



This 1937 picture of the May Pole and entertainers at Holland School shows the town of Holland in the background. Students in costume were ready to perform dances and songs to entertain the Queen of the May. Sadly, the two Holland schools and some other buildings in Holland were lost due to arson some years ago.

## Welcome Sweet Springtime

This issue was begun as we were seeing signs that the long cold wet winter was over. Like the Druids and our more recent ancestors before us, we in the SNHS office longed to celebrate the new life that comes in this gentle season. Rather than erect a May Pole in the Dawson House backyard, we sought to share pictures from May Day celebrations in the past.

### Welcome Sweet Springtime

After a long cold wet winter this writer is pleased to have cause to remember the words of a song sung for May Day many years ago:

*Welcome Sweet Springtime,  
We greet thee with song,  
Murmurs of gladness fall on the ear,  
Voices long hush'd now their full notes prolong,  
Echoing far and near.*

Refrain:

*Sing then ye birds, raise your voices on high;  
Flowerets awake ye, burst into bloom.  
Springtime is come and sweet Summer is nigh.  
Sing, then, ye birds, O sing!*



In this 1939 photo elementary school girls appear as butterflies to celebrate May Day at Holland School.

## May Day

The pictures in this issue illustrate that May Day was celebrated at schools throughout Suffolk and old Nansemond County—high schools as well as elementary schools in some cases.

We are reminded that most mothers were at home and could sew elaborate costumes.

This writer once appeared in a mostly crepe paper dress sewn on Mother's machine. It was intended to create the appearance of an upside down daffodil.

### Chuckatuck Grade School 1920s

*Top photo:* Front center: Mary Louise Doyle. Back: Randolph Parker, Frances Gilliam, A. Hill, \_\_\_ Holland, Nancy Ray Gilliam, Mary Virginia Johnson (seated), Addie Rawls Moore, Vernell Pruden (?), unknown, Marion Willoughby, and unknown.

*Right Photo, L-R:* Front: Frank Spady, Judith Gilliam, Matsie Moore, Leah Godwin, Francis Edwards; Middle: Nancy Saunders, unknown; Back: Hulda Kelly, Sarah Hill, Lucy Garner, Marie Cristie, Marjorie Mathews, Hazel Dailey, Nelle Cotton.



*Courtesy Lynn K. Rose*



### Mrs. Harrell's c. 1948

In the 1940s and '50s local public schools were not yet offering kindergarten but several private home kindergartens were open. Mrs. Joshua Harrell had a kindergarten at her home on Bishop Place in the 1940s. The May Day celebration included the following students, left to right: Jackie Grant, Penny Barrett, Jack Brantley, Barry Chamberlain, Betty Fletcher, Tom Woodward, Betty Sue Habel (Greene), Gene Famous Birdsong, Becky Debnam, Dickie Harrell, (queen) Connie Reid (Happel), Karen Volper, Kit Vaden (Roller), Melinda Davidson, Harriet Clay (Naismith), Bobby House, Jimmie Smith, Jimmie Woodward, Brenda Bailey (seated), George Gatling, Doug Smith and David Corcoran. (Sorry we're not sure of more married names for girls.)

Some other kindergartens were operated by Mrs. H.W. Churn on Broad Street, Mrs. Walter Story on Maryland Avenue, Mrs. Ernest Stephenson on Virginia Avenue, Mrs. George Gatling on Causey Avenue, and, later, Mrs. George Morrison on Pinner Street. *Thanks to Jane Gatling and Tom Woodward.*

## Old King's Fork School 1954

Excuse this rerun from our 2008 Kings Fork edition, but it is so apropos and we have new members who might not have seen this. Boy in cowboy hat (#6 from L.), Jimmy Gardner, prince & princess to R. of queen, Gene Ellis and Eleanor Powell; queen, Josie Ann Underwood, and king, Hugh Whitley; princess to L. of King & back beside the bush—Mary Ainslie Saunders, with prince, Howard Council; little girl wearing hearts, Dirran Savage. In R. foreground, Willie Williams (blond) and Lindsey Mincher. The farmhouse in far right background is that of Mr. and Mrs. Rob Wright (of Rob's Drive). The outbuildings are gone and the farmland has been developed but the house still stands. This site is less than a mile west and across Rt. 460 from NSA where May Day is still celebrated. See picture below.



