

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA -- 2001 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 826

Recognizing Surry County's significance in Virginia's history.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 21, 2001

Agreed to by the Senate, February 15, 2001

WHEREAS, 2002 will mark the 350th anniversary of the establishment of Surry County; and
WHEREAS, Surry County was the south side of the original Jamestown Settlement of 1607 and was formed from James City County in 1652; and

WHEREAS, in 1607 English settlers from the Virginia Company of London visited the Quioughcohancock Indians near the present town of Claremont in Surry County, but because the ships could not land near the south shore, they took the first colonists to the north side of the James River; and

WHEREAS, Surry County is the home of Hog Island, the first official English farm in America, so named because the original settlers of Jamestown kept their hogs on the island; and

WHEREAS, Smith's Fort was established in 1608 by Captain John Smith as a fallback position, and was part of the dowry for Pocahontas presented to John Rolfe by Powhatan, and still exists today; and

WHEREAS, during the "starving time" around 1610, local Surry County Indians, under their leader Pepiscumah, called "Pipsico," saved the colonists by providing food and training in raising indigenous crops such as corn; and

WHEREAS, Surry County was the home to a converted Indian youth, Chanco, who in 1622 saved the colonists from imminent annihilation at the hands of the Quioughcohancock tribe, and whose memory is honored by a monument on the courthouse grounds; and

WHEREAS, in 1634 the original counties, including James City County, were formed and by 1646, court was held on the "Surry Side" for the benefit of settlers across the river; and

WHEREAS, the Surry County formed in 1652 included all of the land on the south side of the James River to the border of what would become North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, in 1652 and 1653, Nathaniel Bacon patented 1,075 acres in Surry County, and in 1665 Arthur Allen built the house now known as Bacon's Castle, the oldest brick building in America and the site of Bacon's Rebellion in 1676; and

WHEREAS, by 1700 nearly all of present-day Surry County had passed into private hands by means of land patents from the King of England, granted to such familiar historical names as Benjamin Harrison, Sr., Nicholas Meriwether, Captain James Pierce, Thomas Rolfe, Nathaniel Bacon, and Major Arthur Allen; and

WHEREAS, in 1702 a ferry was established across the James River from Jamestown to Swan's Point in Surry County; and

WHEREAS, in 1720 Surry County presented the first petition to the General Assembly asking that no more slaves be imported into Virginia, a practice that was finally abolished in 1778; and

WHEREAS, the Surry Lumber Company, chartered in 1885, was the largest industry ever operated in Surry County and became so successful that the Surry, Sussex and Southampton Railroad was chartered in 1886 to ship the company's massive output of lumber; and

WHEREAS, in 1925 the modern motor ferry between Glass House Point at Jamestown and Scotland Wharf in Surry County was opened, and continues to be the shortest route across the James River from Surry County to James City County; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Electric and Power Company began operating a nuclear power station near Hog Island in 1972, the first nuclear power station in Virginia and still one of the lowest-cost producers of electricity in the country; and

WHEREAS, Surry County has preserved and protected its original county records since 1652 and continues to house them in the county today; and

WHEREAS, the 350th anniversary of the establishment of Surry County as an independent county is a unique milestone for a rural community rich in history and natural scenic beauty; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly recognize Surry County's significance in Virginia's history; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Surry County 350th Anniversary Committee as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations and best wishes for a glorious anniversary celebration.

ENROLLED

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