

# Mathews County Historical Society, Inc.

## Spring 2024 Newsletter

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

mathewscounthistoricalociety.org | info@mathewscounthistoricalociety.org



### CELEBRATING OUR 60TH ANNIVERSARY

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#### Thomas James Store

The Thomas James Store, owned by the Mathews County Historical Society, is an A-framed commercial structure that was built by 1820. It is one of the best preserved stores in the South and is on the National Register of Historic Places. Originally located on Main Street, it was moved to its current location behind the Sibley's General Store in 1899.

The Mathews County Historical Society received a grant administered by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to repair the foundation and lift the structure as protection for its continued preservation. The building sits on land that is basically the size of the footprint of the building.

As the project commenced, it was discovered that the building sits just slightly over the property's boundary with Maple Avenue. Therefore, in order for a building permit to be approved, a new survey had to be completed and an application for a boundary adjustment had to be made.

This boundary modification required the approval of the Mathews County Board of Supervisors. Project Manager Marsha Carlton spoke in favor of this boundary line adjustment at the March 21<sup>st</sup> Board of Supervisors meeting. It was unanimously approved. We are currently awaiting the boundary adjustment paperwork to be filed by the Mathews County attorney and the building permit to be issued. Storybound Construction stands ready to start the project as soon as the building permit is issued by the county.

We would like to thank Frances Hudgins, architect with Hudgins Design Collaborative; Gordon Jones with Bay Design; Paul Hatton, Michael Swiderski and Mike Rowe with Storybound Construction; Caitlyn Sylvester and Will Harris of the Virginia Department of Historical Resources; and Reed Lawson, Hunt Thompson and Martha McCartney of the MCHS for their combined and continued efforts to complete this project. We look forward to celebrating the re-opening of this historic gem in Mathews County.



Project manager Marsha Carlton, Michael Swiderski of Storybound Construction, and Roger Emig, Thomas James Store Curator.

## President's Message

Reed Lawson

2024 is racing by, and it's been a busy year so far! First, I would like to thank those who have renewed their membership for 2024 and welcome our new members. Together, we can support the society's efforts to educate and promote Mathews County's unique history. We welcome: Elizabeth and Matt Abbitt, Morey and Lynda Alexander, Lois and Alan Biddison, Mary Chapman, Davie Cottrell, Mary and Pete Dunklee, Steve Griswold and Carolyn Rowe, Margie and Andy Hantwerker, Marymac and John Hoffman, Nancy and Woody James, Judy and Al Kinker, Debbie and Ron Lambert, Michele and John Larson, Gerrie and Frank Lohr, Carol and John McCormack, Vikki Miller, Mary Helen and Harvey Morgan, Carol and Bob Murdock, Barry and Brenda Napp, Chris and Carol Nyce, Judy Richardson, Joe Syslo, Alex Stuart, Susan and Coleman Tyler, Diane Vogel, Cleveland Walker, John Werner and Kristin Wheeler. Thanks to all of you for joining the team.

Much activity is scheduled for the months ahead. In April, after almost four years of waiting, the lift and repair of the Thomas James Store will begin. On May 11<sup>th</sup>, the dedication/unveiling of the historic highway marker *Flights to Freedom* takes place which affirms the courage of those who sought freedom from bondage. In June, MCHS will present a program on Gen. James H. Lane, CSA, of Mathews County. The summer party is next! Be on the lookout for further details.

The society wishes to thank Martha McCartney for hosting the January winter party at her home. At our Annual Meeting and Dinner in February, we welcomed Marybeth Almond and John Hoffman to our board of directors and thanked Trish Reed, who's retiring from the board but not moving away! We also are grateful to Fred Lyon for giving a public presentation on Delegate and Speaker of the House John Warren Cooke's role during the unsettled era of integration in Virginia.

My continued thanks to the members of the Board of Directors and the volunteers who have been so generous with their time and talents.

Best wishes to all!

## In Memoriam

The society has been saddened to hear of the recent passing of three members. Carl Aschman of Mathews died January 8, 2024, after a long illness. Our condolences to Martha and her family.

Longtime member, humorist and Onemo native, Carl Douglas Thomas passed away Leap Day, February 29, 2024. Our hearts go out to Norma, his daughters and grandchildren.

Barbara "Jeannie" Eugene Trower of Cary, North Carolina, passed away Friday, March 15, 2024. Jeannie, and her husband Wil have been members of the society for the past several years. We extend our deepest sympathy.

The society has just learned of the death of mariner John William Houlder Hudgins on January 30, 2024, at his home in Edgartown, Mass. Bill, a descendant of Houlder Hudgins (1738-1815) of Mathews, donated Hudgins family photographs and paintings, documents, silver and china to MCHS over the years. *Pax vobiscum.*

### MCHS BOARD

President: Reed Lawson

Vice President: Amy Baker

Secretary: Martha McCartney

Treasurer: Hunt Thompson

### Incumbent Board Members

#### Class of 2024

Reed Lawson

Ray Stubblebine

Hunt Thompson

Roger Emig

#### Class of 2025

Liz Bateman

Terri Hyman

Martha McCartney

Tim Morgan

#### Class of 2026

Marybeth Almond

Amy Baker

Marsha Carlton

John Hoffman



VIRGINIA  
ASSOCIATION  
of MUSEUMS

**WE INVITE YOU TO ATTEND  
THE DEDICATION AND UNVEILING**

**'Flights to Freedom'  
Historic Highway Marker  
Saturday, May 11, 2024  
11:30 a.m.  
First Baptist Church  
9654 Buckley Hall Road  
Mathews, Virginia**

**Sponsored by  
Mathews County Historical Society, Inc.  
Mathews Branch NAACP #7090  
First Baptist Church**

**MATHEWS COUNTY  
VIRGINIA<sub>250</sub>  
AMERICAN REVOLUTION**

## **SPRING CONCERT**

**Courthouse  
Community Orchestra  
May 15, 2024 at 6 p.m.  
Mathews Court Green  
Mathews, Virginia**

**Free Admission  
Bring your lawn chairs and blankets**

**Patriotic music and music for the times to memorialize the 248th anniversary of the May 15th creation of Virginia's Declaration of Independence.**

## *General James Henry Lane* **SOLDIER AND EDUCATOR**



**John Coulter  
June 13th • 7 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
Mathews Memorial Library  
251 Main St • Mathews, Va.  
Open to the Public • No Charge**

**Sponsored by  
Mathews County Historical Society  
Mathews Memorial Library**

## **Programs & Events**



**WE NEED YOUR HELP!**  
MCHS is looking for dedicated individuals to join our Programs & Events Committee.

**FESTIVALS    LECTURES    SOCIALS**

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



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### 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

**Additional Donations:**

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

**In support of 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**