## Oakland School 1970s

Kindergarten kittens wait to perform in 1977 (above). Dancers gather around the May Pole (right) in 1974. Oakland is on Rt. 10 just outside Chuckatuck. This was a school for the black community before integration. By the 1970s, it was an integrated school. In fairly recent years it was given a new lease on life with major renovations. *Courtesy Lynn K. Rose*



*The May Pole is wrapped with brightly colored ribbons.*

## Nansmond-Suffolk Academy 2010

Traditionally NSA celebrates May Day with dances around the May Pole and other dances by all third graders. Welcome sweet springtime. *Courtesy Diane Nelms of NSA*

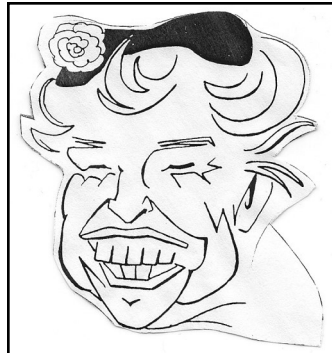
## Postscripts to our March 2010 Franklin Street issue

- This program from the Class Night exercises of Jefferson High School Class of 1915 was held at the Virginia Theater. Mae Brinkley (interested in poetry even then) and Tazewell Pettit were from Franklin Street. This is, of course, the season for graduations.

PROGRAM	PROGRAM—Continued
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduction.....Thomas Woodward, Class President</li> <li>2. Welcome Address and Song..... .....Miss Elsie Bailey and Class</li> <li>3. Class History.....Miss Margaret Butler</li> <li>4. Class Prophet.....Miss Nancy Woolford</li> <li>5. Our Motto: "We Can Because We Think We Can" ..... Ellis Pinner</li> <li>6. Class Song—"It's A Long Way To Graduation" .....Miss Katie Brinkley and Class</li> <li>7. Class Poem: "Those Time Honored Studies".... .....Miss Mae Brinkley</li> <li>8. Presentation of Class Picture.....William Alfred Hall</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Tribute To the School Board..... .....Miss Helen Harrell and Class</li> <li>10. Class Critic.....Tazewell Pettit</li> <li>11. Some Advice To the Juniors..Miss Edith Hosier and Class</li> <li>12. Last Will and Testament.....Kilby Brown</li> <li>13. Last Roll Call.....Seth Eley Campbell, Class Secretary</li> <li>14. Closing Chorus ..... Class Accompanist—Miss Margaret Underwood, Class of 1917.</li> </ol> <p>Class Motto—"We Can Because We Think We Can." Class Flower—"Red Rose." Class Colors—Old Rose and Silver.</p> <p>Class Play, "Aaron Boggs, Freshman," will be presented Tuesday night, 8:30, Virginia. Seats 25c. Reserved free at Nansemond Drug Store.</p>

- Correction:** It was Charles Henry Causey, Jr., nephew of James Colvin Causey of Franklin Street, who led the Suffolk Grays in the Spanish American War. C.H. Causey, Jr.'s home on West Washington Street was open on our 2008 Candlelight Tour. It is now the First Lady, an events facility at the corner of West Washington and Wellons Streets. See our November 2008 Boomtown issue.

