

The Messenger

OF THE CHESTERFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VIRGINIA

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Former Slave Passes Away - 104 Years Old

Peter Lipowicz

From the New York Times March 31, 1896

Mrs. Lucy Thomas died in Boston. She was born a slave on the Alpheus Roulette[sic, should be Rowlett] plantation in Chesterfield County May 18, 1792. She was married at age 13 to husband Thomas and she had twenty children, seven of whom were living at the time of her death. Mrs. Thomas left the plantation at the end of the Civil War. Her husband was sold during the war and she never saw him again. At the time of her death she was living in Boston with her son David.

10 cents Charged to See Big Baby

Peter Lipowicz

From the Washington Post May 14, 1907

Andrew Thomas Brockwell of Chesterfield County is 11 months old and weighs 56 pounds. He weighed 15 pounds 7 ounces at birth. His mother, Mrs. Herbert Brockwell has put up a sign on her porch announcing a price of 10 cents to see the little fellow. The 1910 Census shows the family to be living on Lee Street in Manchester. The mother's name is Clara.

January Quarterly Meeting

Sunday January 27th 1:30 pm

Capri Italian Grille 8629 River Rd

Each year the events committee selects some "new-old" places that we think our members will find interesting, for our quarterly meetings. This year's January Quarterly Meeting will be on Sunday, January 27, 2013 at 1:30 p.m. at Capri Italian Grille, 8629 River Rd., South Chesterfield at Seven Springs Marina. Luncheon will be a buffet including several Italian entrees (including vegetarian), side dishes, salad, non-alcoholic beverages and dessert. Cost to CHSV members and friends is \$20 per person. Alcoholic beverages are available. Our speaker is Bob Wichser, Executive Director of the Appomattox River Water Authority, who will speak on "Lake Chesdin and the History of Building the Dam on the Appomattox." Paid reservations must be received by Friday, January 18, 2013..

Directions: 8629 River is not directly on River Rd. Turn South toward the marina. There is a sign for Capri at the turn on River Rd. Capri is directly ahead on the water. All roads are paved. There is plenty of parking. The phone number for Capri is 590-1425.



Mission Statement

The Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia serves as the center for Chesterfield County history. Its purposes are to collect, preserve, interpret and promote the county's unique past for the education of present and future generations

From the President -

His hands and arms were aching from pushing stone against stone. A large rock had been delivered to the CHSV office some weeks before. What was it for? How was it to be used? All was made clear at Colonial Market Day at Castlewood. Breaking up chocolate on the stone was a hit on May 5, 2012.

2012 was a busy year for CHSV. Museum exhibits continued the "Fourscore and More" memories of Chesterfield's older African American citizens; children played hopscotch on the sidewalk before entering the museum; a train whistle enchanted everyone who came to the Chesterfield County Early Railroads exhibit. Kids and their parents came to Castlewood to ask where the old jail was so they could see the Chesterfield Police exhibit (parents) and the jail cells upstairs (kids).

Successful teas were held at Magnolia Grange which was the site for several other CHSV activities, including a thank you reception for our volunteers. County receptions, private parties and weddings were also held there. The gift shop at Magnolia Grange was and is open at all times the house is open. Stock up now on presents for birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, next Christmas, etc. Don't forget those Chesterfield related items you need for yourself.

The Winter Lecture Series in January, February, and March, held in 2012 at Lucy Corr, was a highlight of CHSV events. The heirloom seed exchange was a success as were the heirloom tomato plant sales. Our cooperative programming efforts with groups such as the County Parks and Recreation Department were extremely popular. CHSV had a presence at several activities including the opening of the headstock and amphitheater at the Mid-Lothian Mines and Rail Roads Park, Celebration of the Vine, and the inauguration in Ettrick of AMTRAK passenger train service between Norfolk, Ettrick (Petersburg), and Boston.

CHSV participated in the Point of Rocks sale to the county. We worked with the Planning Department to get a chapter on historical and cultural activities in the county into the Comprehensive Plan. We donated door prizes at Chesterfield Chamber of Commerce luncheons. The Society participates in the Chesterfield Alliance for Cultural and Heritage Tourism (ACT). CHSV played an important role with ACT in obtaining coverage of Chesterfield in the November issue of *US Airways Magazine*. Millions of passengers read about Chesterfield while en route from somewhere to somewhere.

Our volunteers give lectures, often with pictures and artifacts, throughout the area. If your group needs a program give the office a call. All your Society's committees were hard at work all year for the benefit of our members, the county, and visitors. CHSV is involved in many programs every year. We hope our members and friends enjoy them as often as possible. The Winter Lecture Series, the museums, and Magnolia Grange tours are free to our members. Have you been to the library in Castlewood recently? We can be justly proud of the collection there. Come see it and learn more about Chesterfield's history.

There is no doubt I could mention a lot more. Without dedicated volunteers CHSV could not function as it does. I convey my thanks to the Board, committees and volunteers of Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia.

As we look forward to programs and events in 2013, I invite you to our January quarterly meeting which includes a luncheon. More information is in this issue of *The Messenger*. A buffet luncheon with a grand view of Lake Chesdin is new to us. You will enjoy it. See you there.

Tra

From the Messenger editor – please e-mail by March 10 any submissions you would like to see in *The Messenger* to lipowicz1@verizon.net. Your stories, research, and photos are all welcome. If your submission is handwritten or typed, please provide to Diane Dallmeyer.

Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia

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Messenger Editor

Peter Lipowicz

DuPont Spruance Plant History

This is the second article on the history of the DuPont Spruance Plant. A retired DuPont employee wrote it, and I have edited it for this article. Information, photographs and documents used for this article were provided by the DuPont-Spruance Plant Community Relations Department. This article covers the history through 1945. Future years will be in the next issue.



