



Message from the Director

“The past is never dead. It isn’t even past.” William Faulkner

One evening in late June, a few days before my boys left for summer camp, we drove out to the field where my father was working. Mother had asked us to deliver a jug of ice water to him and to the other gentlemen who were also working late. No one had wanted to stop for dinner. They were cutting wheat, and noticeably trying to finish harvesting this tract of land before the weather turned.

A thunder storm was building in the distance and, as we pulled into the field, we noticed the tractor trailer was parked with its nose facing toward home with the engine running. It was half loaded and the driver was standing by. The air around us was ridiculously hot and thick. Lightning flashed alarmingly close and, even though the wind had picked up just enough to blow our hair off of our foreheads, we barely noticed. We just stood on the edge of the field, leaning against one of the truck tires, holding our breath, wide-eyed and grinning. The excitement was palatable as the massive combine continued to harvest in front of us, sweeping across the field as the summer storm quickly drew near.

The actions of these complicated and modern pieces of machinery co-mingling with the forces of Mother Nature were hypnotizing: the combine header whirling at a menacing speed, the auger simultaneously unloading grain into a wagon being pulled alongside, engines roaring and thunder cracking loud claps overhead. I don’t think we even blinked.

But suddenly, as the tractor pulling the grain cart veered away from the combine, the boys and I made our break across the field to meet my Dad, the jug of water swinging in my hand. We were determined to do our part. As I was running alongside my children, I couldn’t help but be grateful to be a part of this scene. I was glad, of course, to be able to keep up with them and glad that some things haven’t changed. Farming certainly has evolved into big business over the years, but it is still a business run by families.

This is the theme of Dr. Lee Bloxom’s research on Eastern Shore Farm Life in the Early 20th Century, which will be exhibited at Ker Place during the months of August

and September. Dr. Bloxom has provided a compilation of rich stories which describe the family farm on the Eastern Shore when our greatest generation was coming of age. Reading their stories, seeing their photographs and hearing their voices in Dr. Bloxom’s recordings makes one nostalgic as well as cognizant of an altogether different concept of hard work. It reflects the familiar interconnectedness of Eastern Shore families, their farms, and the community as a whole.

This exhibit shows a life unlike the one we live now. These days combines read moisture levels in the grain and electronically determine the bushels yielded per acre. They follow GPS coordinates for maximum fuel efficiency and automatically shut down if something isn’t functioning properly. I might mention that all of this goes on seamlessly while the operator is following the commodities market on his smart phone.

But even as the farming industry has changed and gotten bigger, being a part of a family farm or simply living in a farming community is very much the nucleus of the Shore’s big picture story, no matter the method. Farming was our first connection to the rest of the world and it continues to be a huge influence on who we are as a culture. It is the singularly defining part of our history and this exhibit, along with the festival organized around it, will be a celebration of the age old family business of feeding the world.

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• **Farming Life** •
On the Eastern Shore
August 8 & 9 at Ker Place

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August

Explore Onancock! Walking Tours

Send house guests out for the morning or learn something new for yourself! Join our guide & discover the history of Onancock, from the first watermen and farmers, the wharves and wars, to scandalous pirates abound. Tours are \$20/person or \$15 for ESVHS members. Each week, the tour starts at the Onancock wharf and ends at Ker Place. The walk takes 1.5 hours with admission to Ker Place included. Available each Sat. now through Labor Day at 10 AM. Call 757-787-7184 to make a reservation.

Concert on the Lawn & Farming Life Festival

Friday, August 8. (5 - 8 PM) Come to Ker Place for the Summer Concert on the Lawn with 18 members from The Delmarva Big Band kicking off the Farm Life Festival. (Showtime 6:00 PM) Bring your blankets and enjoy beer and wine and food prepared by Shore Beef & Barbeque.

Saturday, August 9 (10 AM- 3 PM)

Join us at Ker Place for music, a special exhibit, demonstrations, lectures & games inspired by Dr. Lee Bloxom's collection of oral history recordings from farming families who lived on the Shore in the 1920's, 1930's and 40's. Saturday will include a panel discussion and a country fair, Free Family Fun.

September

Lunch & Lecture

September 10. (11:30 AM- 1 PM)

"Landmark Trees of Onancock." Walk. Talk. Repast. Join us at Ker Place as Onancock Tree Board President, Bill Burnham, points out the significant trees living among us. Come prepared to walk casually for 45 minutes and enjoy lunch at Ker Place afterwards. \$20 for members. \$25 for non- members.

Festival of the Arts at Ker Place.

Preview Reception: September 12. (5:30 - 8:00 PM)

Art Show: September 13. (10:00 AM - 5:00 PM)

Join the Eastern Shore Artisans Guild & the Eastern Shore Art League at Ker Place for a weekend where over 40 juried exhibitors in hand-crafted items, fine art and photography will be exhibiting and selling their pieces. Artist demonstrations will be held throughout the day. Proceeds from this event will go to support the Eastern Shore of Virginia Historical Society & The Eastern Shore Artisans Trail. Friday night Cocktail & Preview Reception is \$15. Saturday Admission is \$5 per person.

October

Lunch & Lecture

October 8. (11:30 AM- 1 PM)

"The Oyster Wars on the Eastern Shore." Part I. While the Governor has declared Virginia as the 'Oyster Capital of the East Coast,' the love and passions for this culinary treasure has been around for decades. We'll let you guess what's on the menu this day at Ker Place as Dr. Paul Ewell gives us a glimpse of the very serious conflicts that occurred in our waters not so long ago. Limited reservations, please call by October 1. \$20 for members. \$25 for non- members.

Living a Modern Life with History- Special Event

Friday, October 17. (6 PM)

Cocktail reception & Exhibit Preview & dinner after Saturday, October 18. (9AM- 3PM)

Exhibit, lectures & appraisal a la carte

An exhibit featuring original Audubons, early Virginia maps and rare Redoutes botanicals will be loaned to the Eastern Shore of Virginia Historical Society and on display at Ker Place for one month. Join us as we welcome world renowned antique map dealer, Graham Arader for a 2 part special lecture series and a "road show" style appraisal service. More information will be mailed separately. Advance registration is recommended. Call or register now on line, now.

The Monster Ball. Live at the Roseland.

Halloween Concert & Costume Contest. Friday, Oct. 31 (8 PM)

Come see, The Deloreans, perform Live at the Roseland. This 80's cover band out of Hampton Roads will be playing on Halloween with their signature flashy wardrobe and rockin' retro tunes that will send you back to when you were watching MTV for the first time. And get ready, on this night, we are going to judge your outfit. Prizes will be awarded for: Best 80's vintage, the Best Couple, the Greatest Historical Figure & Most Creative Overall. Ticket price: \$25 per person. Sign up on- line or call to reserve your spot.

November/December

Lunch & Lecture

November 12. (11:30 AM- 1 PM)

Blue Crab Bay Company has been in business for 30 years and they are celebrating. Pam Barefoot will talk about her inspirations and passions with food. Enjoy a tasting of 2015's new recipes. Lunch will be served, and yes, those delicious Bloody Mary's will be available. \$20 for members. \$25 for non- members.

Artisan's Tour

Friday, Nov. 28 & Sat., Nov. 29. (10 AM - 5 PM)

Come to Ker Place for the Open Studio & Vineyard Tour held on Thanksgiving weekend. Juried Guild members exhibiting a wide variety of media will include both contemporary and traditional work in a variety of different mediums: wood, carvings, stonework, floor cloths, jewelry, hand-formed ceramics, furniture, functional and ornamental glassware, fiber, and sculpture.

Holiday Dinner

Friday, December 12 (6:30 PM)

Join us for an elegant supper while Ker Place is decorated in full splendor for the season. Enjoy this magnificent house among your fellow members and entertain your friends with style and good taste. Live Music, a full bar & wine service is included. Tables accommodating up to 8 people may be reserved in advance. Seating will be limited. \$75 per person.

Holiday Open House

Saturday, December 13 (11 AM - 4 PM)

Celebrate the holidays at Ker Place with the Shore's largest collection of nutcrackers, and a cheery house decorated by local garden clubs. This day is free, open to the public and a part of the Onancock Homes Tour.

Farming Life Festival at Ker Place

August 8 & 9

Celebrate the history & culture of farming life on the Eastern Shore with a free 2-day event: a festival for the whole family!

The Schedule:



FRIDAY NIGHT 5:00pm: Eastern Shore Stories- Exhibit Grand Opening

- **Music on the Lawn** is swinging! Join us as 18 musicians from the [Delmarva Big Band](#) wow us front & center. **Showtime: 6:00pm.**

SATURDAY 10:00am: *Voices from our Past:* A panel discussion led by Dr. Lee Bloxom addressing life on our Eastern Shore farms during the Great Depression era with Dennis Custis, OW & Violet Mears, Ridgway Dunton, and Butch Nottingham.

SATURDAY 11:00am - 3:00pm: Family Fun at the Fair!