- John Perts caricature



*John Perts sent his caricature of Eleanor Roosevelt in a Christmas card c. 1960 to a staunchly Republican friend.*



*Kay Goldberg (above) leads the way on a recent yard work day at the Dawson House. Below: NSA students Lindsay Bulls (foreground), Virginia Cox and Tripp Jones finish the weeding.*



## Kudos to:

- SNHS member Byron Carmean, a/k/a the Tree Man, who has recently been honored with a Thomas Jefferson Conservation Award. He was nominated for the award by Dr. Jeff Kirwan at Virginia Tech. The award was presented at the Natural History Museum in Martinsville, VA. Byron has identified a number of record big trees and contributed to the book *Remarkable Trees of Virginia*. He is also quoted in the new book, *The Mill: The Franklin Mill from Camp to International Paper*, by Phyllis Speidell and John Sheally.
- SNHS member Doug Naismith, this year's Rotary First Citizen. Doug made an excellent Dr. Challis Dawson on the first day of the 2009 Candlelight Tour and his wife, Mary Jane, gave a fine portrayal of the talented Madame Dawson.
- And thanks to SNHS member Kay Barnes Goldberg (upper right) who is retiring as a history teacher at Nansemond Suffolk Academy and, therefore, as sponsor of the NSA student history group. The students are helpful to SNHS in many ways at: Candlelight Tour, our member meetings, cemetery tours and Dawson House yard work.

*Opposite page: This is an imperfect copy (but just right for this season) of a page from a publication from the Finney sisters' Suffolk Female Institute. A law office and College Court now occupy the site of the school. (Last sentence, last paragraph: Capt. George Parker, father of Surry Parker? March 2007 issue.)*



# THE CASKET.

Vol. I.

SUFFOLK, VA., THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 1876.

No. 1.

## THE CASKET.

Mr. N. R. KILBY, Local Editor.

THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 1876.

### COMMENCEMENT.

The annual commencement exercises of Suffolk Female Institute will take place to-day, and, as usual, Temperance Hall will be crowded with the papas and mamas, and particular friends of the young ladies, together with our friends, the public generally.

The morning exercises will consist of music, essays, &c., and to-night will be presented the operetta of the "Flower Queen." We bid all our friends a hearty welcome, and earnestly hope that our efforts to please may meet with their hearty approval. While here don't fail to purchase a copy of the CASKET to carry home with you, as this will help us to pay the printer, and you will hardly miss the amount.

To-morrow morning, hasty adieus, tears, kisses, good-bye, and we are off for home, holiday and fun. To our kind friends in Suffolk, our teachers, and all who have ministered to our comfort, not excepting the cook, we bid an affectionate farewell.

### LOCAL NEWS OF THE INSTITUTE.

#### BRIEFS.—

Miss Ida G. Lassiter, of the *S. F. Institute*, left for her home in Gates county on Friday last.

Misses Annie and Mary Darden have just returned from the commencement at Farmville.

Mrs. Charlie Riddick, of Nansemond county, will take a trip to the Centennial not many days hence.

Mrs. P. Rodman came up and spent the day with her daughter Mary, at the *Institute*, a few days ago.

We are glad to learn that Miss Eva's pig has recovered, for she nursed him well by giving him blue mass pills. He is now walking about the yard.

Miss Lulie Crump left here on Wednesday last to spend a few days at her home. We sincerely hope she will have a pleasant time eating cherries, and return promptly to school.

The two Misses Holland, of this school, left for their home, near Boykins, on the 16th inst. We wish them a pleasant vacation, but had rather they would have remained with us until our concert is over.

We are not surprised at one young lady of the *Institute* being fond of hunting eggs for Miss Eva, for she finds that the nest contains more notes than eggs. Put them in the nest B., M. will be sure to get them.

Miss Julia Pinner went home on Saturday last, and returned on Monday following with a quantity of the sweetest cherries we ever saw. We are sure that Miss Pinner and her cherries were most kindly welcomed by all the ladies of the *Institute*.

Four of the young ladies of the *S. F. Institute* went out to the pump one night last week to get some water. They saw some one sitting on the palings, which frightened them very much, and they ran back into the house. We reckon it was some of the same fellows who crawl around the pig pen on the opposite corner.

