

YORK COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

AUTUMN 2017 NEWSLETTER

York County Historical Museum P.O. Box 2431 Yorktown, VA 23692

Two Locations in Historic Yorktown
York Hall, Lower Level, 301 Main Street Museum on Main, 307 Main Street



MUSEUM VOLUNTEER RECEIVES AWARD



York County Historical Museum volunteer Chris Bonin was one of eight recipients of the 2016 York County Outstanding Volunteer Award. Each year selected volunteers are recognized for their outstanding contribution to York County government operations through their volunteer time and efforts. Chris started volunteering for the Museum in late 2015, following completion of a Master's Degree in History from the University of Nebraska. During 2016, Chris logged in 307 hours of volunteer time with the Museum. His efforts included cataloging and archiving the Museum's collection of 19th century survey maps of York County and Poquoson. He has been an invaluable asset to the Museum with his assistance in organizing, cataloging, and archiving various historical manuscripts, photographs, books and other artifacts owned by the Museum. These materials and information are now available not only for display in the Museum, but for research by other historians and institutions. Many of his volunteer hours were spent as a docent at the Museum in York Hall and the Museum on Main next door. He has always been available to assist with special Museum events and exhibits during public holiday celebrations such as Veteran's Day, Fourth of July, and Yorktown Day. During 2016, the Museums attracted over 10,000 visitors from all over the U.S. and 26 foreign countries. We would not have been able to welcome so many people without Chris' assistance.

2017 YORKTOWN INDEPENDENCE DAY 8K & 5K RUN/WALK

The annual race event, a major fundraiser for the Museum, was a success again this year. Over 400 runners and walkers participated in the event, which starts at York High School and traverses over the historical tour roads in the Yorktown Battlefield section of the Colonial National Historical Park. Participants ranged in age from 5 to 77 and hailed from 25 different states and even one foreign country - Denmark. The Museum worked this year with Mettle Events, who used electronic chip timing for the first time at this event to provide instant individual participant results via text messaging or social media posts. Race medals were presented to top finishers in their age groups and, also new this year, finisher medals were presented to each participant as they crossed the finish line. Thanks to all the enthusiastic participants this year, and we look forward to another great race event next July!



Photo courtesy of Mettle Events

ARTIFACT SPOTLIGHT ~ THE SHAW MONUMENT

The tip of the concrete and brick pillar is all that remains of the Shaw Monument, a 21½-foot tall obelisk commemorating the October 19, 1781 Revolutionary War surrender of British forces under Lieutenant General Charles Cornwallis to Continental Army forces commanded by General George Washington on the Yorktown Battlefield. The monument was erected in 1895 near the Yorktown National Cemetery by John W. Shaw, a Civil War veteran who served as Superintendent of the Cemetery. The core of the obelisk is believed to have been made of pieces of brick taken from the foundation of the early 19th century York County Court House, which had been destroyed by an explosion in 1863.

Following Shaw's death in 1907, the monument was not maintained and fell into disrepair. In 1934, Colonial National Historical Park (CNHP) staff removed the monument to a wooded area off of Redoubt Road. The monument remained in that location until 2013, when, deteriorated and broken into several pieces, it was relocated to a CNHP maintenance yard.

In 2014, CNHP donated the top portion of the monument to York County with the stipulation that the monument be placed on permanent loan to the York County Historical Museum for display and interpretation. Visit the Museum on Main to view the artifact and learn more about its story.



The Shaw Monument, early 1900s
Photo courtesy of the Library of Virginia

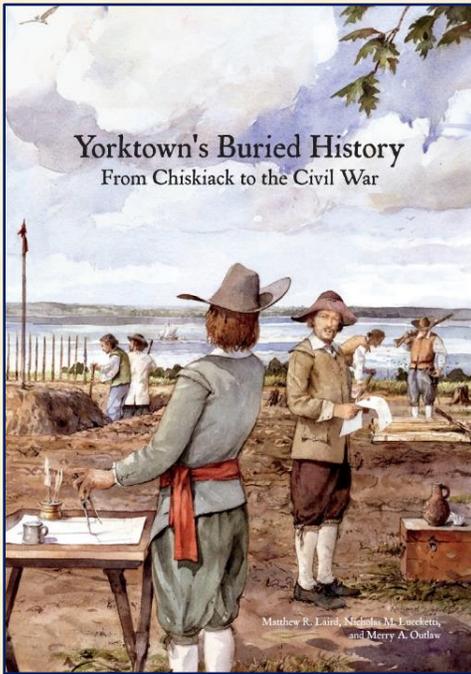
THE REDCOATS OCCUPY YORKTOWN ONCE AGAIN



Jason and Russell Stechele portray Revolutionary War militia soldiers in front of the Museum on Main during the Labor Day weekend event

