTIMORE." Watercolor. 1806. H. 17 3/4" x W. 25 1/8". Artist unknown. The ship is flying an American flag with 15 stripes and a ring of 15 stars with another in the center on a blue field. *Mariner's Museum, Newport News, Va.*



E.P. Gardner, the first master of the *Orozimbo*, commissioned the Herculaneum factory in Liverpool to produce a pair of creamware jugs with a hand-enameled ship portrait circa 1805-10. Gardner's initials "EPG" are painted under the spout of the jug. *Peabody Essex Museum, Salem Mass. and Mariner's Museum, Newport News, Va.*

## President's Message

Reed Lawson

Welcome, fall!

These cooler temperatures and Indian summer days are delightful. Sweet relief!

The society board of directors is revising organizational documents and operational procedures to better fit the Mathews County Historical Society of 2023. A Strategic Plan was approved and implemented to focus attention on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and uncertainties, near-term goals, and those goals with a lower priority. The Manual of Operations is currently being revised, followed by changes to the Bylaws. Cloud file storage and credit card and online sales are being finalized. The grant application (with Mathews County) to raise Tompkins Cottage out of the flood plain and for repairs will be submitted to the sponsoring Commonwealth History Fund shortly. Thanks go to Tim Morgan and Martha McCartney of the society and Tim Tillage, county Facilities Manager, for their tireless efforts.

On the lighter side, Mathews Market Days was a huge success despite Saturday hours shortened by storms. Record attendance on both days! We welcomed several nonprofits to the grounds – Fairfield Foundation, Mathews Land Conservancy, Gwynn's Island Museum, Gwynn's Island Project, BT Chapter of PEO, and authors Benn Trask, Tom Wiatt, and our own Martha McCartney signing their books. Thank you to the docents Terri Hyman and Becky Barnhardt joining me and volunteers Marybeth Almond, Amy Baker, Dee Bane, Liz Bateman, Mairi Furniss, Mary Ann Gilman, Nancy Miller, Becky Morgan, Trish Reed, Hunt Thompson, and Kathy Yent. Special thanks go to TC Curator Becky Barnhardt who orchestrated the society's presence at Mathews Market Days so ably.

The society sponsored a bus trip to the Historic Stratford Hall Wine and Oyster Festival in mid-September. By all accounts, everyone had a great time. Thanks so much to Amy Baker for organizing this event. We'd like to continue this type of educational – and fun – experience and are on the lookout for the next opportunity to learn and play at the same time.

Upcoming events include the October 8<sup>th</sup> volunteer/donor supper, the October 19<sup>th</sup> presentation "The Haunting of the Hudgins House," the November 4<sup>th</sup> County Highway Cleanup, the Holiday Open Houses at Tompkins Cottage for Thanksgiving and Christmas, the Christmas Parade, and a wintertime party (TBD). And, just maybe the Thomas James Store lift will commence!

We regret that Mike Miskovsky has resigned from the Board of Directors, citing just too much on his plate. We'll certainly miss his enthusiasm and great ideas. Best wishes, Mike!

As always, my thanks to the membership for your continued validation of society efforts to tell Mathews County's unique story.

## MCHS BOARD

*President:* Reed Lawson  
*Vice President:* Martha McCartney  
*Secretary:* Trish Reed  
*Treasurer:* Hunt Thompson

### Class of 2023

Amy Baker  
Marsha Carlton  
Reed Lawson  
Trish Reed

### Class of 2024

Ray Stubblebine  
Hunt Thompson

### Class of 2025

Liz Bateman  
Terri Hyman  
Martha McCartney  
Tim Morgan

### Standing Committees

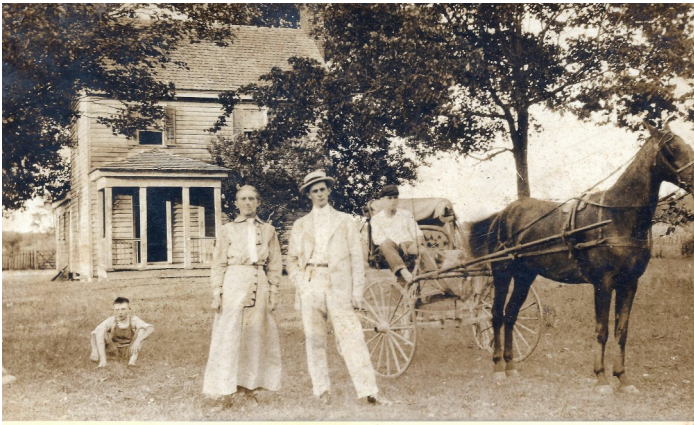
*Building & Grounds:* Marsha Carlton  
*Education:* Terri Hyman, Martha McCartney  
*Governance:* Tim Morgan, Martha McCartney & Trish Reed  
*Market Days:* Becky Barnhardt  
*Membership:* Hunt Thompson  
*Programs:* Becky Barnhardt, Terri Hyman & Trish Reed  
*Publications:* Liz Bateman, Trish Reed  
*Publicity:* Becky Barnhardt, Martha McCartney

