

CHIPPOKES PLANTATION STATE PARK AND THE JONES-STEWART MANSION A BRIEF HISTORY

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HERE TO SERVE....The mission of the Friends of Chippokes Plantation State Park is to identify and promote activities to enhance the cultural and natural resources of Chippokes Plantation State Park. In furtherance of our mission, the Friends of Chippokes shall actively encourage donations and fund-raising to support the Park. **Friends is a 501c(3) organization.**

1619	1623-1678	1678-1836	1837-1917	1918-1966	1967	1971
First Land Grants to William Powell	Successive Absentee Landowners	Property of Phillip Ludwell and Descendants	A. C. Jones and Jones Family Heirs	V. & E. Stewart purchase and restore	Mrs. Stewart gifts Chippokes to Commonwealth	Chippokes Plantation State Park opens to the public

The written record of Chippokes Plantation begins c. 1619 when English gentleman, William Powell, received patents for 550 and 200 acres of land on the "Surry side" of the James River. Powell had arrived at the fledgling Jamestown settlement on a resupply ship ~1611. By 1617, he was appointed by Governor Samuel Argall as "Captain of his guards and company, Lieutenant Governor and Commander of James Town blockhouses and people there." In 1619, he represented James City County in the first House of Burgesses. Records in the British State Paper Office and in the colonial land and court records of James City and Surry Counties attest to Captain Powell's status and his ownership of what became known as Chippokes Plantation.

Powell's land grant lay in the village of Algonquian Chief Chipcoaks, a lower-ranking chief under paramount chief, Powhatan. An uneasy, on-again/off-again peace existed between Powhatan's people and the early Jamestown colonists. In 1622, Powhatan's successor raided the English Tidewater settlements and massacred about 1/3 of the settlers. Powell survived the attack on Jamestown Fort, but as captain of the militia, he led a retaliatory raid early in 1623 and was himself killed. By the 1640s, subsequent owners expanded Chippokes' boundaries to its present 1,403 historic acres. Beginning with Powell, all these early landowners appear to have been absentee landlords who leased the land or farmed it with overseers, indentured servants, and slaves. Among the early owners were Governor William Berkeley and the wealthy and influential Philip Ludwell family. The Ludwells owned Chippokes the longest—150+ years. During the Revolutionary War, Chippokes was confiscated from John and Lucy Ludwell Paradise due to their continued loyalty to the British Crown. At War's end, old friend Thomas Jefferson interceded on their behalf with the new American Government, and their properties, including Chippokes, were returned to them.

In 1837, Albert Carroll Jones of Isle of Wight County purchased Chippokes for \$12,000. He was the first owner to actually reside on the property, living first in the then four-room c. 1830 River House, doubling it in size within a few years. In 1840, Jones ran his plantation with 13 slaves. He planted extensive fruit orchards at Chippokes and was one of a very few in the second quarter of the 19th century with a legal license to distill liquor. He brewed peach and apple brandies and cider in his Chippokes distillery. To accommodate his burgeoning business, he built a wharf and storehouses near the River House and the river, and shipped his brandies all along the East Coast.

Albert married 18-year-old Ann M. Baskerville of North Carolina in 1844 when he was 29. Their daughter, Mary Ann, was born in 1847. Ann died in 1850. She is buried, along with Albert's parents, Peter and Mary Ann Jones, at the old family home, Round Oak, in Isle of Wight.

Estimates are that Jones began building the brick mansion in 1852, using materials available on the plantation. It was completed of brick with a stuccoed front façade ~1854, at which time Jones, his mother, and young daughter moved in. The separate brick kitchen was built about the same time with living quarters above for Jones's slave cook and laundress. By 1860, Jones claimed the value of his real estate at \$20,000.00, and he now owned 43 slaves.

During the Civil War, there was constant gunboat action on the James River and military skirmishes in and around Surry County, but Chippokes escaped the war years relatively unscathed.

Legend is that Albert Jones sold brandy to both Union and Confederate troops who were reluctant to interfere with their liquor supplier. Jones did not serve in the Confederate Army, but requested and received a pardon from President Andrew Johnson in 1865 for any perceived activities against the United States. He did supply four of his slaves to work on the Ft. Huger fortifications in 1862, for which he was paid \$80.00 by the Confederate Army. Albert's son-in-law, Charles W. Sutton, was a Civil War Virginia Infantry veteran, wounded at Seven Pines, who married Mary Ann in 1871. After their marriage, Mary Ann Jones Sutton and Charles lived in the River House. Charles died in 1880.

Albert Jones died in 1881. He left his estate to his only surviving direct descendants, daughter Mary Ann and grandson Henry, with life provisions for second wife, Roberta Baskerville Jones, sister of his first wife. The Jones/Sutton families are buried in the old Southwark Parish cemetery in Surry County. Roberta outlived both Mary Ann and Henry. Upon her death in 1910, the estate was inherited by her Baskerville relatives. Due to non-payment of debts, the entire estate went up for auction in 1918.

Victor W. and Evelyn Stewart and partner Thornton Jeffries bought Chippokes at this auction for \$47,000.00. The Stewarts bought out Jeffries in 1925 for \$5,000.00 and made Chippokes their home. A native of Ohio, Victor attended Swarthmore College and served in the Spanish American War. He owned a prosperous lumber business in North Carolina. Native Pennsylvanian, Evelyn Bleakley Stewart, was a 1907 graduate of Vassar College who had married Victor in 1909.

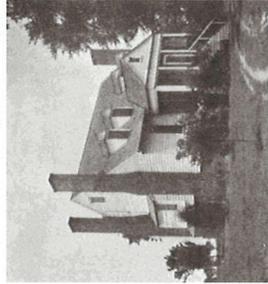
After purchasing Chippokes, Victor established the Colonial Pine Company in Petersburg, Virginia, and founded the Virginia Forestry Association. Well known and respected by business colleagues and Virginia legislators, Stewart received numerous accolades for his progressive thinking on the environmental impact of deforestation. Stewart was also a humanitarian, instrumental in helping to build and fund the Petersburg Hospital, where he died in 1965.

While Victor concentrated on his lumber business, Evelyn, a former teacher, ran Chippokes Plantation assisted by tenant farmers. She was an accomplished equestrian and an avid gardener, responsible for planting the formal gardens at Chippokes. Evelyn furnished the mansion with 18th and 19th century antiques and renovated the brick kitchen to display her cooking and laundry antiques.

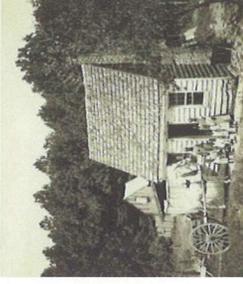
The Stewarts ran a dairy operation at Chippokes for a time and also raised turkeys. In the early 1950s, they replaced a small, one-story mansion wing with the current, two-story wing that contains a first-floor galley kitchen and two, second-floor bathrooms. They also built a one-story kitchen dining space where tenant workers were occasionally fed noon meals.

After Victor's death, Evelyn deeded the plantation in its entirety to the Commonwealth of Virginia in his memory, retaining life rights, and stipulating that it continue to be farmed as it had for centuries before. Evelyn died in 1969. Victor and Evelyn are buried in her beloved garden at Chippokes.

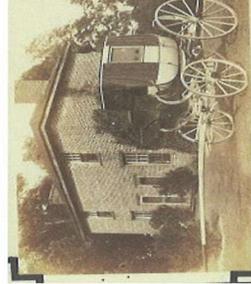
Today, Chippokes is one of the longest continual farming operations in the nation. Local farmers lease the farmland and continue to grow various crops. A herd of cows remains on the property as an homage to the Stewart's dairy operation. Visitors enjoy four centuries of agricultural history and plantation life at



River House in the 1930s



Tenant House, ~1920



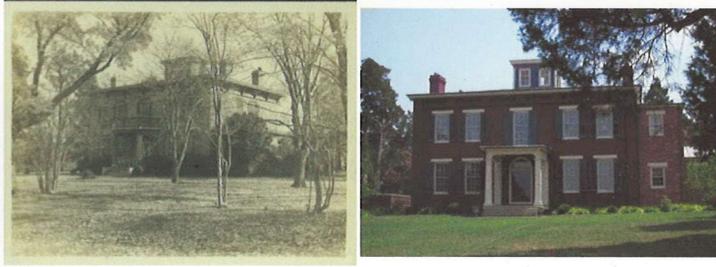
Kitchen and 19th c. Carriage



The Stewarts, 1920s

Chippokes Plantation... Virginia's Jewel on the James

Mansion House – Then and Now



Mansion Interior - Gentlemen's Parlor



Mansion furnishings and personal possessions were left essentially intact by last owners.

Chippokes Plantation, a 1,947-acre state park, lies in Surry County, Virginia, across the James River from Jamestown. Chippokes sits on a peninsula of land bounded by the James River and Lower Chippokes Creek.

The plantation's historic area contains 37 historically significant structures, including two 19th century manor houses with separate, outdoor kitchens; an 18th century barn; a carriage house; and numerous other dependency buildings. More than 30 archaeological sites have been identified, dating to 3,000 B.C.



Quarter Lane Barns

The five-building Farm & Forestry Museum exhibits several centuries of farming and farmhouse tools, equipment, and vehicles.

The park's recreational area consists of a Visitor Center, campgrounds, picnic areas, equestrian trails, and a swimming pool. Renovated ~1930s tenant houses serve as cabin rentals on the historic grounds.



Chippokes Plantation was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1968.