



Isle of Wight County Museum & Isle of Wight County Historic Resources



April 2023 Report

J.L. England, Museum Director & Isle of Wight County Historic Resources Manager

Isle of Wight County Museum 103 Main Street, Smithfield

- **VISITATION:** 693

- **SPECIAL EVENTS**

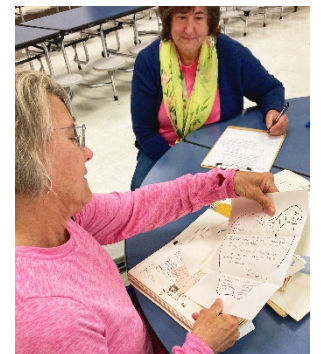
- **April 5. Historic Wharf Hill Signage Ribbon Cutting.** In conjunction with Historic Smithfield, the sign at the base of Wharf Hill was rewritten and redesigned to be more reflective of the history in that location and to be more structurally sound. Signage was installed, and a ribbon cutting was held.



- **April 16. Virginia Honey: A Sweet History.** Honeybees have been a part of Virginia's history since they arrived with the first European colonists. They were Jamestown's valuable addition and served as homefront heroes when world wars caused sugar shortages. In recent years, mead has seen a resurgence along with beekeeping. Join author Virginia Johnson to hunt escaped swarms flying wild in the forests, visit modern-day observation hives and follow the mead path across the Commonwealth for a taste of history. Other buzzing surprises await this fascinating lecture and perhaps a few samples. Ms. Johnson's book will be available for purchase in the museum's gift shop. 25 guests & bees.



- **April 27. Share Your Memories of Hardy Elementary School.** As part of the final walk-throughs scheduled for the circa-1961 Hardy Elementary before demolition in June, students, staff and members of the public are invited to bring items reflecting their memories of the school and their time there. The Isle of Wight County Museum will attend these two events to scan or document those items for the museum's collection. Of particular interest are photographs, cards, fliers, homework, programs, school menus, textbooks, patches, report cards and spirit items. Many guests.



- **LIVESTREAMING EVENTS.** We continue to connect to visitors, supporters, fans and the community via social media. Our livestreaming tours and programs on Facebook are driving traffic and enhancing interaction on our sites. Events this month, still viewable in the videos section of our Facebook page, include:

- **April 4. LIVE at 12:05: Mercantilism.** Today, the economy of Virginia and the U.S. is based on Capitalism but colonial Virginia experienced Mercantilism as its primary economic theory. A Mercantile economy typically focuses on exports to a mother country and is closely tied to colonialism. England expected its colonies to provide important goods, especially natural resources like lumber, naval stores, tobacco and more.
- **April 6. LIVE at 12:05: Barracks Building at Carrollton-Nike Park.** Director Jennifer England was on location today inside the former 1954 barracks building at Carrollton Nike Park,





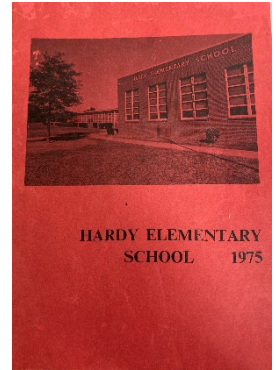
A dark, irregularly shaped object, possibly a piece of wood or bone, with a small metal tag attached to one end. The tag has some text on it, including "MUSEUM" and "1880".

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	Curtain	23	Buttons	
	The Smithfield Packing Company, Inc. Smithfield, Virginia Luter's Genuine Smithfield Hams Bacon - Sigsbee			
No. G 27417		Shipped Date		7/27/49
To		To		
ADDRESS		ADDRESS		
CITY		CITY		
STATE		STATE		
ZIP		ZIP		
DATE		DATE		
CARRIER		CARRIER		
CLASS		CLASS		
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TERMS		TERMS		
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- **BEHIND THESE WALLS**

- People, objects and places all tell stories, and it is the history of a community that shows its unique character. This video series, launched in 2020, allows some of the county's most interesting structures to share their stories. On April 20, video and interviews were collected for the **former library** on South Church Street in Smithfield. This episode will air in May. View all episodes in this series on the museum's YouTube Channel, Facebook page or website. YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RKfQqNu8tVY>.

