

DECEMBER 2021

# FARMVILLE - PRINCE EDWARD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Monthly Newsletter

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

### 2021 in a nutshell...

As incredible as it seems, the year is nearly over! During the past year the historical society was very active. Some of our activities included:

- After a sixteen-month hiatus due to the pandemic, we were able to resume our monthly meetings in June of 2021.
- We continued working with Farmville's Virginia Heartland Regional History Center.
- We assisted the [Dunnington Mansion Organization](#) with research and acquiring photographs.
- We researched and compiled a history of the Farmville Volunteer Fire Department.
- We began an ongoing project to research the history of the tobacco warehouses in Farmville for the Cralle family and Green Front Furniture.
- We updated the FPEHS [website](#).
- We continued organizing the historical society [archives](#).

- We digitized and uploaded dozens of recordings of past historical society meetings to our [YouTube](#) channel.
- We continued to answer research questions regarding the history of Farmville and P.E. County.

### Coming up in 2022!

We have been busy planning meetings for the upcoming year. The first three meetings for 2022 will be:

- **January 18th** at the Historic Farmville Train Station: **Show & Tell**. Bring an item or collection from home to share with the group! We will also be sharing some interesting items from the historical society and Longwood archives!
- **February 15th** at the Moton Museum: **The Life & Legacy of Phil Ward**. In celebration of Black History Month, Dr. Letoshia Foster from the Longwood University History Department will be sharing the fascinating story of Phil Ward, longtime Longwood head chef.  
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- **March 15th** at the Historic Farmville Train Station: **Trivia Night!**

Form a team or play on your own, answering trivia questions regarding Farmville and Prince Edward County History.

**Membership Dues for 2022**

Dues for 2022 have increased to \$25 for individual membership or \$30 for family membership or businesses. Dues can be paid in-person or checks can be mailed to:

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

We are planning some exciting projects for the new year and your dues are an important part of making those possible.

**Volunteer Opportunity!**

We are looking for volunteers to help us organize historical society archival collections. There is a significant number of backlogged collections as well as many new collections that need to be organized, described, and made accessible to the public.

If you are interested in helping us accomplish this goal, please contact Benedict Chatelain by email at: [chatelainbg@longwood.edu](mailto:chatelainbg@longwood.edu) or by phone at: 434.395.2448.

**On December 23, 1905...**

according to the Farmville Herald, Professor John Chester Mattoon, who taught manual training at the State Female Normal School, was badly burned while portraying Santa Claus at a Christmas party. Mattoon was hired at the Normal School in 1902. In addition to his teaching duties, he and fellow faculty member Elmer Jones founded both the Archery Club and the Guitar & Mandolin Club.



In 1907 Mattoon married Mary Venable Cox, a Normal School alum and niece of Benjamin Matthew Cox, the Normal School's business manager and former Farmville Sheriff.

Mattoon continued to teach at the State Female Normal School until 1912 when he accepted a position at the University of Indiana in Bloomington. To learn more about the Mattoon Family Collection and view hundreds of early Farmville photographs taken by John Chester Mattoon, visit the Longwood University [Digital Commons](https://digitalcommons.longwood.edu/).

**For the latest news, visit our website: [www.fpehs.org](http://www.fpehs.org)**

## **It Happened in December...**

- 12-1-1947 Southside Council on Health Care organized.**
- 12-1-1892 J.R. Martin was elected Captain of Farmville Guard.**
- 12-2-1836 N.E. Venable, Confederate marine and druggist, was born.**
- 12-3-1940 H.C. Crute, druggist and water works patron, died.**
- 12-4-1890 Petition presented to Farmville Town Council to obtain electric service.**
- 12-5-1944 George M. Robeson, founder of Farmville Manufacturing Company and international plow-handle mogul, died.**
- 12-4-1969 Steeple replaced on the Presbyterian Church.**
- 12-8-1899 W.W.H. Thackston, mayor and Virginia Dental Association founder, died.**
- 12-9-1952 U.S. Supreme Court hearings begun on appeals by Prince Edward and other jurisdictions regarding "separate-but-equal" public school systems.**
- 12-11-1850 Farmville Lodge No. 41 Ancient Free and Accepted Masons chartered by Grand Lodge of Virginia.**
- 12-12-1849 Walter Grey Dunnington, tobacconist, was born.**
- 12-14-1900 Banquet honoring Joseph Mannoni held at Randolph House.**
- 12-17-1873 County's first Agricultural Grange chapter met near Prospect.**
- 12-19-1753 Virginia's Royal Governor Dinwiddie signed bill to divide Amelia County, creating Prince Edward County.**
- 12-22-1795 Virginia General Assembly incorporated the "Upper Appomattox Company" designed to clear the Appomattox River for navigation from Petersburg to Farmville and beyond.**
- 12-24-1844 Col. Charles McKinney Walker, commission merchant, was born.**
- 12-25-1885 Union Seminary faculty reluctantly approved one-day Christmas holiday.**
- 12-27-1860 Moses Tredway, innkeeper and town trustee, died.**
- 12-29-1890 Farmville Electric Light, Heat and Power Company franchised.**
- 12-30-1938 Farmville Manufacturing Company won bid to build new courthouse.**