- Come see special exhibit, *Eastern Shore Stories at Ker Place!*
- Listen to Radio Shows from the 1930's & 40's
- Record your own oral history
- Look at Antique Tractors from the Peninsula Tractor Organization
- Enjoy Children's Crafts & Lawn Games: horseshoes, cornhole, sack races
- The Book Bin will host a book signing with Curtis Badger
- Learn more from The Beekeeper's Guild of the Eastern Shore
- Have Fun with Flowers, a talk given by Cindy Downing.
- Hear about the ESVA Food Heritage Project presented by Todd Brady
- Visit the Farmer's Market: Shine & Rise, La Caridad Farm, Perennial Roots, Sanders Orchards, Lavender Skies, Ten Good Sheep, Willowdale Botanical Science, Copper Cricket Farm



Special Exhibit coming to Ker Place this Fall
**Original Audubons, Rare Maps of Virginia,
Exotic Redoutes Botanical Prints and
Graham Arader**

The Eastern Shore of Virginia Historical Society

invites you to join us

Enjoy this special opportunity to view a selection of rare antique maps of Virginia, as well as original Audubons and colorful Redoutes botanicals loaned to us by Graham Arader Galleries in New York.

SCHEDULE:

Friday, October 17

6 pm-Exhibit Opening & Preview Reception

7:30 pm-Dinner with Graham Arader

Saturday, October 18

10:30 am- Alexis Jason Mathews lecture

1:30 pm-Graham Arader Lecture

3- 4:30 pm Graham Arader appraisal

PRICING FOR THE WEEKEND:

Friday October 17

Preview Reception \$25

Dinner with Graham Arader \$75

Saturday October 18

Package for both lectures & Appraisal \$50

Total Weekend Package \$150

Each lecture may be purchased a la carte.

Inquire for more details 757-787-8012

dine
Lecture
appraisals
Mingle

Fri, October 17

RECEPTION • SEATED DINNER

Sat, October 18

**BREAKFAST • LECTURES
APPRAISALS**



Graham Arader

INTERPRET

Eastern Shore Stories:

An oral history of farm life on Virginia's Eastern Shore

An exhibit description written by: Dr. Lee Bloxom.

Webbed with tidal creeks and marshes like capillaries, an isolated peninsula marks the eastern boundary of Virginia, separated from the rest of the state by the lower Chesapeake Bay. Eighty years ago in Accomack and Northampton Counties, family farms grew strawberries, potatoes, string beans, and other vegetable crops for sale in cities like Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York. The work was done manually, with the assistance of teams of mules or horses, and shipped by rail north. One hundred acres was considered a large farm. Today, as one farmer put it, "one hundred acres is an annoyance."

Since May 2009 and with the support of the Eastern Shore of Virginia Historical Society, I have recorded and transcribed fifty interviews with men and women from this geographically distinct region known as the Eastern Shore of Virginia. These text excerpts, audio clips, and

photographs are representative of the Eastern Shore Stories project. The material artifacts are on loan from local families. Grants from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and the PNC Foundation provided financial support for this oral history project.

The fifty-four men and women I interviewed shared stories of farm work, of shared meals and simple entertainment, of parents, aunts, uncles, and grandparents. Through their stories, they also revealed a relationship with a particular place, with land and a local geography where most have lived an entire lifetime and all have family roots. It has been an honor to hear their stories.

An excerpt from the exhibit:

Somebody said I went to the college of the burning bush, hard knocks and experience – that's probably the most expensive education you could have, but it's a lasting one. So much of farming is ... you're farming and you do something this year, maybe next year, and it works pretty good, and you think "I've mastered this art – I know what to do." And you do it the third year, and it'll fly up in your face. [Farming's] an inexact science.

Bill Davis

Message from the Director

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If I were to state simply the importance of knowing history, I would say that it allows us to put our lives in order; reminding us which things are more important than others. The aim of this Historical Society is to enlarge a picture, freeze a moment in time, or capture some detail that connects us to the rest of the world and past civilizations- like an artist may interpret a scene or how a photographer sees life through a viewfinder.

Our history is living all around us, and our upcoming exhibits, programs, classroom lessons, and lectures will be inspiring, uplifting, sophisticated, yet simply presented in a modern and fresh way. Graham Arader's exhibit in October will be one of the most significant and comprehensive collections of antique maps, original Audubons and Redoutes ever assembled on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Just as the Farming Life exhibit presents the story of our culture, the Arader Exhibit will show us the journey of how the first explorers saw the Eastern Shore and how the rest of the world saw our land when our forefathers met native peoples and a new American culture was born. Now their journey will be ours.

*With warm regards,
Jenny Barker*



As most of you know, Amine Kellam, a founding member of the Historical Society recently passed on June 14, 2014. She was a dynamo and her contributions to enhance and enrich life on the Eastern Shore

would be hard to enumerate. Cleaning up the junk cars, marketing the Shore through songs and verse, opening her lovely home to thousands of visitors for Historic Garden Week, the list goes on and on.