1600s Spruance site is the scene of London iron works; a wharf was built on the James river, later to be called Warwick and eventually deepwater terminal

1729 Henry Cary house erected

1732 Archibald Cary completed Cary mansion; George Washington and Thomas Jefferson spent time there

1750 Archibald Cary inherits site and names it after Ampthill castle in England

1787 Archibald Cary dies and his daughter, Elizabeth, inherits Ampthill

1803 Robert temple buys Ampthill for \$19,200

1839 John Watkins buys Ampthill. Family cemetery on site

1927 property purchased by DuPont from the legatees of the Watkins family (366.2 acres)

- an additional 65.2 acres were purchased from the Bellwood and Adamson families for what would later be the DuPont cellophane plant
- Rayon Plant is third site for rayon production;
- site picked because of abundant supply of water and top labor available in area

1928 ground broken on July 7; Ampthill house used for brief period as office; first wage employee was C. W. Parham

1929 site known as DuPont Rayon Co.

- Willis Shackelford is first plant manager
- on May 20, first press charged & on May 29, first spinning position strung up at 9:15 am
- plant enrollment at 539
- K. Missimer named service superintendent

1930 cellophane production starts up ; Col. W. Spruance secured technology from France

1931 Rayon production curtailment due to market conditions

1932 recovery year from curtailment; capacity on the increase; land purchased from the J. Scott Parrish family

1933 Rayon Plant at 90% capacity; Spruance's worst safety year - 45 serious injuries

1934 production of Cordora high-tenacity viscose rayon begins

1935 Rayon Plant II starts up

- employment up to 2,750 ; production at 3 million lbs.

- Rayon Plant III construction begins
- purchase of land to add to property at river pump house (known as Warwick Springs tract) from Moncure family
- railroad overpass constructed

1935 the Board of Directors of the DuPont Rayon Co. and DuPont Cellophane Co. met in New York to honor Col. William C. Spruance and his family by officially naming the Richmond plants after him. Retirees interviewed say the official date was in 1937 when the new name was put on signs on the plant. However, company documents, dated as early as April 1934, make reference to the Spruance plant.



1936 Rayon Plant III started; designed for rayon tire cord

- first general manager (safety) award given
- suggestion plan inaugurated

1937 Rayon Plant II expansion

- E. E. Swensson

named plant manager

- railroad tunnel constructed for pedestrians
- first President's safety award achieved
- parking sheds for employees built
- disability wage plan initiated

1938 Rayon production passes wool for the first time

- plant enrollment at 2,785
- first official plant newspaper for Rayon - the Spinnerette (officially named by William Yancey, Christine Morrison, Thomas Stotesberry, and Catherine Storko)
- J. P. Carlow named first plant safety representative
- J. T. Bogia named chief clerk
- D. (Ducky) Carlton named first safety supervisor
- Bill Kidd becomes first fire inspector

1940 George Dorsey named first safety inspector

- apprenticeship program begins at Virginia Mechanics Institute
- first Board of Directors' safety award
- first major concern over snow - hampered site

1941 G. E. McClellan named plant manager

- 3000 day no injury club organized
- softball team won state title

1943 "Women in Production Service" becomes active organization ; MGM star Ruth Hussey visits plant. [She starred in the movie *The Philadelphia Story* - editor]

1944 Rayon Plant I tire cord unit started; Beulah Griffin first becomes first Spruance pensioner

1945 B. Walmsley appointed plant manager

- site goes to 40-hr. Week with four shifts
- achievement of the third Board of Directors' safety award

Cohen v. Chesterfield County

How a Chesterfield County Teacher Took Her Case for Maternity Leave to the U. S. Supreme Court - and Won
Peter Lipowicz

Susan Cohen was a young social studies teacher at Midlothian High School in 1970. On November 2nd of that year, she notified the Chesterfield County School Board that she was pregnant and requested to continue teaching until April 1st of the following year. That request was denied. The School Board would allow her only to stay until



December 18th. She personally appeared before the Board and made a second request. This time to teach until January 21st. This request was also denied. Mrs. Cohen sued the Board. Her case went all the way to the United States Supreme Court where on January 21, 1974 the case was finally decided. Susan Cohen won. She received back pay and credit for service. By this time, she had moved to the Philadelphia area and was an adjunct teacher at a local college and substitute teacher. But her victory was an important one for teachers and women, who could no longer be forced to leave their jobs because they were pregnant.

Susan Cohen is a native of New York, and came to Virginia because her husband was pursuing a doctorate at the University of Virginia. Her education was at the City College of New York and Columbia University Teachers College. She loved her job teaching at Midlothian High School. While she only taught there for a few years, I found students who remembered her as a great teacher. One of these students is Marcus Rediker, now a professor of history at the University of Pittsburgh, and the author of several history books. He remembers her as for being hip, progressive, and cosmopolitan. And she was political, too. She was also close to the students. One funny story he relates is that a student starting laughing in class, and the laughter spread contagiously so that the whole class was laughing. Now, mind you, these are seniors, not elementary school kids. Mrs. Cohen tried to put a stop to it by telling everyone to go outside. When they came back, it happened again. This time Mrs. Cohen started laughing, too.

The policy that forced Susan Cohen to leave her job had deep roots. According to School Board meeting minutes of April 23, 1941, the policy at that time was to not reappoint teachers who had just been married. Many school districts throughout the nation had similar policies. So when she decided to sue, she was challenging a long held prerogative of the School Board. How did she come to this difficult decision? Her treatment by the Board was unyielding. But it was her husband's idea to sue, and she went along with it.

You can imagine the odds this young teacher faced. So getting a good lawyer willing to see it through was a necessity. The

Cohens chose John Mann, a lawyer in Richmond, who was a friend of a friend. He had recently graduated from George Washington University law school. He worked as a lawyer with the American Civil Liberties Union on prison litigation. He went to file the case on Christmas Eve, 1970 in the U. S. District Court. in Richmond He learned that he could not file the lawsuit as he was not a member of the U. S. District Court bar. Lucky for him and Mrs. Cohen, Judge Robert Merhige Jr. was in the courthouse that day and opened court to admit Mr. Mann to the bar. So the case was filed.

Mr. Mann sought other progressive lawyers to assist him. When the case was filed, Philip Hirschkop joined the case. He is the lawyer who won the U. S. Supreme Court case in 1967: *Loving v. Virginia*, about the right to marry a person of another race. On the defense side were Oliver Rudy, Commonwealth's Attorney, and Morris Mason, Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney.

