

THE HEADSTONE

Vol. I

December 2023

Issue XII

Christmas is just around the corner! Most of us celebrate the day and season in the context that it was designated, the birth of Jesus. It is a time of giving, sharing, and expressing our love for others. The form that these actions take-on vary greatly. Some exchange gifts, some are very deeply enriched by the religious events they are involved in, some adhere strictly to the spiritual blessing of the day, and yes, others just enjoy it as a day off from work. So, given that since last Christmas I have found, met, and become so connected to family I did not know I had, friends that become closer with time, and strangers that I now greet by first name, I decided to offer a present to every one of them. At least I hope you consider it a present!

I have uploaded the book I wrote, *Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery – Silent Stories, Vol. I*, to the website. It has its own tab on the left of the web page and is available to all members. It has been edited twice and may still be a little rough but after a recent email I received wherein the sender said, “.....and I am really looking forward to reading the book,” I asked myself, “when will they ever get to read the book?” So, it is now readable. It was completed in 2022 and so a lot of information has been learned since that time, hence the “Vol. I” designation. There are errors, (see what I did there) and I would appreciate the reader(s) bringing those to my attention. I have several entries where I clearly show that I have incomplete data and any help with those folks would be appreciated. (E. E. Lotts & family come to mind immediately) I am not a writer and that shows, but I did have good intentions when I put it together. So, to all of you that access and read the book, Merry Christmas to you and your family! It is my gift to all of you, as meager as it may be. It is a big file so please be patient if it takes a minute or so to load.

Given that the holidays are such a busy time for so many of us with cooking, shopping, decorating, and church activities, and knowing that Marie is probably busy with all of these at the same time, we will wait until after the first of the year to be entreated with her research on Johann Melchoir’s migration through Germany prior to coming to America.

The State Review Board and the Virginia Board of Historic Resources will meet Thursday, December 14, 2023, starting at 9:30 a.m. to consider Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery for recommendation to the National Register of Historic Places and for inclusion in the Virginia Landmarks Register. It is my understanding that The Landmarks Register review will be determined the day of the hearing and if approved for inclusion there, the National Register will be considered at a later time by the National Park Service and the decision there is independent of whatever Virginia decides. This has been an eleven-month undertaking with hundreds of hours involved. Needless to say, I do hope things go well but by the same token, it has been a labor of love and a considerable education on my part. I have learned a lot so I will

remain positive, regardless of the outcome. I sent out a blast email asking for support letters and for those of you that have committed to doing that, I cannot thank you enough. All of this has been, is, and will continue to be OUR project, not mine. SO, let's ALL think positive and hope for the best, shall we. A link to the proposal is at: <https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/boards/>

Scroll down to nominations, Northern Region, and click on Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery.

Our Board of Directors will meet on December 4th for the annual meeting and election of officers. The three board members have agreed to succeed themselves and remain in their current positions. Glenn Hanger, Nancy Sorrells, and Randy Brevard.

Below is an overview of our finances as of December 1, 2023. Just a reminder, all administrative expenses, mostly contained in the line items labeled "Website & Non-Profit," were paid by a private donor. All funds donated by members are currently dedicated to the cemetery upkeep (Fence, Tree Removal, etc.) only. A spreadsheet for the full year with detailed line-item expenses will be posted to the website under the tab "About Us", sub-Tab "Financial Disclosures" after the books for 2023 are closed. More information about future expenses is covered in a section below that details the fencing project.

Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery

2023 INCOME / EXPENSE SHEET as of December 01

EXPENSES

TOTAL WEBSITE	\$212.95
TOTAL NON-PROFIT 501(c)(3)	\$432.95
TOTAL CEMETERY	\$3,893.62
TOTAL WEBSITE STORE	\$0.00
TOTAL OFFICE EXPENSES	\$9.90
TOTAL BANKING	\$33.03
TOTAL ACCOUNTING	\$404.91
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$4,987.36

INCOME

9001	Book Sales	\$240.00
9002	Website Members	\$1,405.00
9003	Website Donations	\$575.00
9004	Direct Donations	\$2,966.77
9005	Headstone Rubbings	\$0.00