Amine always loved music and brought it to Ker Place many times, and her passion for the arts continues to be an inspiration for the Historical Society today. Our thoughts will remain with her family.

The 2014 Eastern Shore of Virginia Historical Society BOARD OF DIRECTORS

All Board members are elected by the membership in March at the Annual meeting and serve for a one year term. It is an honor for us to have their time, devotion and support.

Bill Bagwell, *Vice President*

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PRESERVE



Members Making a Difference: Announcing New Items in the Collection. Submitted by: Ashley Oswald

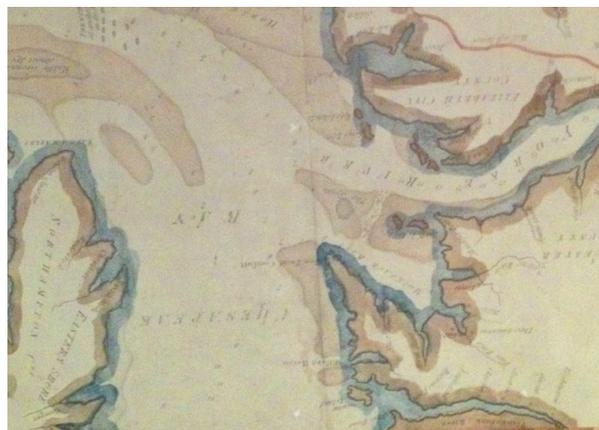
A recent article in the New York Times cited that art brings happiness to people who live in modern societies. Due to the generosity of three of our members and one institutional partner, new items will be on display at Ker Place, as a part of our collection on permanent and temporary loan. Some items are classified as decorative arts, other items are archival, and considered important works on paper. Seeing them here, in person, which helps us encourage

academic advancement, is a source for great happiness. Ker Place is a climate controlled environment with humidity and light conditions acceptable to the standards set by the American Alliance of Museums. The following items have been accepted are all on exhibit now.

An 18th c Eastern Shore painted corner pine cupboard was loaned to us by Jack and Dixie Donohue. The piece is an excellent example of the raised panel furniture native to the Eastern Shore and we appreciate the Donohues for trusting us to care for this important piece of furniture.

Mrs. Sandra Beerends donated the diary of her grandfather, John Thomas Kellam, to our Archive. Mrs. Beerends kindly took the time to transcribe the diary and presented us with both the original document and the typed transcript. It is an incredible and telling document, the type of primary resource most valuable to researchers. We appreciate her thoughtfulness and believe that this diary is a wonderful asset to our collection of Eastern Shore documents.

And finally, Preservation Virginia graciously loaned us a ceremonial Indian peace pipe and Revolutionary War Era map from the Debtor's Prison in Accomack County. The peace pipe is attributed to either King Ekeeks of the Oanancock Tribe or to King Andiaman



of the Occohannocks. Dr. Bayly Turlington found the pipe packed away at Bowman's Folly outside Accomac. The map, discovered in a London bookstore, was part of a magazine article dated November 1781. The article covered the progress of the War in "those parts of Chesapeake, York and James Which are at the Present Seat of the War."

Become a member today. www.shorehistory.org

EDUCATE

Lessons: Narratives and Activities & History Travels - Summer 2014

written by: Randy Stuart

The narratives and activities posted on the ESVHS website are designed to give teachers information about the contributions to history made by natives of the Eastern Shore.

Each series of narratives provides lesson prompts, key words and ideas for teachers to adapt to the particular needs of their classrooms. Teachers may choose to assign short research papers, oral presentations, poster design and term papers with a narrative as the assignment topic. A list of sources for each set of narratives is provided to assist teachers and students in the proper documentation of any written assignments. The activities posted at present are designed to reinforce reading comprehension, retention of material and spelling skills. SOL requirements Core Curriculum requirements, Foundation Blocks of Early Learning & STEM connections will accompany

each narrative & activity lesson.

Presently we are compiling a list of the ESVHS collection items which may be used for the lessons. Photos of the relevant pieces will be available on the Education web page and several will be added to the History Travels story boards.

Our mission is to provide support for the educators of the Shore and engage them in this exciting program. Classes from six schools visited during the past school year and we look forward to more in the coming months. We continue to encourage teachers to request a school tour at Ker Place so the students may experience the use of primary sources; to use our story boards, which are available for use in the classroom or school library; and host a professional educator from ESVHS who will give an in class presentation on the Eastern Shore connection to a specific world event. If you have any questions or requests regarding the narratives, please call the ESVHS at 757-787-8912 or e-mail us at education@shorehistory.org



HISTORY CAMP 2014



September 12 & 13, 2014 • www.shorehistory.org/festivalofthearts



Festival
of the
Arts
at Ker Place

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