The weakest part of the School Board's case was that it did not have a clear rationale for the requirement that a teacher leave after four months of pregnancy. Five members of the Board were deposed, and various reasons were offered, but they were not the same for each member. Some cited concerns about a pregnant teacher walking up steps. Another concern was teacher absenteeism. The conspicuousness of pregnancy was cited by three of the School Board members, with one elderly School Board member saying *"because some of the kids say, my teacher swallowed a watermelon, things like that. That is not good for the school system."* Sam Hixon III, who represented the School Board during the appeals process, was the first person to tell me this statement. He lamented that it was the part of the record he had to work with. John Mann and Susan Cohen remembered it, and told me about it, too.

The trial was held in Richmond with Robert Merhige Jr. presiding. I wondered how the student and staff supported Susan Cohen during the ordeal. Teachers and students and even former students supported her, to the point that the fire marshal at the school remarked that even a fire couldn't get the students to leave as quick as they did to go to court. She regrets that her own school principal did not support her. On May 17, 1971 Judge Merhige ruled in favor of Mrs. Cohen. In his opinion he states that *"Unrefuted medical evidence is that there is no medical reason for the Board's regulation,"* and further, *"...no tenable evidence has been advanced by the defendants in defense of the provision."*

So Mrs. Cohen had won this initial trial. And, by the way, she had delivered her baby on May 2nd. His name is Michael. His birth date, which is in the official U. S. Supreme Court record, was enough for me to find him as I searched for his mother in order to do this story. He is a partner in the Duane Morris law firm in Philadelphia.



Now, judging from today's vantage point, you would think that Susan's battle was over. Susan Cohen was treated in a manner unsupported by the law. The decision was clear cut. Another victory had been scored for women's' rights. But no, that is not what happened. The School Board appealed to the U. S. Court of Appeals. New lawyers were brought in by Chesterfield County including Sam Hixon III of Williams, Mullen. There was just one problem. You don't get to start over in the appeals process. The record of the previous court must be considered. The case was heard January 4, 1972 and a verdict was reached September 14, 1972. It was in favor of Susan Cohen. The court cited a fundamental defect in the School Board policy: *"That the regulation is discriminatory on the basis of sex, we think is self-evident."*

So now you might say, it is truly over. Time to go back and revise the policy. But this time, there was a ray of hope for defendants. Chief Judge Haynesworth dissented: *"Only women become pregnant; only women become mothers. But Mrs. Cohen's leap from these physical facts to the conclusion that any regulation of pregnancy and maternity is an invidious classification by sex seems simplistic."* Now the School Board could appeal again to the same court, except that this time it would be to the full body of the court, or *en banc*.

The second appeal was heard January 2, 1973 and the decision came on January 15th. Susan Cohen lost this round. The opinion states: *"How can the state deal with pregnancy in terms of equality and paternity. It cannot, of course. The disabilities and preoccupations of pregnancy are visited but slightly upon the father. However sympathetic he may be, it is she who must shoulder the principal problems of pregnancy, the labors of childbirth, and the care and feeding of the child in the early months of its life."* Now it is perhaps too easy to poke at this given how much has changed since 1973. But I find it curious that the judges limit the mother's principal role of care and feeding to early childhood.

There was only one place that could settle this issue: the United States Supreme Court. There was another similar case from Cleveland involving two teachers that was combined with Mrs. Cohen's. The case was argued October 15, 1973 and decided January 21, 1974. Susan Cohen won for the final time. The rationale for the Courts decision is



summarized in the opinion written by Justice Stewart. *"While the medical experts in these cases differed on many points, they unanimously agreed on one—the ability of any particular pregnant woman to continue at work past any fixed time in her pregnancy is very much an individual matter. ...it is evident that there are large numbers of teachers who are fully capable of continuing work for longer than the Cleveland and Chesterfield County regulations will allow."* Chief Justice Burger and Justice Rehnquist dissented. *"... the Court will have to strain valiantly in order to avoid having today's opinion lead to the invalidation of*

mandatory retirement statutes for governmental employees." One small victory for Chesterfield County was that it was found that Cleveland's provisions for maternity leave had more violations.

By the time of her final victory, Susan Cohen was far removed from Virginia. Her husband had a job at Temple University. In July of 1974, there was a an article in *Good Housekeeping* magazine about her, and she appeared on the television show *To Tell The Truth*. Susan Cohen went back to school and received a degree and psychology. She worked as a psychologist in a New Jersey public school system and is now in private practice in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

The two lawyers in the case I spoke to remember it well. It was their only case with the U. S. Supreme Court. Sam Hixon III was gracious, even though he lost the decision. He felt the court did the right thing. John Mann recounted the events to me as if they happened yesterday. Mike Cohen, also knew about the case. I could tell from our discussion that he was proud of what his mother had done.

The ultimate winners of Susan Cohen's battle and those of countless others who have fought for civil rights and women's rights are the generations to follow. I am pleased that history this important began right here in Chesterfield County.

On the Trail of Lincoln: Civil War Historian Visits Chesterfield

Diane Dallmeyer & George L. Fickett, Jr.

Civil War historian Noah Andre Trudeau visited Chesterfield County, on a hunt for nuggets of information about President Abe Lincoln that might have escaped the capture of historians. Trudeau is working on his 9th book on Civil War history, this one on the President's visit to City Point and Point of Rocks; a visit that is poorly documented in public records. Trudeau's hope is that local residents may possess valuable information in their families' archives.

"The Lincoln story is very much a mosaic made up of many little pieces," states Trudeau. While welcoming the input his October visit to Point of Rocks has generated, "As I haven't yet reached March 27 in my narrative, I don't have any sense yet of how the pieces that I do have fit together or what might be missing."

Area residents may be surprised to learn of President Lincoln's tie to Chesterfield a mere three weeks before his death. In an attempt to flesh out the last weeks of the president known as Honest Abe and The Ancient One, Trudeau toured the Point of Rocks area on October 11 with George L. Fickett, Jr., local Bermuda Hundred Campaign historian and preservationist. This was one of the last war sites Lincoln visited in 1865 and Trudeau hopes the visit and its succeeding publicity will help him to complete the book he is writing on Lincoln's last days.

