



Town of Smithfield

Isle of Wight County Museum



November 2019 Report

J.L. England, Museum Director

Notable

- Volunteer hours: 88
- The museum was closed on Thursday, Nov. 28, for Thanksgiving.

Museum Stats and Updates

- Visitation: 698
- Special Events
 - **Nov. 10. District Senior Advisor: Service in Vietnam and Beyond.** 2 p.m. As the nation commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War, the museum will host Smithfield resident Al Coke who served in Vietnam from 1967 to 1968 and from 1969 to 1970. After completing training with the District Senior Advisor's Program, he and other graduates



- discovered that this program trimmed assimilation time from their service in Vietnam. Training in language, weapons and State Department fundamentals were essential at the beginnings of the Pacification Program which aimed at turning over the war to the Vietnamese. Veterans are encouraged to join us and share some of their Vietnam memories. The museum is a United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration Partner and will offer official lapel pins to Vietnam veterans at this event. 23 guests.
- **Nov. 14. Tell Me a Story.** 10 a.m. This program, geared for children ages 3 to 5, introduces youngsters to the symbols of Isle of Wight County and features books, songs and games. Theme: Thanksgiving. 21 students.
 - **Nov. 17. A Vital Connection: The James River Bridge.** 2 p.m. Opened November 17, 1928, the James River Bridge has linked Warwick-Newport News to Isle of Wight County for 91 years. This look-back examines life before the bridge, when colonial ferries and steamers served this purpose. The historical journey continues with dedication of the original crossing and construction of the present one. 33 guests.
 - **Nov. 22. Happy Birthday, Benjamin Huger!** 12:30 p.m. Join us for this lecture about the life of Benjamin Huger, 1805-1877, the career U.S. Army ordnance officer who fought with distinction during the Mexican-American War and served as a Confederate general during the Civil War. Isle of Wight County's Fort Huger is named for him. Also here to help us celebrate will be the Blackwater Regional Library. 5 guests.

- Groups/Tours/Programs

- Nov. 2. Girl Scout Troop 759, Chesapeake. 8 members.
- Nov. 6. Solitaires, Williamsburg. 19 guests.
- Nov. 6. Virtual Curation Lab, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond. Their visit included a tour, the scanning of some of our artifacts and the delivery of our full-sized 3D World's Oldest Ham. 5 guests.
- Nov. 14. Noble Care, Portsmouth. 2 guests.
- Nov. 22. Special Needs students from Smithfield and Windsor High School. 15 students.
- Nov. 25. Suffolk Christian Academy, Suffolk. 53 students.
- Nov. 26. 2nd graders, Windsor Elementary School. 110 students.



- Gift Shop.

- No update.

- Exhibit/Project Update

- **English Telephone Box.** The phone box in front of the Bank of Southside Virginia belongs to the Isle of Wight County Museum. It is in need of repairs, media blasting and paint. Funding has been attained. Dishman Fabrications LLC of Yorktown has already taken delivery of the phone box door and will take the rest to their shop for work soon.
- **Dr. Purdie's Papers.** This book will be published in conjunction with the Isle of Wight County Museum Foundation. In production.
- **Steamboats.** In progress.
- **Replacement of the Sign on the Building's Exterior.** In progress.
- **Orientation Film in the Museum's Theatre.** Script written. In production.
- **Online Exhibits Under Development:** Vietnam War Veterans in Isle of Wight County, Unsung Heroes of Isle of Wight County.

- Artifacts

- On Nov. 13, our bust of Benjamin Huger was sent out for conservation.
- A Nike-Ajax lithograph was donated to us.
- While not an artifact, a guest donated a LCD projector to us. The Isle of Wight County IT Department will install it permanently in the museum's basement for programming.



- Staff Training/Requirements
 - Nov. 6. Coaching & Performance Management for Supervisors by the Town of Smithfield Human Resources Director.
 - Nov. 20. Diversity Issues in the Workplace. Presented by the Virginia Risk Sharing Association.

