

## Virginia Research Facilities—Northern Neck—Lancaster County



Mary Ball Washington Museum & Library

### **The Mary Ball Washington Museum & Library**

8346 Mary Ball Rd (Va. Rt. 3)  
Lancaster, VA 22503

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County: Lancaster

**Open** Tuesday-Friday, 10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. & Saturday, 11:00 a.m. —3:00 p.m.

### **Repository**

The **Mary Ball Washington Museum & Library** (MBWML) in Lancaster County, Virginia, maintains a regional History and Genealogy Research Library with thousands of published records, books, manuscripts, periodicals, microfilm holdings, unpublished research notes, and loose paper files related to Virginia family histories, census records, county histories, church and cemetery records, vital statistics, and local history topics.

### **Be Prepared**

Before coming to the Library, we suggest that you first check our online card catalog. Currently you can search over 7,800 items by keyword, surname, title, or author. When you visit, you'll discover additional indexes, subscription-based resources, and wonderful volunteer staff to help you. You'll be amazed by our Surname Index Card File, a pre-computer age labor of love with hundreds of thousands of handwritten entries copied from the indexes of almost every book in the genealogy collection.

The Library has a \$5 daily-use fee (cash or check) or you can get an annual membership pass for \$35. Photocopies and computer printouts are 25¢ per page. Staff will retrieve books from closed stacks and make copies. For an extra \$10 daily fee, you may use your own camera or wand scanner for digital imaging. Laptops/tablets are allowed, but the Library does not offer Wi-Fi. There is a patron computer workstation with Internet access. Our microfilm machine is a reader-only.

Although we have a lot of information, our physical space is small, so we suggest

that you make an appointment. Regular hours are Tuesday through Friday, 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. and Saturday, 11:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m., but please check our website for any changes or call ahead to confirm, especially before driving long distances. You'll find us at 8346 Mary Ball Rd (Va. Rt. 3), Lancaster, VA 22503; 804-462-7280; <http://www.mbwm.org>. If you can't visit in person, contact us about ways we can help by mail or e-mail.

### **Holdings and Collections**

The focus is on Lancaster and the surrounding Northern Neck region, including the counties of Northumberland, Westmoreland, Richmond, Essex, and Middlesex. We also have materials on counties to the north and west that were part of the original Northern Neck Proprietary, other Virginia areas like Tidewater and Eastern Shore, and nearby states where settlers came from or went to, including Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Kentucky. Our historical society is named after George Washington's mother, who was born in Lancaster County, and we have a large reference section on the Ball family and descendants.

### **See Our Indexes Before Visiting the Nearby Courthouse**

Nearly all of Lancaster's court records back to its formation in 1651 still exist at the nearby courthouse, but you'll need to visit our Library first to find indexes to these deeds, wills, order books, etc. Among our finding aids we have court abstract books for Lancaster and 20 other counties. We also have a unique database of Lancaster Estate Records and an index of over 3,000 named slaves.

### **Lancaster House**

Lancaster House, built circa 1830, is the MBWML's main museum building housing exhibit galleries, the gift shop and bookstore, and administrative offices. It has been a private home, a tavern, and a boarding house at various times in its history. Changing exhibits highlight a variety of objects and artifacts related to the county's history, collected by the museum from local donors. Lancaster House is located across the street from the research library building. Public parking for both the museum and library is available in front of Lancaster House.

Karen Hart, Executive Director  
Mary Ball Washington Museum & Library  
The History and Genealogy Center for Lancaster and Virginia's Northern Neck

Dated: 4 June 2014