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Monthly

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A Historical Tale of Chester, Virginia

by Kim Amboy

The following accounts have an interesting commonality...can you guess what it is?

- ★ An ancient indigenous people who hunted, fished, and farmed on the ground we tread today.
- ★ An early upriver settlement full of plucky English colonists led by their hard-nosed, inventive governor.
- ★ A traitorous man who turned on his countrymen and destroyed their entire navy.
- ★ A mysterious sunken graveyard of barges and rusty tugs that today's kayakers and canoeists regularly paddle by.



make up the fascinating history in and around Chesterfield County's city of Chester, Virginia. So, let's take a brief look at how it all unfolded...

Thousands of years before the highways, towns and neighborhoods of today, forests of Chesterfield County were inhabited by an agricultural society of indigenous peoples. By the time the colonists arrived, these native Americans had organized themselves into a vast, united chiefdom under a famed leader named Powhatan, father of Pocohontas.

Enter Sir Thomas Dale and his band of English settlers in **1611**. This life-long military man was appointed as Deputy Governor of the New World and was bent on restoring and maintaining order—someone you would not want to mess with! After sailing up the James, he established the settlement of Henricus, named for King James' son, Henry Frederick. The community was protected by a Dutch-style fenced ditch across a narrow bend in the river, known as "Dale's Dutch Gap."



Did you figure it out? They're all part of a centuries-old parade of people and events that



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Fast forward to **1781**--the American Revolution was in full swing. Newly defected British General Benedict Arnold marched his forces upriver to a spot near Dutch Gap, called Osborne Landing. The entire Virginia State Navy was there and refused to surrender. From the banks, British rifle fire kept the colonial crews from manning their deck guns, resulting in the navy's destruction and capture. Amazingly, Arnold defeated them without a navy of his own!



Over the years, Chesterfield County's communities steadily grew, and by the **1840s**, the railroad was flourishing here. Chester's original "downtown" began as a train stop on the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad near present-day U.S. Route 1 and West Hundred Road (Route 10). Unfortunately, during the Bermuda Hundred Campaign, Chester Station became the site of an **1864** Civil War battle that destroyed the railroad.

During the **20th century**, between the 1920s to 1960s, mining companies floated sand and gravel down the James by barge and tugboat. When their operations ended or the vessels became too old, they were left to decay in the shallows. Today this eerie sight can be experienced firsthand by paddlers enjoying the tranquil 2.5-mile **Lagoon Water Trail** located in Chester inside the Dutch Gap Conservation Area.



It's now time to wrap up our parade of events in Chesterfield County's history. But for those who would like to continue this journey, a visit to Chester's **Henricus Historical Park** is just the ticket! Here, visitors can tour meticulously reconstructed 17th-century buildings and Native American villages, paired with reenacted demonstrations of life back in the day.

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Let's Go! Deltaville - Middle Peninsula Area

by Taylor Armstrong

Is there more to do in Deltaville than just fishing? You bet there is! While the fishing is exceptional on the Chesapeake Bay, land lovers can find plenty of fun and educational activities.

An excellent source of history and boat-building traditions can be found at the **Deltaville Maritime Museum and Holly Point Nature Park** (287 Jackson Creek Road). This 36-acre scenic waterfront location on the shores of Mill Creek is home to a variety of activities including interactive exhibits, a nature park, and a family friendly wooden boat building experience. The park offers walking trails, a pier, free creek cruise, kayak launch, and children's garden. The museum has an impressive display of boat replicas and plenty of information on the history of the Chesapeake Bay. Do you know how the Bay was initially formed? Visit the museum to discover the 35-million-year-old event. The pavilion, which is rentable for social events and even weddings, is surrounded by the beautifully landscaped waterfront and available year-round. www.deltavillemuseum.com.