There is one young man who stands on Washington square, who must think himself very handsome, as he is always in the door whenever the *Institute* girls pass, and tries to attract their attention by his smiles and affected ways. We girls think the first organ grinder that comes around will be apt to take that fop for his monkey.

Says Miss Eva Finney—"It's a trouble to procure provisions for the girls, it's a trouble to get it cooked, it's a trouble to get it put on the table, it's a trouble to get the girls to the table, it's a trouble to get them quiet enough to say grace, but when they do commence it seems but little trouble to eat everything before them."

There are some young men in town who are very fond of getting in a pig-pen, on the opposite corner of Central avenue, for the purpose of peeping at the girls at the *Institute* as they promenade the front porch. We wonder if some of them have not worn out the knees of their pants crawling around in there?

Be sure to know your brothers wherever you see them. There was a young lady of the *Institute* who went to church a few Sundays since and saw a gentleman whom she took to be her brother; she smiled and he smiled, she bowed and he bowed, but when she came to find out who it was, she found it was some one that she had never seen before.

There is a certain young lady in the *Institute* who went home on one occasion, and when she returned she brought with her a Centennial parasol, on the handle was a small glass piece, through which you can see the Horicultural hall; also a pencil, which writes any color imaginable.

There is a certain young lady in the *Institute* who was sitting on the porch a short time ago, and had just been eating strawberries, a very handsome young gentleman passed by, whom she thought a good deal of. She took so much interest in looking at him as he passed by, that she wiped her hands on a girl's dress who was standing beside her. She turned around to the girl and said, "You must certainly excuse me, for I did not know what I was doing." We suppose she was too deep in love to think of anything else.

The following letters were received by the ladies for whom intended:

SUFFOLK, VIRGINIA,  
June 15th, 1876.

Miss.—Although I am not personally acquainted with you, I take this opportunity of writing to you. I hope you will not think me too bold or pert in taking the liberty of writing you, but really I cannot resist the temptation of writing to you. The object of my writing this note is simply to ask if I can have the pleasure of promenading with you on the night of your concert, 22d inst. Can I? Please answer immediately. Your sincere Friend.

SUFFOLK, VIRGINIA,  
June 13th, 1876.

Miss.—If agreeable, may I have the extreme pleasure of walking with you on the porch on the night of your concert. Answer soon, for I am anxious to know. Your Friend.

SUFFOLK, VIRGINIA,  
June 14th, 1876.

Miss.—Doubtless you will think me a queer genius for again taking the liberty of writing to you, after you had once refused to receive another letter from me.

In any way, blame you for not receiving it under the circumstances, but doubtless you would have received it under other circumstances. The object of my writing to you this time is this: Can I have the pleasure of promenading with you on the night of the 22d inst. E. B. is trying to get ahead of me. I readily give up if he is ahead of me. Please answer immediately. You really must excuse pencil, as the boys are keeping so much noise, I could not write with a pen if I were to try. Rest assured you have the best wishes of your Sincere little Friend.

We girls like to become acquainted with the gentlemen before making engagements to promenade.

### ADVERTISEMENTS.

Mrs. William R. Ellis' is the place get your Summer Hats.

Master Allen Darden deals in all kinds of choice Groceries. Sugar and Cakes a specialty.

Ladies and gentlemen, if you want a nice drink of Soda Water, go to Dol Eley's.

Darden & Eley keep on hand all kinds of Dry Goods and Notions. Call and give them a trial.

Boothe & Baker's is the place to get your nice cream-colored Scarf and Centennial Slippers. If you want to be in the fashion get a pair.

Capt. Parker will be glad to furnish any one with Newspapers, Books, Tracts, &c., who will call to see him.

## We are grateful to the following new or returning members for 2010:

### Benefactor (\$1,000+)

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O'Connor, Tommy  
Young, Hubert & Christine

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Gwaltney, James G.  
Habel, Jay  
Habel, Tucker  
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Jaffe, Mr. & Mrs. Gerald  
James, Linda Annas  
Jennings, James L.  
Johnson, David  
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Mansfield, Bob & Charlotte  
March, Clyde V.  
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Stallings, Wenlian J.  
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Taylor, Cindy  
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Watterson, Nita  
Webb, Mindy & Joby  
West, Randy H.  
White, Anne Parker  
Williams, Jesse & Mary  
Williams, Richard & Sue  
Wommack, Jane B.

