

PRE-MAY FAIRE 2024 EDITION

Special News Update and May Faire Report from the Mathews Historical Museum:

- ***May Faire, May 4: the day's schedule**
- ***Hunley Store to Open at Museum in June**
- ***Events Committee at work**
- ***Colonial Williamsburg Fife & Drum Corps will be here for May Faire**
- ***Special archery demo featured at May Faire!**
- ***Did you know?**

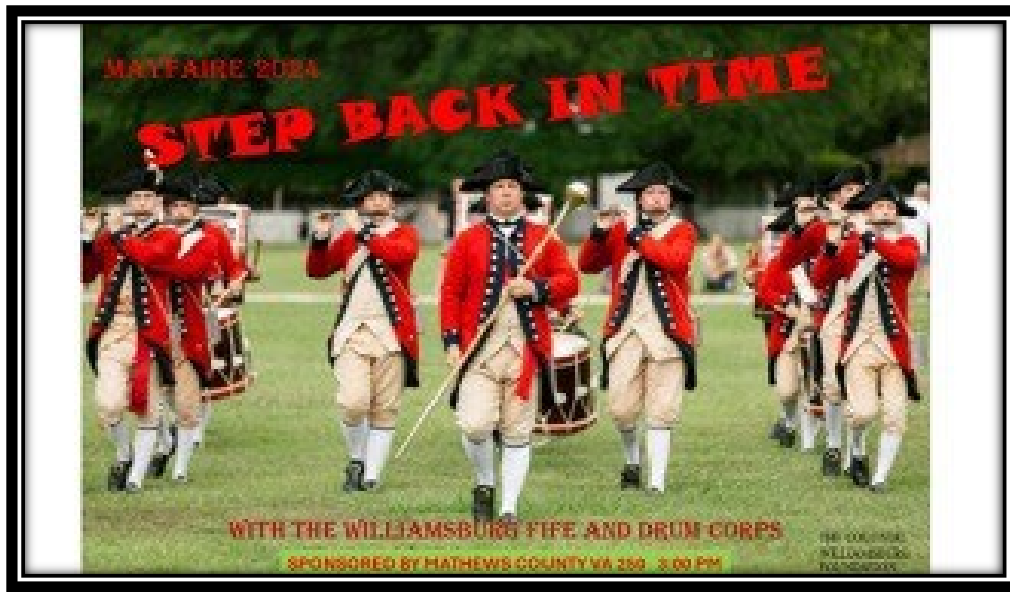
MAY FAIRE 2024 IS SATURDAY, MAY 4! "A RURAL LIFE," FARMING, FAMILIES AND FISHING

Since 2017 the Mathews Historical Museum has sponsored the Mathews spring festival, focusing on various aspects of the county's rich history. This year is no exception. The focus will be on the heritage of the county, with special emphasis on those hardworking individuals who helped shape the county. Museum President, Tom Robinson, notes, "We will harken back to those days when Mathews was a major agricultural community, when its many large farms shipped corn, soybeans, daffodils and other crops nationwide."

***At the Court House**, at **9:30 am**, aerial photographers David and Linda Grow will show "**Mathews From the Air, Then and Now**" going back 60 years; at **11:30 am**, Mathews middle school teacher Michelle Hill Williams will showcase her students' work and speak about her Family and Consumer Science class activities, and at **2:00**, renowned horticulturist Brent Health will discuss "**100 years of daffodils in Mathews.**"

***Inside the Museum's headquarters**, at 200 Main Street, a brand-new interior will greet visitors. After significant renovation this past year, festivalgoers will enter into a world of fabrics, textile arts, home furnishings and products that will "explore the evolution of various aspects of our lives," notes exhibit chair, Cheryl Dale, a specialist in lifestyles of earlier days. Also, inside the museum, works by the winners of the Museum's newly initiated photography contest will be on display, as well as the art of the county's schoolchildren.

***Outside:** At 9:00am, Joe Reid's antique fire engine will sound her horn and the day's festivities will begin. The Children's Corner, the May Faire mini-farm on Brickbat Street, with piglets, bunnies to pet, and baby chicks hatching right in front of your eyes; a pony that children can actually paint!; and an antique corn grinder that will spit out corn so that the children can feed the chicks; an antique apple cider grinder; music on stage by local guitarist Hunter Owens and Mathews finest, The Flattones; the May Pole dance performed by area children, the high school band and announcement of the Pound Cake winners will add to the excitement. There will be antique GM cars on display, antique tractors, and other stationary exhibits that reflect Mathew's life in years gone by.



***COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG FIFE & DRUM CORPS COMES TO MAY FAIRE!**

To close the day's May Faire activities, an appearance at 3:00 by the **Colonial Williamsburg Fife & Drum Corps** will signal the beginning of a two-year countdown to the Nation's 250th birthday, July 4, 2026. Special invitees, Lord Dunmore, the last seated British Royal Governor of Virginia, and General Andrew Lewis, who acted against the Governor at the Battle of Cricket Hill, will make special guest appearances on stage. This performance is designed and sponsored by the MathewsVA250 Committee. Festivalgoers are invited to observe the Fife & Drum Corps as they form up at 3:00 at the firehouse, and then follow the procession to the stage. There is no charge for attending the festival and no charge for this event. All are welcome to view and participate.

***DID YOU KNOW?**

- ✓ *That the Museum is available for use by the community, for special events?
- ✓ *That gift memberships to the Museum are available?
- ✓ They are a delightful and thoughtful gift, and, go to support the Museum's programs and events. Visit www.mathewsvamuseum.org



***THE MAY FAIRE TEAM HARD AT WORK, PLANNING MAY FAIRE**

Preparing the program and displays at May Faire is a year-long effort. Here, at the Gazette Journal offices in Gloucester several of our team members are proofing the wonderful souvenir booklet that is distributed at May Faire each year, at no cost.

Additions to our May Faire team are always welcome. Drop by the Museum at 200 Main Street any Saturday from 10:00am until 2:00 pm and sign up to be a part of next year's two-day May Faire!



***ARCHERY EXHIBIT IS FEATURED AT MAY FAIRE!**

An added feature at this year's May Faire is a special display and demonstration of archery equipment. Bizhan and Amanda from Virago Alley in Richmond will be demonstrating the use of various types of bows and arrows. Bizhan will be demonstrating live flint napping (making arrows). These were common weapons during the early Colonial period.



***Hunley Store to Open in June; Further Details Coming Soon**

There is a “new” general store coming to town! General stores were a “way of life” in Mathews in days past.

As time went on, they gradually began disappearing about 35 years ago. Long time resident Tommy Hunley managed to acquire the contents of these general stores---including the post office boxes—as well as many of the showcases. He moved from a two-room house in Cardinal to his residence in Mathews CH and remodeled it to reflect an authentic country store. The interior was furnished to show how a store was furnished and stocked, with original signage. Those items that were in the store—all of them original, no reproductions—are now being lovingly and personally installed by Ray Hunley, in the Museum’s new special upcoming exhibit. Festivalgoers at this year’s May Fair will be able to take an advanced peek at the exhibit, prior to its grand opening in June.

May Faire 2024 • Our speakers today

Historic courthouse, Mathews Court Green, May 4, 2024



David and Linda Grow

9:30 a.m., Linda and David Grow.

Linda grew up in Ware Neck, David moved to Gloucester in 1958, and both graduated from Gloucester High School. They were married in 1968 and except for a few years in Goldsboro, N.C., have remained in Gloucester. Linda retired after 29 years of banking with Suntrust Bank and EVB. David retired from managing Little England Farm in Bena.

David started flying in 1971. Both enjoy antiques, especially old motorcycles and airplanes. They own a 1946 yellow and green Aeronca Champ that David restored. Watch overhead for them!

For this show, they flew over Mathews and took photos that we compare here with earlier aerials, mostly taken by Walter Becknell of the Gazette-Journal in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s.

11:30 a.m., Michelle Williams and students from THMS

Michelle Williams revived home economics under a new name, Family and Consumer Science, teaching sixth, seventh and eighth graders at Thomas Hunter Middle School. She will tell of their prize-winning entries and development of leadership skills through the local chapter of the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America program.

Her course has proved popular with students and the community alike. Supportive individuals in Mathews have stepped forward with many contributions to stock the cupboards and sewing rooms. Williams will have many students with her to tell of what they are learning about "The Art of Living." They will have a booth near the historic courthouse.



Michelle Williams

2 p.m., Brent Heath of Brent and Becky's Bulbs, Ware Neck

Third-generation daffodil grower Brent Heath, owner with his wife Becky of Brent and Becky's Bulbs, Ware Neck, will talk about "100 Years of Daffodils" and more. His grandfather Charles Heath came to Mathews County from Boston early in the 20th century. According to Charles Heath's obituary in 1936, at his first home Auburn and later at a new home Cradle Point, he became "one of the pioneers of the bulb industry in this County and many rare species have been cultivated and developed by him." His grandson Brent has carried on the family tradition, and his flowers have beautified public and private spaces across the United States.



Brent Heath