Arriving on a March afternoon on the Greyhound, Abraham and Mary Lincoln had climbed the steep bluff and entered Point of Rocks General Hospital. The Union hospital surgeon's quarters was the house built in 1841 by John Strachan, first Pastor of the Enon Baptist Church and commandeered by Major General Benjamin Butler to serve as his headquarters during the Bermuda Hundred Campaign of 1864. Along with the hospital, the compound contained a Union cemetery and a nearby signal tower into which President Lincoln was raised in an elevator powered by mules.

The hospital was the first posting for Nurse Clara Barton during the beginning of the Siege of Petersburg. There were separate wards later for African-American soldiers of the Twenty-fifth Corps, and white troops of the Twenty-fourth Corps, who had fought in the assaults on Petersburg. Barton oversaw the nursing and diet for these soldiers between June and August, 1864. This huge hospital complex, able to house five thousand men, was used for soldiers' recuperation before returning to fight or before being transferred out to the big hospital at Fort Monroe. It is likely that President and Mrs. Lincoln pressed the palms of many Union patriots during that afternoon visit, and that they'd have walked thru the hospital assessing the real cost of the war. Their afternoon visit included a picnic dinner on a crude bench overlooking the Appomattox River before they departed in late afternoon. Three short weeks later, Lincoln was dead.

Trudeau knows that thousands of people saw the president during his last weeks and many would likely have written about the historic event in letters or memoirs, but this period of time has eluded historic documentation. In addition to viewing in person this important site, the purpose of Trudeau's visit is to expose residents to his project in hopes that personal accounts in their possession may provide documentation he can use in his book.

The book is targeted for the 150th anniversary of the Point of Rocks visit in 2015. "One thing I've learned," states Trudeau, "is to be patient. I'm turning up fascinating little details concerning some aspects of this story, and I expect that the final result will be a decidedly different picture from the one that is standard in histories of the military campaign and Lincoln biographies."

Point of Rocks Park will be the ninth Civil War Park in Chesterfield and will be obtained and developed by the county through partnerships with the American Battlefield Protection Program and the Chesterfield Historical Society. "Few people know that Abraham Lincoln set foot in Chesterfield County," states past CHS President Liess van der Linden-Brusse. "Even fewer realize that he was here to visit with wounded soldier's mere days before he died and weeks before the war came to an end. Another treasured nugget of Chesterfield's history is being saved." And as for the unwritten story of Lincoln? "I believe that the key pieces of the Lincoln puzzle regarding his activities in Virginia from March 24-April 8, 1865 will not come from published sources or from known libraries, archives or newspapers," asserts Trudeau. "They will come from family collections, material kept within a family and rarely shown to outsiders. This is a unique opportunity for anyone with such material to bring it to my attention (via my website) and to possibly have it become a part of the last great Lincoln story of his final days."

"It is a very exciting thing for Chesterfield to receive and develop this historic piece of land," asserts Fickett. "Point of Rocks may be the most important Civil War site in our county and the story of President Lincoln's visit here in 1865 is one that county residents can help write with their family anecdotes, stories or memoirs."

See the video at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k3I8_Okxtc.

An Opportunity to Recapture the Oral Histories of Our African-American Elders

Sarah Gregory and Audrey M. Ross

On February 5, 2011, the Chesterfield County Museum opened its doors to the African-American History Committee's (AAHC) Black History Month exhibit entitled *FourScore and More: Capturing Memories of aged 80 and Older African-Americans in Chesterfield County and their Struggles and Successes Experienced*. This article is a continuation from the July 2012 issue of *The Messenger*.

Dorothy Viney Turner

Born March 13, 1918

Dorothy Harriette Romania Viney Turner was born in Northfork, West Virginia, to Dr. Samuel Andrew Viney, Sr. and Eleanor Lucille Dockery Viney. After her mother's marriage to the late William Randolph Stewart ("Daddy"), a contractor and builder, the family moved to Midlothian, Virginia.



Dorothy finished school in Virginia, and furthered her education in North Carolina and Indiana. At an early age, she joined First Baptist Church of Midlothian, where she taught Sunday School and was active in the Baptist Young People's Union (BYPU), which met at churches throughout Chesterfield County.

Dorothy married Landon C. Turner, Sr., and they were the proud and blessed parents of two children: Landon Charles Turner, Jr. and Eleanor Lucille Turner. She joined the ranks of the Independent Order of St. Luke, and after years of dedicated service, was elected to the position of Executive Director, serving in that capacity until her retirement. Dorothy has always been involved in the civic activities of the community. When her children attended Carver High School in Chester, Virginia, she served as President of the Parent-Teacher Association.

At First Baptist Church of Midlothian, Dorothy has served as pianist and music director for the children's choir; and organized the first annual "Family and Friends Day." She was also the inspiration for and a founding member of Christian Women United, which she envisioned as vital to addressing the Christian concerns and needs of the community. She is a good neighbor and friend. Dorothy is never short on advice, but she is also never short on encouragement, praise, and recognition, always giving the best of her service, and inspiring young people to be the best that they can be.

Mildred Jones Temple

Born October 17, 1928

On a beautiful autumn day in 1926, Mildred became the youngest of nine children born to Richard and Mozelle Jones. As a young child, she walked 2 miles to Winterpock Elementary School where her favorite subject was reading. She especially enjoyed fiction, but in time the Holy Bible became her book of choice.

The county's dentist, Dr. Brown, visited the schools yearly. From all of Chesterfield, he chose Mildred as the student with the most perfect teeth. For this she was showcased in a parade marching to the beat of the Chesterfield County Fair band.



It was a 25-mile trip, she tells us, from her home to Hickory Hill High School from which she graduated in 1946. Determined to continue her education, Mildred enrolled at Saint Paul's College in Lawrenceville, where she received the nickname "Strawberry."

From the time she was a baby in her mother's arms she has attended services at Tabernacle Baptist Church. Adopting the strong religious values of her parents, worship became an integral part of her life. Baptized at

age twelve, she has served for seventy-five years in various positions such as: Sunday school teacher, usher, and diaconate. Mildred retired after having worked thirty years at Lea Industries, eight years at Miller and Rhodes, and another sixteen years at the Virginia State Tax Department. In 1990, her husband of forty years, Charles Edward Temple, passed away. Together they had a wonderful daughter, Delores, who Mildred calls, "the love of her life."

Mrs. Temple's hobbies include caring for her plants, and watching Channel 8 News every day in order to stay abreast of current events. Her life of service includes helping others, being encircled with family, friends, and sharing the good news of Christ to all who will hear. Mildred and her daughter reside together in Chesterfield County enjoying life to the fullest.

Alice Virginia Pettiford Surley

Born July 27, 1922

Born eighty-eight years ago on Woodpecker Road, Alice became one of seven children born to Samuel and Isabella Coleman Pettiford. Alice attended most of the first 3 grades at Henry Williams School in Petersburg while living with her aunt. When she moved back in with her parents she had to walk to Matoaca Lab School. Sadly, Petersburg children were soon cut off from attending the Lab School.

"I walked 10 or more miles to D. Webster Davis High School, going [down] back roads and down 4th Ave. since we [Blacks] were not allowed on Chesterfield Avenue. During bad weather, I stayed overnight with relatives living in the River Road area. I dropped out of school in the 9th grade so I could move in and care for my blind grandmother, Alice Coleman, of Petersburg."



She recalls that her father's cousin, Julius Lee, was owner of the "Chatter Box" in Petersburg. He died when he was nearly 100 and had been one of the first to register to vote in Chesterfield.

Alice sometimes stayed at her cousin's house during the weekends where she learned to sew. "On the 1st and 3rd Sundays we attended church at Union Grove, on the 2nd and 4th at Shiloh. We also went to the Virginia Hall to see end of school year events as well as Church plays. Most of my friends were also relatives; many of them lived on Dupuy Road near the White and Stone House and my Aunt and Uncle Cooley's store."

In 1940, Alice married Irvin McKinley Surley and together they had 10 children. Alice's mother-in-law, Mahetta Knott Surely (a midwife), delivered the first of their eight babies. The last two Surley children were born at Richmond Medical Hospital. Ms. Surley worked in the Virginia State cafeteria. That was when the soldiers lived on campus while Fort Lee was being rebuilt. Later when her children were old enough, she spent 20 years working for Allied Chemical.

Royal Sterling Brown

Born December 16, 1921

Royal Sterling Brown was born in Powhatan County, but grew up in the Hallsboro community of Chesterfield. He was one of 17 children, which included three sets of twins. His father, Major Brown, built houses, including the their family home. The family raised cows, hogs, and chickens, and had a family garden. As children they played in the woods finding nuts and berries, making toys, and playing ball. Chores included slopping the hogs, cutting wood, and gardening.



Royal first attended Centerwood School in Powhatan County, which was founded by his mother (Edna Louise Taylor Brown) and Mrs. Ada Middleton. He recalls, "I did not walk far to school, only a couple of miles." When they moved to Hallsboro, he attended Dry Bridge School, and then Midlothian Elementary School, which offered classes up to the 8th grade. He left school after the 8th grade to work with his father building houses. Not having the opportunity to further his own studies, Royal made a commitment to seeing that his children had a good education.

He joined Hallsboro's Mt. Sinai Baptist Church at age 11. When his family moved to Richmond, Mr. Brown stayed in Hallsboro to help pay off the family debt at Page's Store. He continued to work there for 26 years. In 1942 he enlisted in the Army, serving throughout Italy as a Mess Sergeant for officers. Following his discharge in 1946, he returned to work at Page's Store, but demanded his pay increase to \$20 a week.

He married Queen Isabel Thornton of Powhatan County in 1947. He often testifies: "It is only by the grace of God that we were able to send all four children to college." Mrs. Brown passed away in 2010 after they celebrated their 64th anniversary. Today at age 89, Mr. Brown is still active. He serves as Deacon

at Mt Sinai Baptist Church, and cares for other family members, cuts hair, and farms.

Alma Marie Boisseau Watkins

Born May 10, 1930

At the blessed and vibrant age of 80 years young, Mrs. Alma Marie Boisseau Watkins is a proud "branch of the Boisseau/Watkins

Family Tree and is the youngest of the four remaining offspring, (all of whom are active and vibrant Octogenarians, born to the union of the late Hazel Watkins Boisseau and King Solomon Boisseau, both Chesterfield natives. Alma was delivered by the neighborhood mid-wife in a small modest home by the railroad tracks on Thurston Road near the south end intersection off Hopkins Road in Chesterfield County. She was the eighth of nine children.



Alma attended Kingsland Elementary School located on Chester Road. She often speaks about walking to school with family and friends while learning to read and write along with arithmetic. Despite the early demise of her dear parents, Alma not only completed elementary school, but went on to complete her high school education at the historic George Washington Carver High School as a proud member of 1950 class. She was a member of the Drama Team and the Girl's Basketball Team. Her jovial, sincere personality earned her the nickname "Boom Dr."

Alma remembers the encouragement and religious teachings of her devoted parents. She was industrious, independent, and very stylish young lady who continued to put her faith in God throughout all of life's circumstances. She was gainfully employed at Defense General Supply Center (Bellwood), and after 28 years of dedicated service she graciously retired in 1997. Alma has been a lifelong, faithful member of the First Baptist Church Centralia for approximately 70 years.

Alma was married to the late James Mavis Trent (a Chesterfield native) and God blessed this union with her only son, Gary Douglass Trent. As time moved on she was later united in marriage with the late Leon Watkins of Richmond, VA. Alma is the epitome of a loving mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, auntie and friend. As she gracefully enters her golden years of her 80's, Alma is still revered as a neat, stylish fashion icon with a kind and generous spirit, especially to her family and friends.

Alma now spends her days caring for her son, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and other family members. She loves shopping, constantly beautifying her home, both indoors and outdoors, located on Thurston Road adjacent to her birthplace in Chesterfield County. She attends Bible Study, exercise classes, and enjoys the many blessings that God bestows upon her each and every day. She never fails to proclaim to everyone "God has been good to me!"

Men At War: Confederate Soldiers of Chesterfield County

D. Michal Thomas

Veterans Data Base Committee Sesquicentennial Series

Various studies have determined that Virginia provided about 155,000 men to the Confederate army during the War Between the States, that the vast majority were farmers about 26 years old and most were head of their household. These same studies present a broad look at the men in gray across the Old Dominion and the findings, implications and statistics are quite informative and, often, astounding. For a closer, more detailed study of those men specifically from Chesterfield County, one must turn to the Veterans Data Base compiled and maintained by volunteers of the Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia.

About 2,000 Chesterfield men served in the Confederate army during the war. Perhaps another 100 went to the navy and at least 7 to the marines. The men from Chesterfield are found in a variety of roles in the Confederate army. Most were in the infantry, but others provided faithful service in artillery, cavalry, medical, ordnance, engineer, quartermaster and commissary capacities. Each had his own unique experiences and contributions. An in-depth review of the Veterans Data Base finds many valuable and exciting snippets of their individual service while providing a closer and more defined view of these men and their times. The findings allow a number of conclusions and provide a clear framework with which one can judge and understand their service by standards of their day.

The age of the Chesterfield servicemen ranged from as young as 12 to the late 50's with an average of about 26. About 80% of these men were sworn into service by end of 1862. Most were farmers but there was also a deep pool of skilled labor. After the Battle of First Manassas (July 1861), each side realized the war would continue and began upgrading manufacturing to meet the demands of a lengthy war. The Confederate government set about identifying the various trades needed to implement and maintain the industrial war effort and found many of the men needed for these critical skills to be in the army. Chesterfield units, especially those from or near Manchester, were full of mechanics, wheelwrights, engineers, moulders, shoemakers, steelworkers, railroad workers and others with valued skills. Many were detached from their parent commands to work on government projects. While carried on the rolls of their units for the rest of the war, they never again served in the field. Others were discharged outright from the army to work for the government in their specialty field. No less than 74 Chesterfieldians, including 1 man described as "an artisan", were discharged and permanently removed from the ranks because of the need of their skills and talents.

Carpenters were called on frequently and detached to build winter quarters for the army, hospitals and other buildings. Men with logging or sawyer experience were utilized for extended periods to obtain lumber for government needs. Blacksmiths were an integral part of all branches of the army and many are found serving in this role instead of carrying muskets. Another critical but often underappreciated skill was teamster. The ability to control a team of horses (2, 4, 6 or 8) was in high demand. Skilled teamsters were instrumental to the army on campaign and received an extra 25 cents a day in pay for their service. Many teamsters possessed certain blacksmithing and leatherworking knowledge as well, skills that were coveted by the army. No less than 40 men from Chesterfield served as a teamster at one time or another. A number of men were detached at times to the Quartermaster or Commissary

departments serving in capacities requiring certain clerical skills. About 20 others, good soldiers but lacking physical stamina for service in the field while recovering from wounds or disease, were detached as nurses, stewards or orderlies to various army hospitals, given light duty assisting enrolling officers, or given other less demanding assignments. Some eventually returned to their commands, but others remained in a detached capacity until the war's end. About 350 men are known to have been detached from their parent commands on a temporary basis at least once during the war.

Nearly all the men taken from their commands by discharge for government work or detached duty, whether permanent or temporary, were from infantry units. Combined with battlefield casualties, illnesses and other duties, a company with 100 men on the roster in mid- 1861 was fortunate to have 60 present for muster by the end of 1862.

The soldiers from Chesterfield County were highly literate per evidence within their military service records. A number of these records contain well composed and beautifully written letters from men of all ranks and a larger number contain documents with the soldier's signature, usually with well crafted flourishes. Additionally, many show a man's prewar occupation. The nature of certain occupations such as druggist, engineer, student, lawyer, preacher, physician, and others require literacy. Just 3 men were described as illiterate in their military records and less than 50 have documents marked with an "X" on a signature line. Postwar occupations of others found in census and other records showed additional vocations such as judges, sheriffs and clerks, each clearly requiring the ability to read and write. All told, the literacy rate of Chesterfield soldiers from privates to generals, based on a variety of available records, can be justifiably estimated as approaching 90%.

Chesterfield's soldiers were loyal, stalwart men faithful in their duties and service with less than 100 cases of desertion, a rate of less than 6% based on available records. This rate compares most favorably to the overall 12% rate experienced by both the Union and Confederate armies. Most of these desertions occurred in 1862 when the luster of military life wore off with a smaller surge during the terrible winter of 1864-1865. Other men termed "Deserters" by their regiments were found to have simply left their commands for personal reasons to serve in other units without an authorized transfer. Two men reported as deserting by their commanders were indeed absent from their units, but not by choice- each was taken prisoner while on remote picket duty. One died of disease as a POW and the other spent many long and difficult months as a POW before being released in June 1865.

Recent studies of Virginians who served the Confederacy put to rest allegations that "this was a rich man's war with the poor man doing the fighting and dying." Chesterfield's men came from all classes and all walks of life. Just 22 instances of hiring a substitute are found, all early in the war. Several of these were for young men who were students and most are found to have returned to the army later. Prominent county leaders, judges, politicians, sheriffs and other elected officials served in the army. Sons of privileged families are found as privates serving alongside orphans and laborers. There simply was no sign of class distinction in the ranks, on campaign or in the trenches. A few, just 4 are known, did take body-servants with them, but that didn't ease the hardships, reduce the miles marched, increase the food available or lessen the amount of combat they experienced.

Chesterfieldians, like other Virginians, had certain advantages over those from elsewhere in the South. The army was often within a day or two of travel to their homes and many

took advantage for short visits to see loved ones, tend their crops or take care of other business. Fresh vegetables or other foods, in addition to new clothing such as socks, drawers and shirts, could occasionally be sent them by their families. Heavy blankets from home in the winter were accessible and always welcomed. On the other hand, hundreds were sent home under medical furlough to recuperate from disease or wounds thereby freeing up hospital resources for men from Texas, Florida or elsewhere far from home. At least 18 men died at home under these circumstances. Finally, if killed on the field of battle, their bodies often were claimed by relatives or sent home by their compatriots for burial.

Membership Report

Rachel Lipowicz

Membership stands at 610. We extend a warm welcome to 12 new members this quarter. Mr. & Mrs. John Bernard (Lynn); Mrs. Beverly B. Hundley; Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Jennings (Lois); Ms. J. B. Jones; Mr. Eric Lorentzen; Mr. & Mrs. Terry Petze (Mary); Mr. & Mrs. Fred N. Sollog (Mary); Mr. Vernon Taylor.

And thank you to all of our Business Members: Colonial Honda, Shoosmith Bros., Martins Grocery Stores, Ms. Sandra R. Claytor CPA, Express Auto Center, Howlett's Tavern, Old Stage, O'Charley's, and Patient First

Cemetery

Rachel Lipowicz

The Cemetery Committee is working to compile a list of interments in the old West Matoaca Cemetery. This one-acre burial ground has been abandoned for many years now and is very overgrown in brambles and brush. A former Matoaca resident has begun efforts to clear some of this in order to bring some dignity back to the site. If there are any members who know names of persons interred in the West Matoaca cemetery I hope you will email or call me with that information. If possible, please include the death date. Known burials are listed below. Email me at lipowicz2@verizon.net or just call 804-739-7225.

WEST MATOACA CEMETERY INTERMENTS

Note: dc = death certificate

COSTLEY, Bernard T. May 9, 1941; VA Corp 318 Inf 80 Div
COX, Doris Arlene d. Apr 19, 1929; age 1 year; daughter of Jake & Emma Johnson Cox; dc
DISHMAN, Emmett O. 1857—1931; "Kecoutan Tribe No. 37 Imp'd. O. R. M.
DISHMAN, Metra J. Nov 11, 1892—Jun 16, 1918; "At Rest"
HAMM, Frank W. Dec 11, 1939; VA PVT 1CL 162 Inf 41 Div
HAMM, Mary I. d. Jan 10, 1929; age 70 years; widow of William H. Hamm; dc & obit
HEDGEBETH, Martha A. d. May 1, 1921; wife of Charles C. Hedgebeth; obit
HOLT, Eve Feb 3, 1900—Aug 27, 1900; "Sleep On Sweet Babe/ And Take Thy Rest;/ God Called Thee Home/ He Thought It Best"
HUGGINS, Benjamin Feb 14, 1827—Sep 30, 1916; ds with Sarah W. Huggins
HUGGINS, Sarah W. Mar 12, 1850—Feb 18, 1923; ds with Benjamin Huggins
JOHNSON, Alma no dates; info from family
PERDIE, Harvey 1892—1925; "Gone To A Brighter Home Where Grief Cannot Come"; fs: H. P.
PERDUE, James A. Oct 4, 1908—Nov 19, 1925; "In God We Trust"; "At Rest"

PERDUE, John W. 1883—1926; Kecoutan Tribe No. 37 Imp'd. O. R. M.

PERKINSON, Willie Daniel d. Sep 2, 1924; "Of Such is the Kingdom of Heaven"; dc: d. Sep 5, 1924; son of William & Helen E. Collier Perkinson

TRAYLOR, Willie d. Feb 13, 1937; obit

VAUGHAN, Joseph E. d. Jul 15, 1916; husband of Mattie Walthall Vaughan; obit

WEATHERFORD, Frances L. Coley d. Jul 8, 1928; age 68 years; dc
WOODFIN, Hiram G. d. Jul 3, 1922; age 12 years; son of Mr. & Mrs. Charles W. Woodfin; obit

Fundraising

Peter Lipowicz

I am pleased to thank our donors who have collectively given over \$1500 this quarter. Our total for the year to date is over \$16,000. Thank you for your generosity.

Donations of \$500 or more I also give a special thank you to the late John Royall and Gladys Robertson for their donation of property to the Society made in a deed over 30 years ago. Mr. Robertson was a founding member of the Museum Committee, a charter member of the Society, and a great supporter of Chesterfield history.

Donations of \$100 - \$499 Joyce Smith John Britton George Beadles Philip Morris Retirees Group Buddy & Judy Cranford Tomahawk Ruritan Club

Donations up to \$99 Community Foundation Arline McGuire Spencer Brothers Jim Alberston Doris Hancock Christopher Davis Phyllis Hancock Hazel Cole Elizabeth Daffron Ann Dancy

Pro-Bono Professional Services

Thank you to David Brown CPA for providing accounting services, and Troutman-Sanders for providing legal services.

Anna Atkins, A Chesterfield Bard

Gloria Thysell

Little did I realize when I was asked if I would be willing to undertake an inventory of materials donated to the library by her estate, I was actually being given an opportunity to become a voyeur into the life of Anna Shue Atkins.* Throughout the year I have been reading her diaries, letters, family histories, and countless original poems. Anna Atkins was a hard-working woman from humble beginnings who had always had a desire to write. What she left the county is a treasure of memories from growing up in Appalachia and musings from day-to-day life.

Recently I came across one of her poems recalling a childhood experience. A child of depression-era parents, I had heard many stories of the Great Depression of 1929. Anna shared one of her own memories of the "Hoover Hard Times" in a poem she wrote in 1990 at the age of 71.

"The Edison Phonograph"

Had no horse, had no car
He'd walked from farm auction far
Slung across shoulder, riding down back
Tow sack bulged like Santa's pack.

Hand-held box on other side too
Which he put on a table, gasped, "Wh-oo-h."
Meantime, halfway turning aroun'
Cautiously set the tow sack down.

Aware of poverty's wolf at the door

Mom asked, "What did you waste money for?"
"Got us an Edison!" was the reply,
With a smiling face and a twinkling eye.

Spending money, Mom didn't condone.
"Yep," Dad continued, "Got us a gramophone."
He removed the lid from the box-of-a-thing
Found a handle and wound up the spring.

He opened the tow sack for all to see
A huge red funnel – like a Morning Glor-ee.
Like when a peddler opened his sack
Awe struck, "Us kids", all stood back.

He pulled the Morning Glory out and said
"Lay this horn over on the bed,"
While deeper into the pack he prods
And fetches out two short, shiny rods.

"What," ask I, meek and shy,
"Is a gramophone?" In reply
With a grin, "A talkin' machine
For you, Anna, Daphene, and Irene."

