

Mathews Historical Museum Newsletter

Travel Through Time in Mathews

Volume 1, Number 1 • October 2019

www.mathewsvmuseum.org



From our chairman, John A. Caramia Jr.

Welcome to our first newsletter and thank you for your interest in the newest museum in Mathews County. We hope to keep you updated on our progress and upcoming events that you can participate in through our newsletter and web site (www.mathewsvmuseum.org).

The Mathews Historical Museum was incorporated in 2015 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with the mission to preserve and promote the cultural heritage and history of Mathews County. The goal is to open a permanent museum in Mathews that will collect, preserve and exhibit objects that represent the history of the county. Through these exhibits and programs, visitors will be able to gain an understanding and appreciation of the County's past and present and begin to contemplate the future of the county and its people.

At the end of May 2018 the museum acquired a permanent site, through the generosity of an anonymous donor. The building, at 200 Main Street, was built in 1936 for George Phillipotts, a Texaco distributor from Mobjack. The business opened in June 1936, operated by E.C. Fox as a Dodge and Plymouth dealership and sold Texaco products. By 1939 the building was converted by Bob Bertschy into the Be-Jo Bowling Alley. After World War II the building housed a number of businesses – beauty parlor, Western Auto, Virginia Power, and Bassett Furniture. From 1963 to 1998 Catherine Brooks operated the Craftsman Shop in the building. The last business in the building, from 1998 to 2018, was Dilly Dally Emporium. Our building is a contributing structure to the recently created Mathews Downtown Historic District.

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OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair: John A. Caramia, Jr.
Treasurer: Vicki Carter
Vice President: Edith Turner
Secretary: Elsa Verbyla

CLASS OF 2019:

Barbara Bass
John A. Caramia Jr.
Josie Thorpe
Nancy H. Twigg
Elsa Verbyla

CLASS OF 2020:

Alexis Foster
Tom Karow
Forrest Morgan
Cindy Roman
Doug Wilton

CLASS OF 2021:

Gaylen Davis
Katherine Davis Small
Jim Pavik
Edith Turner
Sandy Warhol

CALENDAR 2019-2020

Oct. 5: Autumn on Main, Antique Sale at the Museum, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Nov. 9: Veterans Day, Museum open for Wall of Remembrance, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Dec. 13-14: Christmas Bazaar at the Museum, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., vendor sales
March 16, 2020: St. Patrick's Day dinner at Kingston Parish House.
May 2, 2020: **MAY FAIRE!**

FROM THE CHAIRMAN
(Continued from the prior page)

Since moving into our building we have had a structural analysis done which pinpointed several items that need to be repaired in order to maintain the historical integrity of our structure. We are also working with Commonwealth Preservation Group to develop a preservation plan, space usage within the building, and documents to be used for a capital campaign to raise the necessary funds.

The Mathews Historical Museum's major yearly

**Mathews May Faire Committee
Announces 2020 Theme,
"Celebrate Our Mathews Water Heritage"**

The 2020 May Faire Committee announces the 2020 May Faire theme will be "Celebrate Our Mathews Water Heritage." May Faire supports the Mathews Historical Museum. It is our county's heritage event as laid out in the comprehensive plan. May Faire planners are dedicated to taking the lead in celebrating the county's heritage in a way that the community can enjoy with friends and family, while reflecting on our past.

Schramm to Chair May Faire 2020

Mary "Jo" Schramm, owner with her daughter Sarah of Mathews business Flowers from the Heart, has been named by the MHM Board to chair May Faire 2020—the county's fourth annual Heritage Festival. Schramm has worked with the Museum in the past year as a sponsor of the Peony Festival. "I am eager to participate in the community, and am looking forward to a highly successful event."

Growing up, Schramm and her brothers spent every summer in Mathews at their grandparents' home one lane over from where she currently lives. After spending nearly 35 years in the construction industry, "doing bookkeeping and pushing papers," she decided to move back to her Mathews roots. Just as she was eyeing retirement, the opportunity to purchase Flowers from the Heart from her cousin arose and she jumped at the chance to entertain her artistic side.

fundraising event is May Faire held the first Saturday in May. The event celebrates Mathews County's past with a different historic theme each year. All of the proceeds from the event support the work of the museum. A wrap-up of the 2019 May Faire and our planning for 2020 are described below.

To make the Museum a reality we need your help, ideas, and participation. If you are not already a member we hope that you will consider becoming a member. If you join now your membership will not only continue for the rest of this year but will continue through 2020.

When she isn't working at the flower shop or spoiling her grandchildren, she can be found putting finishing touches on her at-home studio where she will indulge her passion for creating stained glass pieces, sterling silver jewelry or whatever she fancies.