On Labor Day weekend, Yorktown was transformed back to the village that was occupied by British troops in August 1781. The living history event "Before the Siege, When the British Army Occupies Yorktown," sponsored by the Colonial National Historical Park, included over 70 costumed reenactors portraying soldiers, sailors, and civilians alike. Visitors experienced firsthand soldiers' life in camp and the day-to-day activities of villagers and craftsmen as they went about their lives during the occupation. The York County Historical Museum hosted two costumed historical interpreters portraying Revolutionary War militiamen. Jason and Russell Stechele provided a display of fishing tackle, English draughts or checkers, food, and tobacco as would have been used by the common militiaman. Demonstrations included casting round shot for weapons in the field along with loading and firing weapons. Visitors were able to try their hand at using a flint and steel for

starting a fire, writing with a quill pen, and finishing a powder horn. Children visiting the site received reproduction Virginia Currency - a 1/6th piece of a 1777 Spanish milled dollar.



HOT OFF THE PRESSES! MUSEUM RELEASES NEW BOOK

The York County Historical Museum has just published its first book: *Yorktown's Buried History, From Chiskiack to the Civil War*. Authors Matthew R. Laird, Nicholas M. Lucchetti, and Merry A. Outlaw employ the bounty of archaeological discoveries made during excavations conducted on the site of the present-day Chiskiack Watch development in Yorktown to enrich our knowledge of the history of the village. The book tells the century-spanning stories of the Chiskiack Indians prior to European contact, the origins of Yorktown village with the development of a fortified settlement established by Nicolas Martiau in the early 1600s, the busy commercial port of the 1700s, and the hardships of the Revolutionary War and Civil War conflicts during the 18th and 19th centuries.

Copies of the book are available for sale at the Gallery at York Hall, 301 Main Street, Yorktown (\$21.99 + tax).

UPCOMING MUSEUM EVENTS

October 14th and 15th - Yorktown Victory Celebration

Events and activities hosted at the York County Historical Museum, Watermen's Museum, Colonial National Historical Park, Yorktown Custom House, Riverwalk Landing, and the American Revolution Museum at Yorktown. Saturday 9:00 am – 5:00 pm Sunday 12:00 pm – 5:00 pm Note: event times vary by location. For more information, see the 2017 Yorktown Victory Celebration event flyer posted on our website at www.yorkcountyhistoricalmuseum.com

October 19th - Yorktown Day

The 236th anniversary of the Victory at Yorktown, hosted this year by the American Friends of Lafayette, will include numerous activities throughout the day. The York County Historical Museum in York Hall will be open 9:00 am to 3:30 pm and the Museum on Main will be open from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. A special exhibit about the Marquis de Lafayette will be installed in the Museum in York Hall.

8:45 am	Commemorative ceremony at the French Cemetery, Yorktown Battlefield
9:15 am	Wreath-laying at the grave of Governor Thomas Nelson, Jr., Grace Episcopal Church
9:15 am	Wreath-laying at the French Memorial, Yorktown Battlefield
10:30 am	Yorktown Day Parade, Main Street
11:15 am	Patriotic exercises and wreath-laying at the Yorktown Monument

December 2nd – Yorktown Christmas Market on Main

Arts and crafts vendors, music, strolling entertainers, good food, and a visit by Santa and Mrs. Claus. Stop by the York County Historical Museum booth – we hope to have roasted chestnuts again this year! 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

December 2nd – Model Train Exhibit

All aboard! Join us for our annual Christmastime train exhibit at the Museum in York Hall. 10:00 am – 3:30 pm Sponsored by the Peninsula Model Rail Road Club

For more information on these and other York County events, visit www.visitorktown.org

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Do you love history? Would you like to learn more about our local history? Are you looking for ways to contribute to our community and pass along its wonderful story to others? Do you enjoy meeting new people of all ages with those same interests? Then consider volunteering at the York County Historical Museum! As a small non-profit museum, we rely on volunteer support to help tell the world about the unique history of York County. We are always looking for outgoing individuals to serve as docents at our two locations. Please visit our website at www.yorkcountyhistoricalmuseum.com or pick up one of our brochures at either of our museum sites for information about volunteering for us.

York County Historical Museum Board of Directors 2017

Bonnie Karwac, President
Don Kline, Vice President
Arun Verma, Treasurer
Sylvia Virostek, Secretary
The Honorable Rick Atlee
Tim Beale
Jim Funk
Frank Green
Dale Howell
Dave Meredith
Julie Smith
Amy Parker, Staff Liaison

OUR MISSION

To advance the knowledge and understanding of the history of York County and the Town of York through the preservation and presentation of historical artifacts in a museum.

Visit us at

www.yorkcountyhistoricalmuseum.com

www.facebook.com/yorkcountyhistoricalmuseum/

We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization