

Christ Church Parish became the 'Mother Church' . . . (Continued from Page A1)

to the Piankatank River. The other was Lady Lumsford's "Brandon" that was located at the end of what is today Burhan's Road. She owned 1,700 acres and dozens of servants. The tax revenue from these two properties was considerable and each parish wanted it.

Sir Henry Chicheley had married Ralph Wormeley's wife after Wormeley died. He was living at Rosegill. Sir Chicheley served as a member of his Majesty's Council and was serving as Deputy Governor of Colonial Virginia. He quickly grew tired of the bickering between parish officials and was also tired of traveling on Sundays to far-away churches.

Arguably, Sir Chicheley single-handedly took away the two parish system in the county to form Christ Church Parish, the "Mother" church of Middlesex, just down the road from Rosegill.

The new parish was confirmed by order of the Grand Assembly, October 23, 1666. The order stated, "Whereas the parishes of Lancaster and Payanketank having been divided into two parishes . . . it is granted that the parishes be reunited and to be called by the name Christ Church Parish."

Christ Church remained the Mother church in the county until after the Revolutionary War when the Church of England fell into disfavor with a victorious American nation. The church building and graveyard eventually were taken over by the Episcopal Church as it is to this day.

The graveyard at Christ Church has tombs of early colonial settlers of Middlesex, of a Virginia governor (Andrew Jackson Montague); a lieutenant governor (Robert Latane Montague); an attorney general of Virginia (Colonel John Richardson Saunders); and is the final resting place of the famous Lt. General Lewis Burwell (Chesty) Puller, the most decorated marine in U.S. Marine Corps history.

More history
Although called Christ Church today, the area was called Marl for a period of time. There was a post office at Marl from 1918 to 1921 and there were two postmasters, Robert W. Seward and Andrew L. Brooks. The post office was located on the Brooks property on General Puller Hwy. The name was changed to Christ Church Post Office on September 3, 1921. Andrew, and later his wife, Alma Brooks, were postmasters until 1956 when it closed and moved to Christchurch School. That post office closed about 15 years ago, said school officials.

Burhans and Cooper
Moving eastward to what was colonial riverfront land of "Ole Brandon," Burhans' Steamboat Wharf was founded in 1887. John S. Burhans, a native of Westfield, New Jersey, built Burhans' Wharf near Locust Hill.

That same year a post office named Cooper was started in a building on the shore near the wharf. The wharf was constructed near where the old Brandon Plantation (tobacco) pier had been located a century earlier. It was about a quarter mile long and had several buildings along its course. Burhans was served by steamboats owned by Weems Steamboat Line of Baltimore and later by Maryland, Delaware and Virginia Railway Co. The wharf was partially destroyed in the August Storm of 1933, about the time steamboat service stopped coming to Middlesex.

With the wharf gone, the post office at Cooper remained in operation until 1951. John S. Burhans was named the first postmaster on December 13, 1887 at Cooper and the last postmaster was Phillip C. Wood, who was confirmed on August 25, 1922. On June 30, 1951 Cooper Post Office closed and mail was directed to Christchurch.

Locust Hill
There is some indication that a post office was located at Locust Hill prior to 1832.

Unconfirmed records at the Library of Congress state that prior to 1832 there "may" have been a post office at Blackburn's (near Hartfield), Churchville (near Church View), Healy's (near Freeshade), Locust Hill, Jamaica, Owen's Tavern, Pettypanch and Urbanna. (If any Sentinel readers know the locations of Owen's Tavern or Pettypanch, let us know.)

The Locust Hill Post Office was located in the store of John W. Daniel from 1852 to 1909. John W. was postmaster from March 20, 1852 to 1868 when George B. Daniel was named postmaster. John W. was restated in 1875 and was postmaster until 1882 when James William Daniel took over the position.

The post office was located for a while in Sibley's Store and later across the street in the store that belonged to Sydnor W. Thrift and his wife, Lucy B. Thrift. There is a modern brick post office building there now.

The Thrifts are parents of baseball guru Sydnor (Syd) W. Thrift Jr., who was a Major League baseball executive and served as General Manager of the Pittsburgh Pirates from 1985 to 1988 and of the Baltimore Orioles from 1999 to 2002.

Nohead
Nohead Bottom is located across the road from where St. Clare Walker Middle School is located today. It had a post office and commercial activity into the 1930s. The only noticeable reminder of Nohead today is the road sign "Nohead Bottom Rd."

Library of Congress records show that Jefferson D. Collie was the first postmaster when Nohead Bottom Post Office opened on January 25, 1910. Thomas J. Taylor was postmaster in 1923 and the post office was located in his store. Other postmasters were Mary S. Daniel 1916-23; Alfred R. Walton, 1924-

25; Evelyn Fears, 1925-1927; and John C. Wilson took over on January 10, 1927. The post office closed May 31, 1927 and mail was moved to Harmony Village.

Did you know?
Did you know that one of the first airplanes to land on Middlesex County soil happened not many years after Orville and Wilbur Wright made their successful flight? The pilot of the plane successfully landed in a cut-over cornfield at Nohead Bottom.

Did you know that before the pilot could jump from the plane he was surrounded by most of the neighborhood of Nohead who had never, ever seen an airplane. Men, women and children came armed with pitchforks, shovels and whatever weapons they had.

Did you know that the pilot was able to persuade them that he was not an alien from outer space and lived to take off and fly again?

The next article in this series celebrating Middlesex County's 350th anniversary will explore the origins of Harmony Village, Lot (Hartfield), Sandy Hook (Topping), Syringa, Healy's (Freeshade), Regent, Wake, Conrads, Wilton and Stammers.

There were two Healy's Post Offices at two different locations in the county. One was located near Freeshade (Wake/Syringa/Hartfield area) and the other on Stormont Road near Locust Hill. Their histories will be explored in the next article.



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TOWN OF URBANNA

PUBLIC NOTICE 2018 OYSTER FESTIVAL STREET AND PARKING RESTRICTION

The Virginia Department of Transportation has approved the following 2018 Urbanna Oyster Festival Street and Parking Restrictions pursuant to Urbanna Town Council:

Parking Restrictions

Parking restrictions will be in effect within the corporate limits of the Town of Urbanna between 2 a.m., Friday, November 2, 2018 and 11 p.m. Saturday depending on the progress of cleanup crews.

No Parking areas will be designated as Tow Away Zones and towing will be at the owner's expense. The no parking-tow away zone in Urbanna include:

Urbanna Road from the bridge to the Watling St intersection. Watling St from its intersection with Urbanna Rd at the traffic triangle to Cross Street with Watling St all the way past Marston Ave intersection. Prince George St from Cross St to Virginia St. Virginia St east from Wave Ave from Cross St to Rappahannock Ave. Rappahannock Ave south from the Marston Ave intersection to Virginia St. Marston Ave east to each side of street. Bonner St west from Rappahannock Ave to Linden Ave. Grace Avenue from Bonner St to Virginia St. Park St from Rap Upton Lane by the Post Office, Hilliard St, Rappahannock Ave, Cross St, Oyster Rd, Prince George St and Kent St in their entirety.

Parade Routes and Times

The Friday, November 2, 2018, Fireman's Parade will begin at 7 p.m. and commence east on Virginia Street from the area of the Urban Grace Street, right on Bonner Street, left on Rappahannock Avenue, right on Marston Avenue, right on Cross Street, right on Virginia St. The Saturday, November 3, 2018, Oyster Festival Parade will begin at 2 p.m. and will commence east from the staging and Commons Office Building on Virginia Street, left on Grace Street, right on Bonner Street, left on Rappahannock Avenue, right on Marston right on Prince George Street, left on Virginia Street to the disband area where the parade began.

Urbanna Street Restrictions

Other Restrictions: On Friday, November 2, and Saturday, November 3, 2018, law enforcement authorities may close selected streets to routine safety actions dictate.

Town Entrance Restrictions

Friday, November 2, 2018, vehicular traffic entering or leaving the Town will be prohibited beginning at 5 p.m. on the west side (Route 66 Road and beginning at 6 p.m. on the east side (Route 227) in the vicinity of Rosegill for the Fireman's Parade. These Routes will be closed to the Town of Urbanna except to facilitate the movement of police and emergency vehicles. The Town of Urbanna will remain closed on pedestrian traffic.

Saturday, November 3, 2018, 9 a.m. or earlier if deemed necessary by law enforcement authorities, State Route 227 (Urbanna Road) will be closed to all traffic except to facilitate the movement of police and emergency vehicles. The Town of Urbanna will remain closed until 8 p.m. or later if deemed necessary. At any time, law enforcement authorities may temporarily close the Town to routine traffic as crowd and public safety actions dictate.