More recently, she is spending time supporting her husband Mike Schramm's efforts in gaining a seat on the county's Board of Supervisors.

May Faire 2020 Committee Welcomes You!

We are seeking volunteers for May Faire 2020 Committees. Following are the committees, along with their chairs. RSVP to mayfairemathews@gmail.com if you would like to help with May Faire 2020 or have ideas for displays at the Museum, or have items you wish to lend/share with the community.

-Administration: Josie Thorpe.

-Finance: Jim Pavik/Vicki Carter .

-Vendors/Advertisers: Barbara Bass, Cindy Roman secure vendors and advertisers; Libby Crawford and Diana Swenson assisting.

-Day Program: Edith Turner, Nancy Twigg.

-Retail: Cindy Roman, with Elisa Provinsen and Janet Clark assisting.

-Marketing/Advertising/PR: Sandy Warhol ..

-Souvenir Booklet: Elsa Verbyla.

The entire May Faire Committee and friends contribute wherever needed.



May Faire 2019 Report

Wall of Remembrance

More than 350 visitors came to visit the new museum and view the Wall of Remembrance, which boasted over 850 photographs of Mathews residents who serve or have served in our military and in the merchant marine. Additionally, more than 200 came to see the wall during Market Days this year.

May Faire Vendors Express Satisfaction

An unofficial poll of Main Street retail shops as well as vendors at the Farmers Market, showed a pleased group of business owners. Of the five businesses polled, all reported an increase in foot traffic. One vendor at the Farmers Market reported a five times increase in profits at May Faire. Additionally, a poll which is provided to all guest vendors on the mall, showed satisfaction with location, foot traffic, profits and a willingness to return for May Faire 2020.

2019 Raffle winners

Several happy winners walked away with prizes on May 4! Raffle basket (all valued over \$400) winners were, Garden basket, Veronica Murowski; Made in Mathews basket, Melissa Thompson, Electric tools, Joey Murry, Wine basket, Suzi Maloney. John Keith Thomas won the Veteran's Quilt.

Video of Mathews WWII Veterans to be Available on YouTube

As a part of May Faire, "Conversations" with our Mathews WWII veterans, was a main feature of the day, held at the historic Court House. The video was created by Mathews High School honor student, Madeleine Maggioncalda, with advice and support from teacher Jason Smith.

Participating in the "Conversations" were six of our county's WWII veterans: Arnold Ripley, Baxter Shelor, Roney Leitner, Chuck Lirette, Gloria Diggs, and Bill Walters.

The video may soon be accessed through our website at www.mathewsvmuseum.org.

What's a Museum Worth?

Key findings from a recent Conner Prairie survey show that 96% of Americans believe it is important to look at our history to inform our future. Further:

- 92% of Americans think it is important that museums are fully accessible to all guests;
- 91% of Americans agreed that it is important that people learn about history to build a strong foundation for the future;
- 82% of Americans think it important that history museums step up to create a sense of place and community for civil discourse and greater understanding;
- 84% of Americans think it is important that history museums protect the natural environment and engage guests in river and land conservation;
- 79% of Americans think it is important that museums demonstrate a sustained commitment for advancing diversity, equity and inclusion;
- 42% of Americans now have a higher level of curiosity in history as compared to this time last year. The generational breakouts include: Gen Z (47%), Millennials (55%) Gen X (42%), Baby Boomers (28%) and the Silent Generation (26%).

Antique Sale at the Museum, October 5

A fundraiser for the Museum will be held Saturday, October 5, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. with items donated by a Virginia estate and our friends. Come join us and be a part of history.

Christmas Shops at the Museum

Friday, December 13 and Saturday, December 14—the weekend Santa Claus comes to town! 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Friday and Saturday, the Museum will host visiting vendors from the area. Vendors are invited to set up tables in the Museum at a cost of \$25 for a table for both days. Application forms are available on our website, www.mathewsvmuseum.org. Contact cbbbbb@va.metrocast.net.



Mathews Historical Museum Membership Application (2019 - 2020)

Become a Member of Mathews Historical Museum

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

I am interested in the following membership:

_____ Individual, \$25, per year

_____ Family / Couple, \$35 per year

_____ Active Duty Military, \$15 per year

_____ Student (under 18), FREE

_____ Lifetime Membership, \$500

I would like to make an additional gift to support the work of the Museum in the amount of: _____

I am interested in participating in the following activities:

_____ Collections _____ Special Events _____ Retail

_____ Membership _____ Fundraising / Grant Writing

_____ Other (please state)

We will contact you with regard to your interests. Thank you.

Thanks you for your interest and support of the Mathews Historical Museum. Please make check payable to Mathews Historical Museum and submit along with this application to Membership Chair / Mathews Historical Museum / P. O. Box 634 / Mathews, VA 23109.