

# FARMVILLE - PRINCE EDWARD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

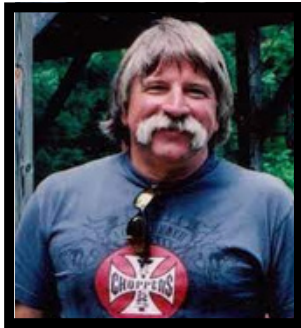
Monthly Newsletter

## UPCOMING MEETING:

NOVEMBER 16, 2021

7PM AT THE HISTORIC FARMVILLE TRAIN STATION

GUESTS ALWAYS WELCOME!



With his recent passing on October 1st of this year, the historical society has decided to dedicate our upcoming November meeting as a memorial to Mike Rice, a longtime friend and past member of the Farmville-Prince Edward Historical Society.

We will be presenting a one hour video which features Mike Rice and John Osborn entitled "Civil War Relics and Collecting." Originally recorded at the January 2001 meeting of the historical society, the video details both Mike and John's collection of Civil War relics.



## OUR LAST MEETING

In case you missed it, at our last meeting FPEHS Vice President John Burton offered a presentation entitled "Bizarre Local Tales of the Paranormal and Supernatural" which included ghost stories concerning both Hampden-Sydney College and Longwood University. Click the image below to view John's presentation on our YouTube channel.



## MEMBERSHIP DUES

Membership dues for 2022 have increased to \$20 for individuals and \$30 for families and businesses. Please make checks payable to: Farmville-Prince Edward Historical Society and mail them to:

**FPEHS  
P.O. Box 546  
Farmville, VA 23901**

Likewise, dues can be paid in-person at our meetings, to any FPEHS board member.



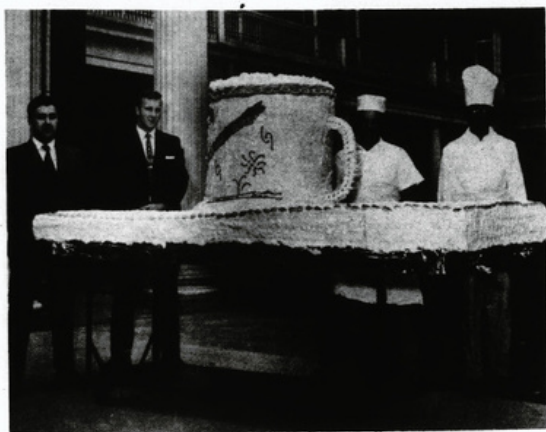
On November 17, 1923 a fire destroyed the South Wing of the State Normal School, including the dining room and school kitchen. While firemen were able to keep the fire from spreading to the Rotunda and no one was injured in the blaze, there was another casualty. Philip Ward, head chef at the Normal School since 1884, lost his entire collection of recipes.

Mr. Ward was born into slavery in Amelia County, on the plantation of Charles Farmer. In an

account later shared with WPA interviewers in the 1930s, Philip Ward described an encounter with Union Army soldiers in the last days of the Civil War. His family lived, he recounted, "in a log cabin at the foot of a hill, out in a field nearby some thick woods." Through those woods, one day, appeared a long column of Yankee soldiers.

"Then this big general," he recalled, "all dirty, with a thick beard covering most of his face, come up to the plantation house and tell our master and missus that he was going to stay there." That general, he later found out, was none other than Ulysses S. Grant.

After emancipation, Mr. Ward's family moved to New York City, where he would work as a cook for both William H. Vanderbilt and the Dupont family. While it is unknown when the family moved back to Virginia, we do know that when the State Female Normal School opened in