- **GROUPS/TOURS/PROGRAMS**

- **April 4. Mineral Springs Baptist Church**, Roanoke, Va. 45 guests.
- **April 13. Smithfield Shakespeare Class**, Smithfield. 12 guests.
- **April 17. Noble Care**, Suffolk. 5 guests.
- **April 17. Country Travel Discoveries**, Wisconsin. 32 guests.
- **April 21. Country Travel Discoveries**, Wisconsin. 38 guests.



- **GIFT SHOP**

- Resin pig magnets are a new addition, \$2.95 each, while Wight Salt was re-ordered.



- **EXHIBIT/PROJECT UPDATE**

- **Taste of Smithfield Cookbook.** The republication of this 1978 cookbook – in conjunction with the Isle of Wight County Museum Foundation – is underway. A proof is anticipated from the printer in April.
- **Sprigg Wing, Phase II: Crops, Trade & Merchants.** A new timeline as well as exhibits about colonial businesses, the tobacco industry and mills are in production. Isle of Wight County General Services designed and installed a shingled roofline above a corner case.
- **First Residents.** This exhibit space will be complete once our longleaf pine tree's branches are mounted.
- **Civil War Trails.** New signage for Fort Huger and Fort Boykin is in production.
- **Local Treasures.** Currently on display is the collection of **Robert Cox** which showcases artifacts recovered from one of Isle of Wight County's early courthouses, the **Mount Holly Courthouse**. Artifacts date to the 1600s and include coins, buttons, leather ornaments, pottery and harmonica reeds. This exhibit concept displays the private collections of Isle

of Wight County residents and/or those with a connection to the area. For more information and applications: www.historicisleofwight.com/local-treasures.html.

- **English Telephone Box.** The phone box in front of the Bank of Southside Virginia is part of the Isle of Wight County Museum's collection. Dishman Fabrications LLC of Yorktown repaired and media blasted the box, and it was returned to its permanent location in April. Once the door and glass installation are complete, a reception and/or ribbon-cutting will be organized.
- **Steamboats & Life on the Water; Colonial Isle of Wight; Unusual Objects.** Under development.
- **Online Exhibits Under Development:** Vietnam War Veterans in Isle of Wight County, Unsung Heroes of Isle of Wight County.
- **ISLE Be Home for Christmas.** This book project is collecting photographs, postcards, stories, mementos, songbooks, recipes and more that detail the holiday season in Isle of Wight County. This book will be published in November 2023.
- **ARTIFACTS**
 - On April 26, the James River Institute for Archaeology returned four boxes of 17th century artifacts from their investigative analysis project of Basse's Choice/Site 44IW0013.
 - Objects added to the museum collection include photographs, documents, tools, a bee skep, a retractable pen featuring the image of the First Pig of Virginia and receipts.
- **STAFF TRAINING AND REQUIREMENTS**
 - April 18. Town of Smithfield staff meeting.



Financials

● Gift Shop Sales (including tax):	\$ 1,426.35
● Donations:	\$ 304.00
● Admission:	\$ 902.00
● Program/Lecture Fees:	\$ 0.00
Total Monthly Deposit:	\$ 2,632.35

Social Media/Online Presence

- Visit our website at www.historicisleofwight.com or www.hamcamva.com.

- **LIVE at 12:05.** Each Tuesday and Thursday, we host pop-up broadcasts on the museum's Facebook page. These programs were seen on the Ham Cam, but since COVID-19, programs and livestreaming from Facebook make these programs more mobile. Our segments – shot in the museum or at any of our historic sites - highlight events at the museum, announcements or artifacts from our collection. Tune in each Tuesday and Thursday at 12:05 p.m. on the museum's Facebook page to learn a bit about local history.



- **Facebook:** Isle of Wight County Museum: 3.4K likes and 3.8K followers. Daily posts.
- **Facebook:** World's Oldest Ham: 211/223 likes/followers. Semi-weekly posts.
- **Facebook:** Town of Smithfield. Periodic posts, responses and maintenance.
- **Twitter.** @WorldsOldestHam. The world's oldest ham has his own account. 1,362 followers.
- **Instagram.** @Isleofwightcountymuseum. 1,088 followers.
- **YouTube.** Isle of Wight County Museum. 57 subscribers.
- **Google Reviews.** 4.7/5 overall rating.
- **TripAdvisor.** 4.5/5 star overall rating.
- **Yelp.** 4.5/5 star overall rating.
- **Foursquare/Swarm.** 7.3/10 rating.