Don't miss the opportunity to take a cruise on "Jenny May," available 9am-1pm, the fourth Saturday of the month, May-September. The park's tranquil backdrop is also home to the **Holly Point Farmers Market**, also on the fourth Saturday of the month, May-September, and boasts local veggies, fruits, honey, artisan cheeses, baked goods and many homemade items.

Seafood is always in abundance at **J&W Seafood Market** (16552 General Puller Hwy), a family tradition for more than 30 years that offers a wonderful assortment of fresh seafood, prepared foods, and a selection of fine wines, craft beers and gourmet items. Bring your cooler along for the trip because you will find plenty of goodies to take home. If you are planning on fishing or crabbing while in the area, they have you covered with a large selection of supplies and bait. www.jandwseafood.com.



Head to the **Deltaville Ballpark** (100 Ball Park Road) to see Virginia's oldest all wooden baseball stadium. Built in 1948, this nostalgic find hosts the semi-pro Deltaville Deltas. Concerts, festivals, community events, and weddings also take advantage of this historic site. Major renovations over the years have helped to preserve the small town feel of crab pot fencing and the beautifully landscaped grounds add to your baseball experience.



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INGREDIENTS:

- 4 thick cut bone-in pork chops, 1.5" to 2" thick
- ½ cup ketchup
- 3 tbsp honey
- 2 tbsp low sodium soy sauce
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- ½ stick butter

DIRECTIONS:

Sear chops in an iron skillet on medium to high heat with butter and olive oil for 5 minutes on each side. Do not move chop until ready to flip. Place the entire skillet in a preheated 375-degree oven for 15 to 20 minutes until the internal temperature reaches 145 degrees. Place chops on a plate and rest for 5 minutes before slicing. While chops are in the oven, mix ketchup, honey, soy sauce and garlic in a saucepan and bring to a low boil. Remove from heat and set aside to serve alongside chops.



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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH @ 11 AM - 3 PM

The **3rd Annual James River EcoFest** at the **James A. Buzzard River Education Center** is a celebration of nature, sustainability, and community. There will be a marketplace of artisans and vendors, activities, and information about sustainable living. (TheJamesRiver.org)



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH @ 5 PM

Country Jam III is back with fun for all, including line dancing, bounce houses, a mechanical bull, and corn-hole. Larry Fleet, John Morgan, Kelsey Hart, and more take the stage at the **Hanover Vegetable Farm**. (HanoverVegetableFarm.com)

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH AND SATURDAY,
SEPTEMBER 19TH @ 6 PM - 9 PM**

North America's largest interactive true crime murder mystery dinner show, **The Dinner Detective**, will be at the **DoubleTree Hotel** at 1021 Koger Center Blvd. (TheDinnerDetective.com)

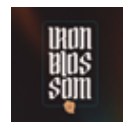


SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH AND SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH @ 11 AM

Enjoy two fun-filled days of music, dance, food, and culture at the **43rd Festival of India** at the **Greater Richmond Convention Center**. There will be a cultural program, many different types of Indian cuisine, and vendors selling traditional Indian clothing, jewelry, and more. (TheFestivalOfIndia.org)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19TH @ 11 AM

Get creative at **Artful Gatherings: Exploring Creativity Together** at the **Perkinson Center**. The art activities are designed for all ages and abilities. (PerkinsonCenter.org)



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19TH AND SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20TH @ 1 PM

Two days of music, food, drinks, and connection start at the **Iron Blossom Festival** at **Midtown Green**. (IronBlossomFestival.com)

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22ND THROUGH SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH

Richmond International Film Festival is back with over 180 films at **The Byrd Theatre** and **Bowtie Cinemas**, as well as community events, industry panels, live music performances, and much more. (RichmondFilmFestival.com)



**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH AND SUNDAY,
SEPTEMBER 27TH @ 11:30 AM - 7 PM**

Maymont Bier Garden is open, with music, yard games, folk dancers, the Marketplatz, featuring local vendors, and of course, plenty of beer and German and other European cuisine. (Maymont.org)

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