9006	Challenge Coin Sales	\$0.00
9007	Unaccounted for Donation	\$100.00
TOTAL INCOME		\$5,286.77
BALANCE (Year-To-Date)		\$299.41
Checkbook Balance (12-01-23)		\$1,197.18

Now, about the fencing. I have labored over what to try to work towards financially as far as fencing goes. I first considered maintenance and got pricing for 3-board vinyl fencing. It was around \$11,000.00 just for the materials. A no go at that price, which by the way included a generous discount since it was for a cemetery. I knew white vinyl would look good and be low maintenance, but I also knew that it would still need to be cleaned periodically and that tree limbs would make for an expensive replacement. Then I asked myself what would have been used in the 18th century. Answer – wood. Probably rail. SO, I started looking at that. Cons: It rots, it breaks. Pros: It is easily replaced when it rots or breaks – remove the rail(s) and replace them. No cutting or hammering. If for some reason we need to get a large piece of equipment inside, just remove 3 rails and if necessary, 6 rails and a post. If we want to cut a tree down close to the fence, just remove 3 rails and if necessary, 6 rails and a post. I started feeling pretty good about rail.

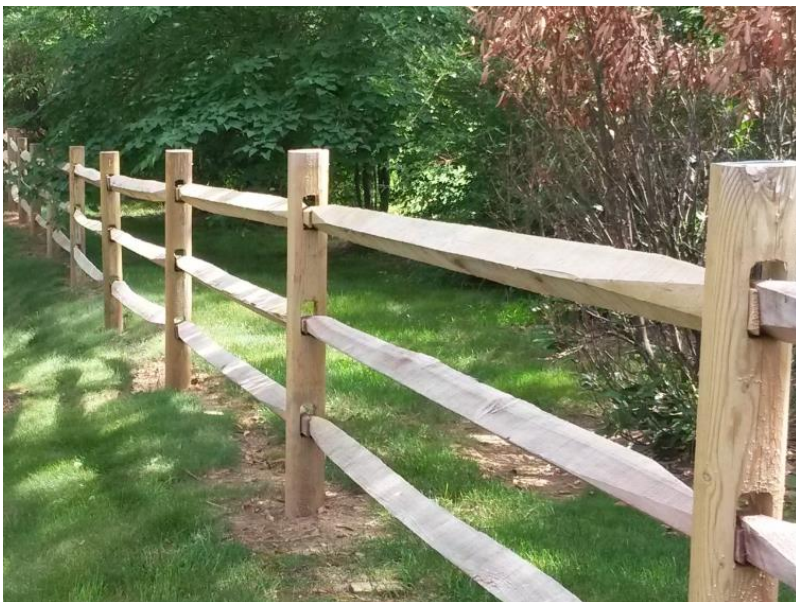
I mustered up the courage to call my fencing contractor, Nick Smith, owner and operator of Smith's Fencing, and got him to measure the cemetery perimeter and get a price for the materials. Perimeter: approximately 768 feet. I already knew from math class that 768 was a big number to multiply by anything except one. Nick called me two days later and said he was at Virginia Frame Builders in Fishersville, Virginia, talking to the salesman, Kenny Fretwell. It just so happens that Kenny has handled every purchase I have ever made from Virginia Frame, including the materials for a 50 ft. x 100 ft. barn, so I knew I was in good hands. So as not to draw an otherwise unexciting story out any further, I will just report that Kenny talked to the owners of the company, and after they learned what the fence was for, they quoted us a price of \$3,323.62 for all the materials and a few extra pieces for spares for the full 768 feet. I can't overstate that this was a true gift and absolute Blessing. So, it looks like the fence will be rail. It is period authentic, rustic, easily replaced, and affordable for us. UPDATE: Virginia Frame Builders delivered the fencing materials to the cemetery November 20, 2023, and the bill has been paid in full!

I reported in the November issue that I was in the process of purchasing an entry gate and provided a picture of what I was looking at. After remembering that I have already tried to get my mower with the 42-inch deck through a 36-inch opening to no avail, I talked with the builder in Arkansas and he agreed to make a custom double gate for us, 48 inches wide, at what I considered a very reasonable price, \$470.00 plus tax and with free shipping. A picture of the actual gate we purchased is below. I have, since this photo was taken, primed and painted it and it is ready for installation and I am counting on the wrought iron – rustic rail combination to complement and not clash. I hope it will.

A good bit more clearing had to be done to accommodate the fencing contractor and his equipment and that work is complete, which consisted of removing ALL of the briars, brambles, and brush (and a few trees) from below the graveyard so he could get his equipment in. On Thanksgiving Day, I meandered over to the graveyard and took a photo from the top section looking down the slope towards the area that had to be cleared. That photo is below.



After the fence was paid for, we have a balance in the checking account of approximately \$1,197.00. Probably not enough to pay the Smith's Fencing install bill in full, but close enough that we can make it work. I will be helping Nick at no charge so that should help our bill some although when he sees my work, he may charge me to be there! A photo of the actual gate purchased and an EXAMPLE of the rail fence that will be erected is below.



It is because of the generosity of each of you that we will see this project come to fruition. What teamwork, and what a Blessing! With a lot of our memberships renewing right after the first of the year, I think we will be just fine. Not rich monetarily, but just fine. Please plan to keep your membership. It is so important to what we are trying to accomplish, and I think we have so much yet to learn about Dutch Hollow.

As an example, I met with the cemetery landowner at his house on November 6th and I took him over to the graveyard. He is elderly and doesn't get around the best, but he seemed to enjoy it. So, what did I learn from that trip? That there was a medium-sized rock headstone with a name on it towards the top of the graveyard that I have not found yet, but he did show me about where he remembered it being. He can't remember the name. He also told me that he clearly remembers a headstone (rock) with the name Anderson inscribed on it. I have yet to locate that one as well. He showed me two areas where in the early 1950s he remembered a lot more stones standing where there are none visible now. All good investigative leads that need to be pursued.

In an effort to keep this month's newsletter a little shorter than most, I will save several pieces of information for the new year when we are snowed in and dreaming of warmer days. May the joy and Blessings of the Christmas season surround each and every one of you all year long.

Website Updates: Members Section

In The Library / Archives Section

Ship Passenger Lists 1732-1754 - 16 Total

Unpublished Documents - 9 Total

Published Documents - 10 Total -

Life in Dutch Hollow - 93 Total

Obituaries & Death Notices - 461 (Still several hundred to go)

Lucas-Fix Private Collection 109 Total

Department of Historical Resources Augusta County Archaeological Site Surveys - 13

DHH Cemetery Forensics, Etc. -Preliminary Findings of Ground Penetrating Radar for lower 35 feet of Cemetery and GPS of entire cemetery

NEW TAB! Miscellaneous Research Notes -Tidbits of documentation & Photos on those associated with Dutch Hollow in one form or another. Hundreds to upload as time permits. Many in field note style but a lot of info at the fingertips of anyone needing it for their research. More on this next month- 16 Total Folders- 198 separate files already uploaded.

JUST ADDED! E-Book - *Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery, Silent Stories Vol. I*, by Glenn D. Hanger

Coming Soon:

Elijah Jacob Hanger Private Collection (Approximately 450 files to be uploaded as time permits)

In The Focused Research Section

18 Files (40+ more to be researched, formatted, and uploaded as time permits)

Four of the *Blood of Our Blood* books have been sold, leaving one available. If you or someone you know wants one, it might be wise to get it before it is gone! Any of the books in the website store would make a great reading gift for that history buff in your family. All are out of print and have good information that is germane to Dutch Hollow and the folks that we call ancestors. And don't forget that members get a discount!

Okay, so it is Christmas. What better time to arm each of you with a few good Santa jokes.

Q: How much does it cost Santa to park his sleigh?

A: Nothing, parking is on the house.

Q: How can you tell that Santa is real?

A: You can always sense his presents.

Q: What did Mrs. Claus say to Santa as she looked up at the sky?

A: "Looks like rain, dear."

Q: What nationality is Santa Claus?

A: North Polish.

Q: What do you call Santa when he's wearing earmuffs?

A: Anything you want, he can't hear you.

Until next month, Blessings & Happy Trails.

Glenn Hanger

President, Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery