

President's Message

Welcome to a New Season with TVHS!

Dear Members and Friends,

As summer fades, fall brings a lineup across our four mission areas – as advocates for history, archaeology, preservation, and culture – featuring engaging bus trips (Prosecco included!), exclusive Century and Lifetime Member gatherings, and programs celebrating America's 250th.

We kick off in September with a Members-Only bus trip to Historic French's Tavern. In October and November, join us at the Kimball Theatre for Sunday programs. And capping off the year the board will also host a special event for Lifetime and Century Members; if you're not yet one, see the Membership Corner to consider upgrading.

Coming this fall: a refreshed website with updated program info, event photos, newsletter archives, and online options to pay event fees, join or renew, and register for 2026.

Spring 2025 highlights: talks by Dr. Rebecca Brannon and Brendan Burke, plus a sold-out Virginia Beach trip—many thanks to Co-Program Directors Jane Eng and Diana Freeman.

We need You! Volunteer to help out with membership, events, photography, newsletter, and much more. Your support sustains our mission to preserve, explore, and celebrate Tidewater Virginia's heritage through history, archaeology, and cultural preservation.

I can't wait to reconnect this fall.

Warm regards,
Paige Jessee, President

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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SEPT

24

Members Only: Historic French's Tavern Bus Trip

OCT

5

TVHS Sunday Lecture Series: John Rother

NOV

2

TVHS Sunday Lecture Series: Dr. Julie King

MAR

1

TVHS Sunday Lecture Series: Mark Edward Lender

APR

12

TVHS Sunday Lecture Series: TBD

MAY

?

Spring Bus Trip - Details Coming Soon!

What's Happening this Fall

Members Only Trip

Wednesday, September 24, 2025
Historic French's Tavern, Powhatan, VA

Step back in time on a rare tour of a privately owned 18th-century residence and garden, meticulously restored and listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and recognized as a National Historic Landmark.

Originally Swan's Creek Plantation, the site served travelers between Richmond, the Piedmont, and the Shenandoah Valley as an inn, tavern, and general store. Under Thomas Jefferson's ownership it became Indian Camp. Renamed French's Tavern after Hugh French acquired it in 1807, the home endures as a vivid window into early American life and architecture.

Our visit features a "young Thomas Jefferson" interpreter; and historian-author Rebecca Suerdieck demonstrating 18th-century cooking and sharing recipes in the rebuilt kitchen recently reconstructed near the original footprint by University of Tennessee archaeology staff and students. Lunch is from the beloved County Seat Restaurant, known for Southern hospitality. This TVHS **Members-Only** trip is a rare opportunity! Deadline to register: **Friday, September 12**



[Register Now!](#)



Sunday Lecture Series



Sunday, October 5, 2025 2:00PM

John Rothert, The Virginia Canals and Navigations Society
The Hidden History of the James River Batteaux
The Kimball Theatre

Discover a little-known chapter of Virginia's transportation history! While deep-sea vessels from the Tidewater are well documented, the flat-bottomed batteaux that once navigated Virginia's inland rivers were nearly forgotten—until an incredible archaeological find in the 1980s changed everything. During construction in downtown Richmond, the remains of 18th-century batteaux and canal artifacts were unearthed at the site of the old James River and Kanawha Canal turning basin. This rediscovery sparked new interest in Virginia's river heritage and inspired the now 40-year-old James River Batteau Festival.

Don't miss this engaging look at the history, rise, and revival of inland navigation in the Commonwealth.

[Register Now!](#)





Photo Credit: Catherine Dye

Sunday, November 2, 2025 2:00 PM

**Dr. Julie King, Professor of Anthropology,
St. Mary's College of Maryland**

Mapping the Dragon: An Indigenous History of Bacon's Rebellion

The Kimball Theatre

Step into the shadows of the past with Dr. King as she unveils her latest archaeological discoveries in the Dragon Swamp, nestled along the southern edge of Middlesex County.

In this compelling lecture, Professor King will explore the untold impact of Bacon's Rebellion on the Native American tribes of Virginia's Middle Peninsula. Discover how the 1676 uprising led by Nathaniel Bacon shook the colonial government with attacks on both Jamestown and nearby Native Americans. As a result the Rappahannock people sought refuge in the remote landscape of Dragon Swamp. Join Dr. King as she shares how her team has been uncovering clues of the Rappahannocks' presence in the swamp, offering new insights into this turbulent chapter of American history.

Register Now!



Membership Updates

As a gentle reminder, our membership begins in January and ends in December (unless you are a Lifetime member).

Membership Options:

- **Individual** – \$40
- **Couple** – \$60 (2 people in the same household)
- **Family** – \$75 (3+ people in the same household)
- **Student** – \$15 (College students or high school seniors)
- **Century** – \$100 (Individual membership + an invitation to our exclusive annual event)
- **Lifetime** – \$500 (One-time payment for a lifetime membership + exclusive annual event invite)

Century and Lifetime Members -you have a separate check-in line for any TVHS event, PLUS 2 guest passes for TVHS Sunday Lecture (a \$20 value) every year, PLUS reserved seating for all TVHS events. Our Century and Lifetime Annual Event will be announced on Sunday, October 5, at our 2:00 program at the Kimball Theatre.

Guests and non-members are required to pay a \$10 fee to attend programs and an additional \$25 fee on top of the cost for any bus trip. If you're bringing friends along, encourage them to join TVHS. The benefits add up quickly!

We mourn the loss of two dear members: Rick Short, husband of our former president Sharon Short, and Debbie Olien, wife of David Olien. Prayers go out to the families.

May 25' Membership Stats

Total Memberships: 101

Total Members: 146

New Members (Since May):

- Lee Wolff-Silver
- Terri and Timothy Cordle
- Mary Ann Cody
- Janet Earnest
- Diane Donohue

Pay your 2026 Membership Dues by January 1st!

Pay by Check:

TVHS
P.O. BOX 427
Williamsburg, VA 23187
ATTN: Melissa McCue

New! Pay Online:

Pay Now!



Website Updates

We're excited to share that paying your dues just got easier! Our updated Membership page is now live, giving you the option to pay online in just a few clicks. Simply click this link, select your membership level, check out as a guest by filling out the form, and choose the membership year you're renewing. Plus, you can now pay online for any programs you register for! Explore our upcoming programs here and enjoy the convenience of quick, secure online payments.

[New Membership Page](#)



Board of Directors

President: Paige Atkinson Jessee

Vice President: Ben Arney

Treasurer: Melissa McCue

Secretary: Ellen Peters

Membership Director: Janie Moyers

Program Director: Jane Eng

Program Director: Diana Freeman

Partnerships/Publicity: Carl Bass

Members at Large:

James Dean

Carl Lounsbury

Sherri Phillips

Fred Siegel

Jeannie Takesian

Board Member Emeritus:

Forrest Morgan



May 7, 2025 Virginia Beach Bus Trip

"On May 7th a busload of TVHS members went to Virginia Beach to tour several historic sites. We visited the Cape Henry Lighthouse, the Adam Thoroughgood House, the Lynnhaven House, and my personal favorite, Ferry Plantation, where we learned from a fabulous storyteller the story of Grace Sherwood, the Witch of Pungo. Although I have lived in this area for almost sixty years, my knowledge of Virginia Beach had previously been the ocean front, concert venues, and good seafood restaurants. That is the beauty of TVHS. It takes us places we would normally not go on our own."

*Bobby Sue Silvey
Members since 2015*



Bobby Sue Silvey
Bob Zoglman

Please be advised that photographs and/or videos may be taken at Tidewater Virginia Historical Society programs, events, and trips for use in the Society's informational, historical, and marketing materials, social media, and other publications. By participating in these events, you consent to the use of your image and likeness.