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Drewyor, Richard  
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Hillard, Holly Anne  
Kusmez, Karen  
Pollard, Paige (Commonwealth  
Preservation Group)  
Pond, Wayland  
Pullen, Mike  
Rawles, Beverly  
Webb, Bill

### Complimentary

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Gates County Historical Society  
Murfreesboro Historical Assoc.  
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### Student—NSA

Barclay, Cole  
Bulls, Lindsay  
Carter, Sabrina  
Chung, Ashley  
Cox, Mallory  
Cox, Virginia  
Fiebrandt, Michelle  
Gersbach, Lauren  
Howell, Landon  
Jefferson, Kaitlin  
Jones, Tripp  
Manno, Kelly  
Parr, Douglas  
Porter, Matthew  
Salmon, Emma  
Smith, Cody  
Williams, Sheila

List reflects memberships received through June 7, 2010.

*SNHS makes every effort to ensure accuracy. If you find an error in your listing or if you would like to change your recognition preference, please call Julie Johnson at (757) 539-2781 or email snhs@verizon.net.*

# THANKS TO OUR 2010 CORORATE MEMBERS

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Lynn Barlow, Treasurer

### Gifts and Memorials through May 31, 2010

To the Dawson House

- Birdsong Corporation
- In honor of Nita Bagnell  
*by her four children  
and their spouses*
- NSA Student Historical Society

To Suffolk-Nansemond Historical Society

- Mature Methodists @ Providence United Methodist Church
- In memory of J. Braxton Powell  
*from Allie & Dick Sueflow*

Suffolkian Margaret Saunders (Dashiell) was May Queen at Randolph-Macon Woman's College in the 1940s. *Period newspaper photo*



PRINTER: please insert Train Station picture, phone and email.  
Train Station Assistant: Marie Carmean



### Coming Soon!

It's not too early to think about the holidays! Plan to support the SNHS wreath sale again this year. Look for more information in the next newsletter.

PRINTER: please insert Dawson House picture and contact information, including:  
[www.suffolkhistory.org](http://www.suffolkhistory.org)

### Train Station Anniversary

The Suffolk Seaboard Railroad Museum is celebrating the Tenth year since Restoration and Grand Re-opening, and our One Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Anniversary! The Anniversary events will launch on **August 28th and 29th** at the Station, with museum tours, displays and train-related exhibits never before seen. We will have a children's train display, petting zoo, Teddy Bear Express Trackless Train and other wonderful things just for the kids! There will be food, fun and live music all day on Saturday from 10 -7 and again on Sunday afternoon from 1-4. The gift shop will have new items for purchase.

There will be separate events to honor the members of the Tidewater Chapter of the National Railroad Modelers Association for their amazing contribution to the Station; to honor those responsible for the incredible restoration ten years ago; and to honor our many wonderful volunteers. Dates and times for the Receptions for these groups will be announced. We also plan to have members of each of these groups well represented on the 28th & 29th.

Our raffle of a huge Seaboard Station replica made of gingerbread (the winner to be announced in late November) made by a local award-winning gingerbread artist will also kick off on that weekend. It will be a Celebration to remember!

**Hours: Wednesday - Saturday 10 - 4; Sunday 1 - 4**

### LW's Lawn Service, LLC

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*Thanks to LW's Lawn  
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and McKay lawns this  
summer.*



*The 1939 May King and Queen at Holland High School are shown with their court. In the background is the Holland School built in 1914 and destroyed by fire in 1992. Unfortunately the participants are not identified.*

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*Mexican Hat dancers prepare to perform, Chuckatuck School, May Day 1954. Courtesy Lynn K. Rose*