



GOOCHLAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER

Volume 25 Number 1

P.O. Box 602 2875 River Road West, Goochland, Virginia 23063

May, 2004

**REGIONAL ARCHAEOLOGIST
TO SPEAK AT MAY MEETING**

Dr. Chris Stevenson, is the regional archaeologist for the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Central Region Preservation Office. He provides technical advice on archaeological and preservation issues in Central Virginia. In addition, he conducts an annual excavation at Fort Christanna, an early 18th century trading post located in Brunswick County. Dr. Stevenson has previously worked as an archaeological consultant in the private sector and has conducted research for more than twenty years in the Pacific region on Easter Island.

A multimedia presentation will be given to the membership by Dr. Stevenson about the Woodland Indians of Goochland, how an assessment is conducted, what the expected outcomes are, and how Goochland can expect to benefit from such an endeavor.

Dr. Stevenson will be the liaison for the archaeological assessment to be conducted in Goochland County in the summer of 2004. The assessment will be conducted by The College of William and Mary. Goochland County will be only the second county in the Commonwealth to have such an assessment done. There are more than 300 known archaeological sites in Goochland. The Board of Supervisors and the Historical Society recognize the importance of having these sites evaluated and mapped in order to provide for preservation and to enhance the decision making process for future growth and development. The known sites list does not include locations of historic buildings but these will be a part of the assessment.



SPRING MEETING

SUNDAY, MAY 16, 2004

THREE O'CLOCK

In the Old Goochland Courthouse

Travel east or west on Route 6 to the town of Goochland. The Courthouse is on the north side of the road. Parking is available on both sides of the Courthouse Green.

The Old Jail will be open for visitors and weather permitting, refreshments will be served on the courthouse lawn.



Editor's note: Many of the archaeological sites in Goochland County are those left by the Woodland Indians. This is a brief summary of the history of the Woodland Indians in Virginia. It is excerpted from the website of the Department of Historic Resources, and *Indians in Seventeenth Century Virginia*, by Ben McCary.

First People: The Early Indians of Virginia

The term “woodland” was introduced in the 1930s. It is a generic category for prehistoric sites that fell on a time line between the Archaic “hunters and gatherers” and the Mississippian cultures in the eastern US. In the Southeast, the Woodland period is now generally viewed as a stage dating from about 1000 B.C. to A.D. 1000. The Woodland period is divided into three phases: Early, Middle and Late but the beginning and ending dates for these phases are not the same across the Southeast. The Woodland period is generally considered to begin with the introduction of pottery. Pottery is important to archaeology. It can be collected in large samples and shows changes in the cultures. These changes are used to distinguish among groups from different regions.

Most of the archaeological sites in Goochland are thought to be from the Late Woodland phase. In the past, archaeologists have considered the Late Woodland as a time of cultural poverty, but careful analysis shows that it was a very dynamic period. Bow and arrows replaced the atl-atl or “throwing sticks” we call spears. This technology became wide spread. New varieties of maize, beans, and squash were introduced. The Late Woodland people achieved a richness of culture that was unmatched to date. Since the preservation of artifacts from this period is outstanding, scientists have been able to reach some conclusion about the lives of the Late Woodland people.

Sophisticated craftsmen created a wide range of pottery forms, stone artifacts, and bone tools such as awls, fishhooks, needles, and turtle shell cups. Jewelry for the wealthy was made from imported shell and copper. Ceremonial and symbolic objects of stone, copper, and shell were also made. A wide range of rather elaborate burial customs reflected the people’s fascination with the passage from life to death.

In an area that includes Goochland on the northern piedmont, there existed a culture from A.D. 950 to the time of European contact. These early Virginians’ defining characteristic was that they buried their dead in earthen mounds. Some of these mounds reached a height of at least 20 feet. The mounds were sacred places where ancestors were honored. Sometime between 1760 and 1781, Thomas Jefferson examined one of these mounds near Charlottesville. He later wrote that he watched Indians in the mid-18th century walk directly to the mound and stand before it for some time with sorrowful expressions. Then they left the mound and went on their journey.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Eleanor Andrews	Goochland
Anne & Bobby Bishop	Lynchburg
Col. & Mrs. Floyd Callihan	Manakin
Dr. David Curd	Arizona
Martha Kay	Goochland
Ruth Ann & Henry Kramer	Richmond
Jeanie & James Mathews	Maidens
David & Becky Mims	Texas
William & Virginia Mims	Richmond
P. E. Turner & Co Ltd	Richmond
Angelene Pell	Rockville
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Robelen	Manakin
Sherry Taylor	Tennessee
Dowell & Ella Wood	Manakin

Architectural Survey Nears Completion

Gibson Worsham, Architectural Historian, is in the final stages of submitting his report of Goochland County. His report will contain recommendations of properties that should be placed on the Historic Register. The Society is offering help to fill out and submit the forms. Please contact the Society for information.

The Museum Shop offers an excellent place to purchase that perfect gift for someone new to Goochland or the “old-timer” who is especially proud of his county. The Wood and Gilmer maps are new items. A reprint of the Cookbook is available as well as the ever popular *Goochland, Yesterday and Today*. Wachovia Bank also sells copies of both books for the Society.

SOCIETY ACQUIRES FORREST SHEETS LIBRARY

The Society has the good fortune to announce the acquisition of more than 1200 volumes of genealogical resources. The books are from the library of Reverend Forrest D. Sheets, a past president of the Society and former pastor of Byrd Presbyterian Church. Rev. Sheets was an avid genealogist who kept meticulous records. In addition, all of his research files which includes some photographs were donated to the Society by his



Cindy Sheets Paris and Amanda Sheets Healy are shown with some of the books and files from their father's library.

daughter, Cindy Paris. Included in the book collection are sources that provide passenger lists of ships that came to Virginia as well as other ports along the East Coast. Many of the books deal with the people who first came to Virginia and then made their way to Goochland. Rev. Sheets did a lot of work to create usable indexes to early Goochland court records. "This is an important addition to our Library", said Carol Salmon, Chair of the Acquisitions Committee. "It will greatly improve our ability to help everyone who comes to the Center as well as those who send us research requests."

NEW VOLUNTEERS AT THE CENTER

Volunteers new to the Historical Society include Floyd Callihan, Barbara Froman, Kay Higgins, Denise Jenkins, and Margaret Walker. An orientation meeting was held at the Center in March. Marty MacMillan, President, Phyllis Silber, Director, Ruby Martin, Volunteer Chair and Pete Williams, Treasurer, greeted those who attended. They were given an overview of procedures at the Center, a guided tour of the offices and an introduction to conducting genealogy research. Every volunteer at the Center is an important part



L-R: Ruby Martin, Margaret Walker, Pete Williams, Kay Higgins

of the work the Historical Society does to achieve its mission of service to Goochland County. The volunteers each bring a special expertise to the job. The Society is grateful for their efforts.

Contact Us:
Phone/Fax: **804.556.3966**

Visit our web site:
www.goochlandhistory.org

Visit the Center:
2875 River Road West



Goochland County Historical Society