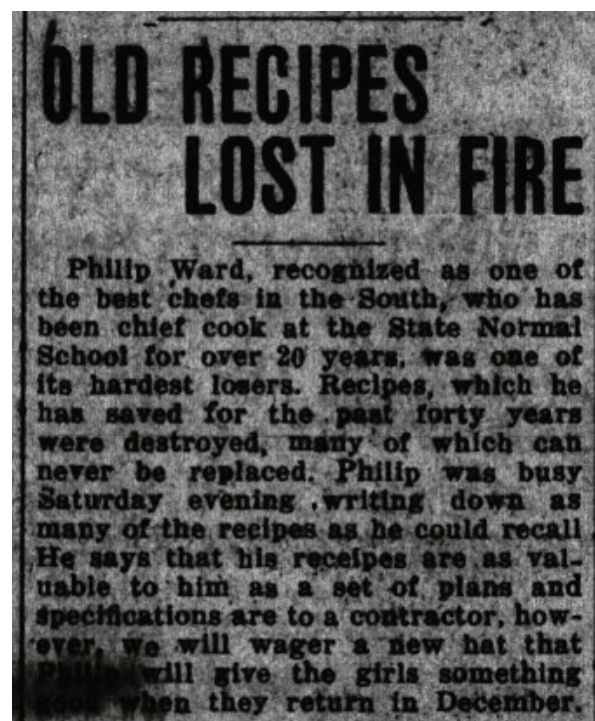


**1969's Oktoberfest Cake**

Farmville in 1884, Philip Ward was hired as a cook. He quickly worked his way up to the position of head chef and by 1898, his son Charles joined him in the kitchen. In 1934 Mr. Ward was honored during the 50th Anniversary of the school and was presented with an honorary degree during a special ceremony. Although he retired in 1940, the legacy of Philip Ward continued at Longwood through his son Charles, cook and head baker at the school for over 50 years. As well, his grandson Phillip, who worked in the school kitchens from 1945 until his death in 1971,

was known for his massive cakes made to celebrate special occasions.

The Ward family story is far too long to be told on one page. Stay tuned for news about our upcoming meetings in 2022, one of which will be presented by special guest lecturer Dr. Letoshia Foster, and will be dedicated to the life and legacy of Phil Ward!



## **It Happened in November...**

- 11-1-1926 The Longwood Garden Club was formed.
- 11-2-1908 Free mail delivery began in Farmville.
- 11-3-1857 Sixty-six slaves emancipated in the will of John Watson began the journey to resettlement in Liberia.
- 11-3-1941 The old electric plant at foot of Randolph Street burned.
- 11-7-1898 A.A. Cox's livery stable burned; 9 horses perished in the flames.
- 11-7-1908 County historian Herbert Clarence Bradshaw was born in Rice.
- 11-8-1917 R. A. Baldwin, founder of Baldwin's Department Store, died.
- 11-9-1895 The first fire fought with water from a plug was at Mrs. Sallie Hunt's residence on Baptist Hill.
- 11-10-1900 The First National Bank was organized.
- 11-11-1918 Farmville held large nighttime celebration for World War I armistice declaration.
- 11-12-1905 St. John's Lutheran Church was dedicated.
- 11-13-1912 The Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians held revivals which accounted for multiple conversions.
- 11-15-1890 *The Farmville Herald* began publication.
- 11-17-1753 A bill passed by the colonial assembly divided Amelia County, creating Prince Edward County.
- 11-17-1894 County voters rejected bond issue for 7-mile connection to Hampden-Sydney.
- 11-17-1923 The south wing of State Normal School burned.
- 11-18-1926 Southside Community Hospital opened.
- 11-19-1867 Noted educator and longtime Longwood president, Joseph L. Jarman was born.
- 11-22-1875 Dr. John Peter Mettauer, pioneer surgeon and medical educator, died.
- 11-23-1893 Z.A. Blanton, Captain of Farmville Guard, councilman and Planters Bank assistant cashier, died.
- 11-23-1902 Dr. Walter Reed, famed medical researcher and childhood resident of Prince Edward County, died.
- 11-25-1836 The Farmville Baptist Church was organized.
- 11-26-1917 Construction began on a new Post Office (present-day old U.S. Federal Building).
- 11-29-1796 A petition was presented to the Virginia General Assembly, founding Jamestown on the Appomattox River east of Farmville.
- 11-29-1942 World War II coffee rationing began.