Media Coverage/Promotion/Advertising/Lobbying

- Various pieces in area publications to include calendars and events.
- **April 10. Destination Virginia.** Article/Video/Social Media: Isle of Wight County Museum - <https://www.yurview.com/sponsored-post/isle-of-wight-county-museum>.
- **April 12. Smithfield Times.** Article: Liftoff: Westside students learn rocketry at former missile base; Cutline: Wharf Hill's history documented.
- **April 18. WTKR News 3.** Meteorologist Myles Henderson interviewed museum staff for several upcoming packages. Airtimes TBA.
- **April 21. Smithfield Times.** Article: Country ham – Luter-style - <https://www.smithfieldtimes.com/2023/04/21/country-ham-luter-style>.
- **April 21. Windsor Weekly.** Article: Reflecting on pop culture in the Atomic Age - <https://www.windsorweekly.com/2023/04/21/reflecting-on-pop-culture-in-the-atomic-age>.



Outreach Lectures & Events

- **April 6. Grace Church, Yorktown.** Topic: Cemetery preservation. 10 guests.
- **April 11. Isle of Wight County Parks and Recreation Spring Break Camp, Carrollton-Nike Park.** Topic: Cold War history and its influence on pop culture, specifically B-list monster movies. 28 kids.
- **April 12. Isle of Wight County Parks and Recreation Spring Break Camp, Windsor Town Center.** Topic: Cold War history and its influence on pop culture, specifically B-list monster movies. 20 kids.
- **April 18. Main Street Baptist Preschool, Smithfield.** Topic: Earth Day. 14 students.
- **April 19. Warwick County Historical Society, Newport News.** Topic: Cemetery Preservation. 35 guests.



- **April 19. Warwick County Historical Society, Newport News.** Topic: Assistance and training with PastPerfect, collection management software. 3 members.
- **April 20. Carrollton Elementary School, The Learning Center.** Topic: Earth Day. 18 students and 2 teachers.
- **April 21. Hardy Elementary School, The Learning Center, Session 1.** Topic: Earth Day. 18 students and 3 teachers.
- **April 21. Hardy Elementary School, The Learning Center, Session 2.** Topic: Earth Day. 18 students and 3 teachers
- **April 21. Hardy Elementary School, Multiple Disabilities.** Topic: Earth Day. 4 students and 3 teachers.
- **April 28. Hardy Elementary School, Community Walk-Through.** Document scanning and outreach. Many guests.



Windsor Castle 705 Cedar Street, Smithfield

- **April 2. Walking Tour.** From the site's pre-colonial existence to the present day, Windsor Castle tells the fascinating history of the development of Smithfield. Join us for this walking tour through history as we explore the house and several of the outbuildings. Meet on the front steps of Windsor Castle, 301 Jericho Road, Smithfield. \$5 per person. To reserve your spot: www.windsorcastlepark.com/walkingtours.html. 5 guests.



Fort Boykin 7410 Fort Boykin Trail, Isle of Wight County

- No updates.

Fort Huger 15080 Talcott Terrace, Isle of Wight County

- Improvements to the park entrance sign as well as a replacement of the Captain John Smith Trail sign are in progress.
- **April 8. Walking Tour.** Visit this Civil War fort and learn the significance of this gateway to the Confederate capital. Tour meets at Fort Huger, 15080 Talcott Terrace, Smithfield. 7 guests.



Nike-Carrollton Park

13036 Nike Park Road, Carrollton

- **Nike-Ajax Missile Restoration**
 - Isle of Wight County Public Utilities is at work on the site plan for the missile.
 - Repairs were made April 25 by Big Daddy Edwards Welding and Repair LLC. With 3D scanning and printing, they fabricated the two missing radio antennae. Additionally, they repaired the guidance fins and several cracks.
- **Signage.** The replacement of four panels of interpretive signage regarding the former Nike-Ajax missile battery (N-75L) as well as Jones Creek (N-75C) are in production.
- **April 6. Westside Elementary School.** Staff and volunteers were on-site for lectures and a guided tour of this former U.S. Army missile base during this day of Cold War history, Nike-Ajax missiles and rocketry. Four classes of sixth graders.
- **April 22. Walking Tour.** Visit Nike-Ajax Missile Site N-75L, one of the Cold War's few surviving Army Air-Defense Posts. Local historian Albert Burckard, along with former missile mechanic Ira Abbott, hosts a short presentation and a walking tour of this site which contains the original barracks, mess hall, administration and recreation building, officer/non-commissioned officer family housing, fueling area and underground missile magazines. Event begins in the Recreation Hall (former soldier barracks) at Nike Park, 13036 Nike Park Road, Carrollton. 14 guests.