Financials

• Gift Shop Sales (including tax):	\$ 1,104.70
• Donations:	\$ 88.00
• Admission:	\$ 690.00
• Program/Lecture Fees:	\$ 306.00
Total Monthly Deposit:	\$ 2,188.70

Social Media/Online Presence

- Visit our website at www.historicisleofwight or www.hamcamva.com.
- **LIVE at 12:05.** Each Tuesday and Thursday, we host pop-up broadcasts on our Ham Cam. Our segments highlight events at the museum, announcements or artifacts from our collection. Tune in each Tuesday and Thursday at 12:05 p.m. to see what we're doing: www.hamcamva.com. **If you miss these broadcasts, they are available for viewing on our Facebook page.**
- **Facebook:** Isle of Wight County Museum: 2,116 likes and 2,195 followers. Daily posts.
- **Facebook:** World's Oldest Ham: 171 likes and 174 followers. Semi-weekly posts.
- **Twitter.** @WorldsOldestHam. The world's oldest ham has his own account. 718 followers.
- **Instagram.** @Isleofwightcountymuseum. 368 followers.
- **Google Reviews.** 4.6/5 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 about our walking tours and special events.
- Nov. 3. *Daily Press* and *Virginian Pilot*. Cutline: Nike missile moving to Isle of Wight - <https://www.dailypress.com/cities/hampton/dp-nw-hampton-iow-nike-missile-20191102-3y3ehoo4b5evthx4w3mkym1bfy-photogallery.html>.
- Nov. 4. *The Post and Courier*. Keeper of the world's oldest ham has ham-buying ideas for Charleston area holiday hostess - https://www.postandcourier.com/food/forked_path/keeper-of-the-world-s-oldest-ham-has-ham-buying/article_5cff7604-fa8e-11e9-aceb-1f9e8630311b.html.
- Nov. 15. *Hotels4Teams*. Blog post: Roadside Attractions in All 50 States - <https://www.hotels4teams.com/traveltips/roadside-attractions-50-states/>.

- Nov. 20. *Smithfield Times*. Article: Nike Park master plan calls for demolition; Cutline: Missile has arrived.

Outreach Lectures & Events

- Nov. 3. Isle of Wight County Historical Society. 52 guests.
- Nov. 13. Town Center, Windsor. 17 guests.
- Nov. 13. Virginia Peanut Story documentary, Slover Library, Norfolk. 40 guests.
- Nov. 14. Head Start, Smithfield. 31 students.
- Nov. 14. Sons of Confederate Veterans, Magruder-Ewell, #99, Newport News. 15 guests.



Windsor Castle

- Nov. 21. Meeting to discuss exhibits and interpretation with Parks and Recreation Director Amy Novak.

Fort Boykin

- No updates.

Fort Huger

- No updates.

Nike Park

- On Nov. 1, the Virginia Military Preservation Association donated their time, skills and equipment to move the Nike-Ajax missile, booster and launcher - generously gifted from the City of Hampton's Air Power Park - to Carrollton-Nike Park.
- Nov. 7. Nike-Ajax Missile Task Force meeting.



Boykin's Tavern

- Visitors: 6
- Interpretive signage for the tavern's first floor is in production.

Meetings

- Nov. 1. Windsor Town Center to discuss programming.
- Nov. 6 and 13. Town of Smithfield staff meeting.
- Nov. 7. James River Institute for Archaeology.
- Nov. 18. Westside Elementary School to discuss programming.
- Nov. 21. Genuine Merchants of Downtown Smithfield.
- Nov. 25. Interview of potential intern from Christopher Newport University.

Safety

- Nov. 13. Town of Smithfield Safety Committee meeting.

Selections from Our Website and Social Media



November 8. Museum docent Cindy does a little light reading in the country store exhibit. [#ReadWithUs](#)



World's Oldest Ham @Worldsoldestham · Nov 12

This matchy-matchy couple from [#Boston](#) came to see me today. In the rain, too. And they giggled the whole time.

[#newfriends](#)



November 26. The World's Oldest Ham is participating in [Smol Animal Memes'](#) [#drawaduck](#) challenge. Show us your artwork.



November 27. Gorgeous welcoming wreaths were placed on the museum's front doors - courtesy of the Woman's Club of Smithfield.