### Ad Hoc Committees

*Editorial Board:* Martha McCartney  
*Finance:* Hunt Thompson, Marsha Carlton, Tim Morgan  
*Special Events:* Ray Stubblebine  
*Social:* Trish Reed

### Positions

*Archivist:* Reed Lawson  
*Curator, Tompkins Cottage:* Becky Barnhardt  
*Curator, James Store:* TBD  
*Docent Coordinator:* Terri Hyman  
*Newsletter:* Becky Barnhardt  
*Newsletter Distribution:* Terri Hyman  
*Registered Agent:* Hunt Thompson  
*Webmaster, FaceBook Admin:* Becky Barnhardt



*The Haunting of the*  
**HUDGINS HOUSE**  
*an Ever Evolving Tale*

**BENN TRASK**  
**OCT 19 | 7 PM - 8 PM**  
**MATHEWS MEMORIAL LIBRARY**  
**251 MAIN ST • MATHEWS, VA**

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC • NO CHARGE  
REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED

SPONSORED BY  
MATHEWS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY &  
THE MATHEWS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

# HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

## TOMPKINS COTTAGE MUSEUM

43 BRICKBAT RD. • MATHEWS, VA

**THANKSGIVING**  
**NOVEMBER 18**

**10am – 1pm**

**CHRISTMAS**  
**DECEMBER 9**

**10am – 1pm**

**TOURS & HOLIDAY SHOPPING**

## FALL COMMUNITY CLEANUP NOVEMBER 4TH @ 8 AM

Tabernacle Rd. from Rt. 14 to two miles east.  
Meet in Riverside Convalescent Center parking lot,  
603 Main St., Mathews, Virginia  
Bring grabbers, nets, gloves and wear suitable clothes,  
like Guinea boots!

Contact: Reed Lawson @ 804-725-3375



# Poplar Grove

## A Pictorial History: 1910 - 1928

### Memories of Days Gone By

In 1910, Arthur St. Clair Butler and his wife, Nannie Scott Betts, of Richmond, Virginia purchased historic *Poplar Grove* on the East River of Mathews County.

The Butlers graciously opened their newly expanded and renovated home to family and friends for extended visits.

Mr. Butler, a retired tobacco manufacturer, engaged in raising livestock and farming non-perishable crops. He also improved the tide mill and installed a power corn crusher.

In 1928, the Butlers sold *Poplar Grove* to George Upton, Sr. of Boston, and returned to Richmond.

*Molly P. Buford Collection*

*Mathews County Historical Society*

*Note: Ms Buford is a direct descendant of the Butlers*





## SNAPSHOTS

Festival Days are the Best Days!

During Mathews Market Days, Fairfield Foundation archaeologists held a public dig, authors Martha McCartney, Benn Trask and Thomas Wiatt signed their books, and representatives from the Gwynn's Island Museum, Gwynn's Island Project, Mathews Land Conservancy, and P.E.O joined us at the Tompkins Cottage.

MCHS members and guests joined our bus trip to historic Stratford Hall Plantation's annual Wine & Oyster Festival. Delicious food and wine, fresh oysters, live music and so much more were enjoyed by all!



**Mathews County Historical Society Membership Application**  
*A friendly reminder - Our membership dues are renewable January 1st of each year!*

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Annual Membership:

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

Preserve the county's past:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Researcher, under \$100
- \_\_\_\_\_ Friend, \$100
- \_\_\_\_\_ Benefactor, \$250
- \_\_\_\_\_ Patron, \$500
- \_\_\_\_\_ Historian, \$1000

Support MCHS projects:

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

**INVITE YOUR FRIENDS TO JOIN MCHS OR GIVE THE GIFT OF MEMBERSHIP**

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



## WE NEED YOUR HELP!

MCHS is looking for dedicated individuals to join us in our mission.

Board Members • Membership & Program Chairs  
Tompkins Cottage Museum Docents  
Special Events • Community Outreach


## JOIN NOW

[info@mathewscountyhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@mathewscountyhistoricalsociety.org)



**VIRGINIA**  
ASSOCIATION  
of MUSEUMS

Mathews County Historical Society, Inc.  
P. O. Box 855  
Mathews, VA 23109-0855



Have you paid your  
Yearly **Dues** yet?  
Not sure? Call Hunt  
@ 804-384-6430.

## 2023 Mathews County Museum Calendar

### **Gwynn's Island Museum**

Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays, April – October  
1 p.m. – 5 p.m.

### **Mathews Historical Museum**

Saturdays, Markets on Main and for Special Events

### **Mathews Maritime Museum**

Fridays & Saturdays, May – November  
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

### **Thomas James Store**

Saturdays, April – October  
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

### **Tompkins Cottage Museum**

Saturdays, April – October  
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

### ***Holiday Open House***

Saturday, November 18th &  
Saturday, December 9th  
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

## 2023 Mathews County Events Calendar

### **Thanksgiving Market**

Saturday, November 18th  
9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

### **Christmas Farmers Market**

Saturday, December 9th  
9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

### **Mathews Christmas Parade**

Saturday, December 9th  
1 p.m.