Boykin's Tavern, 1820 Clerk's Office & Isle of Wight County Court House Complex

17146 Monument Circle, Isle of Wight County

- Boykin's Tavern Visitors: 9
- April 19. Museum staff cleaned the exhibit spaces of Boykin's Tavern.

Meetings

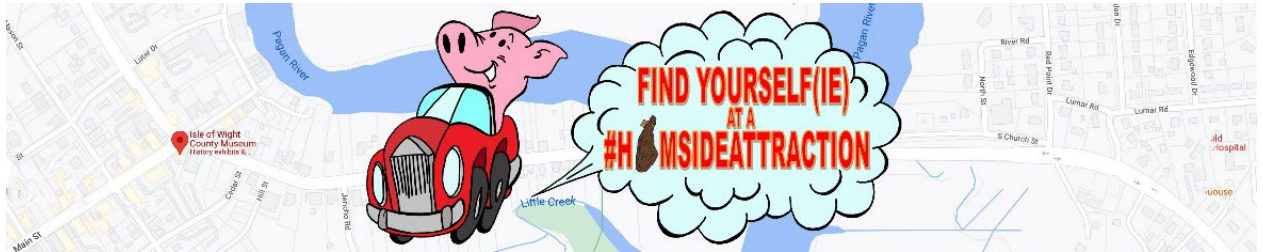
- **April 5. Peninsula Museums Forum.** Zoom meeting.
- **April 20. CivicPlus.** Zoom meeting regarding Town of Smithfield's website.
- **April 26. Blackwater Regional Library.** Regarding digitization, programing, documents and partnership projects.
- **April 27. Wight Salt of Newport, Isle of Wight, United Kingdom, and Isle of Wight County Department of Economic Development.** Zoom meeting regarding development of product and marketing opportunities.
- **April 27. City of Newport News Boards & Volunteers.** Reception at the Mariners' Museum, Newport News.

Other Events & Notable Information

- **Volunteer Hours:** 101
- **Ivy Hill Cemetery.** Provided promotion for Ivy Hill Cemetery's walking tour on April 8.
- **Closed.** The museum was closed on Easter, Sunday, April 9.
- **April 13. Evacuation Assembly Center Activation Training with Isle of Wight County Department of Emergency Management.**
- **April 14. Calvert Marine Museum, Solomons, Maryland.** Reception for James Adams Floating Theatre exhibit. Museum staff provided images and research for this temporary installation. Museum volunteer attended the reception.
- **April 28-30. Isle of Wight County Springfest.** Museum staff, as a member of the Isle of Wight County Fair Committee, provided all voiceover announcements for the event.
- **Virginia American Revolution 250 Commission.**
 - No updates.



- **Virginia History Day.** Museum volunteer served as a judge for Virginia History Day state competition on April 29, held at the Virginia Science Museum in Richmond. Virginia History Day is the **state affiliate of National History Day**, a project-based learning program for students grades 4-12.
- **Virginia Tourism Corporation Small Business Marketing Leverage Grant.** This month, social media advertising continues. Further promotion included one campaign email. Visit our campaign landing page here: <https://www.historicisleofwight.com/find-yourselfie-at-a-hamside-attraction.html>.



Safety

- All staff reminded of Distracted Driving Awareness Month.
- April 12. Town of Smithfield Safety Committee meeting.

Selections from Our Website and Social Media



World's Oldest Ham @Worldsoldestham · Apr 17
#InternationalHaikuPoetryDay

...

I'm just an old ham
Preserved in a museum
Awaiting your visit



World's Oldest Ham @Worldsoldestham · Apr 25

Instead of taking a bite out of the Big Apple, Stuart and Sally Henley of Glen Falls, N.Y., visited and took a bite of [#3dprinted](#) me! [#newfriends](#) [#ILoveVisitors](#)



World's Oldest Ham @Worldsoldestham · Apr 27

Sometimes time is surreal.

And sometimes you sport your Salvador Dalí-inspired Cartier Crash.

[@Cartier](#) [#WhatTimeIsIt](#)