Dipping farther into the pack
Withdrew black pipes from the sack,
Wiped the dust off on his sleeve,
And onto a cylinder put one of these.

Released the brake and 'round it went.
Amazed, we listened and all ears lent
To the Edison.
A wonder, he did invent!

"My darling Snow, dear
Say you will go dear
Let us not t'tarry here
My sweet Snow, dear."

This song was the first record tried.
"More, more," "us kids" cried.
He taught us to play it each and all
"Careful, don't drop or let it fall."

The wolf oft knocked at the door.
We did not know that we were poor.
We toted water from the spring.
The Johnny-house was down the lane.

We used kerosene lamps for light
And early hit the feather bed at night.
We played our Edison. It was a joy.
And for poor children – quite a toy!

We went to college and to war.
The house burned down in '54.
Alas! The contents burned galore
And the Edison was no more.

*Anna Atkins and her husband Paul donated their property on Courthouse Road to the County to protect their land from future development and to preserve the natural resources. Thirty percent of this property will become Atkins Acres Community Park. The rest will remain in its natural state.

2013 Winter Lecture Series

presented by the Chesterfield Historical Society of Virginia

All lectures take place Fridays at 7 p.m. at the Lucy Corr Village Community Hall, 6800 Lucy Corr Blvd., Chesterfield.
Admission is free for Historical Society members and \$5 for non-members. Reservations are recommended.
Call 804-796-7121 to reserve a seat.

January 11

"PATRICK HENRY:
THE VOICE OF LIBERTY"
portrayed by
William Young, author
and historic impersonator



January 25

"THE HOME FRONT AND
THE CONFEDERATE WAR EFFORT"
by Bert Dunkerly,
National Park Service ranger



February 8

"HISTORIC FOREST HILL"
by Nancy Kraus, historian



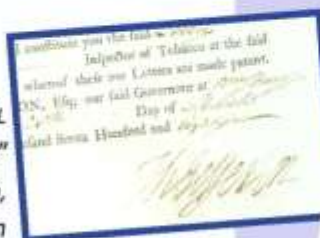
February 22

"WHY TUSKEGEE?
PRESERVING THE TUSKEGEE
AIRMEN LEGACY"
by Silas H. Christian III,
Petersburg TAI Chapter



March 8

"COLLECTING HISTORICAL
AUTOGRAPHS"
by Randall Welch,
historian



March 22

"MAJ. GEN. EDWARD
'OLD ALLEGHANY' JOHNSON,
CHESTERFIELD'S SENIOR
CONFEDERATE OFFICER"
by Gregg S. Clemmer, author



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Current Occupant or:

CHS Events Calendar

Permanent Exhibit: "Protecting our Citizens: A History of Law & Order in Chesterfield County."

January 2013

11th, Fri, 7pm
12th, Sat, 2-4pm
19th, Sat, 8-10pm
25th, Fri, 7pm
27th, Sun, 1:30pm

Winter Lecture: "Patrick Henry – The Voice of Liberty" by interpreter Bill Young (*Lucy Corr Senior Village*)
Civil War 150th – Butler's Offensive (*Point of Rocks Park*), \$8, Register online with PayPal
Spirited History Paranormal Tour of 1917 *Chesterfield Courthouse Green*, \$20, Register online with PayPal
Winter Lecture: "The Home Front & the Confederate War Effort" by Bert Dunkerly *Lucy Corr Senior Village*
CHSV Members Quarterly Lunch Meeting (*Capri Italian Grill*, \$22/person, Reservations required)

February

Thursdays, 10am-2pm
8th, Fri, 7pm
9th, Sat, 10-11am
16th, Sat, 9am-2pm
22nd, Fri, 7pm
23rd, Sat, 7-9pm

Heirloom Seed Exchange Open (*Castlewood*) (804) 768-0616
Winter Lecture: "Historic Forest Hill" by Nancy Kraus (*Lucy Corr Senior Village*)
Mid-Lothian Mines Park Tour #26242, \$8, Register: (804)748-1623
Black History Month Symposium "Civil War to Civil Rights" (*VSU*) Free
Winter Lecture: "Tuskegee Airmen" by Silas Christian (*Lucy Corr Sr. Village*)
Paranormal Investigation Technique 102 Workshop (*Magnolia Grange*), \$10, Register online with PayPal

March

Thursdays, 10am-2pm
2nd, Sat, 10-11am
8th, Fri, 7pm
16th, Sat, Noon-4pm
22nd, Fri, 7pm
30th, Sat, 10am-2pm
30th, Sat, 7-9pm

Heirloom Seed Exchange Open (*Castlewood*) (804)768-0616
Eppington Plantation Tour #26238, \$8, Register: (804)748-1623
Winter Lecture: "Historic Autographs" by Randall Welch (*Lucy Corr Senior Village*)
Falling Creek Ironworks Day, CHSV Info Table, Free
Winter Lecture: "Gen Ed Johnson" by author Gregg Clemmer (*Lucy Corr Senior Village*)
Civil War 150th – 1864 Bermuda Hundred Campaign Van Tour (*Henricus Park*), \$15, Register online
Paranormal Workshop 101: Memorial Photography (*Magnolia Grange*), \$10, Register online with PayPal

April

6th, Sat, Noon-3pm
13th, Sat, 9am-1pm
20th, Sat, 10am-2pm
20th, Sat, 11am-5pm
27th, Sat, 10-11am
28th, Sat, 8-10pm
21st, Sun, 2pm

"Confederate History & Heritage Day" (*1917 Courthouse*), Free
"Chesterfield Antiques Evaluation" Fundraiser (*Providence Middle School*)
Civil War 150th – Howlett Line Van Tour (*Henricus Park*), \$15, Register online with PayPal
"Celebration of the Vine" (*1917 Courthouse Green*) CHSV Info Table
Falling Creek Ironworks Tour #26240, \$8, Register: (804)748-1623
Spirited History Paranormal Tour of 1917 *Chesterfield Courthouse Green*, \$20, Register online with PayPal
CHSV Members Quarterly Meeting (*Mt. Hermon Baptist Church*)