

ship information, contact Hanover Arc: 804-798-2400; e-mail: info@Hanoverarc.org.

Free open houses of courthouse are offered monthly

Free informational open houses are being offered at the historic Hanover Courthouse between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month.

The Parks & Recreation Department is offering an inside look at the courthouse where Patrick Henry first gained fame in 1763.

Hanover Courthouse is believed to have been built around 1737, making it the second oldest courthouse in

Virginia that is still in use. The courthouse is nearly as old as the county, which was formed in 1720.

In the early days, the courthouse was the center of county life. On monthly court days, the justices heard civil suits, held hearings in criminal cases and issued tavern licenses. Four court days a year were reserved for jury trials. Auctions of both real estate and slaves were held in the historic courthouse.

The courthouse and its surroundings would have been crowded with people selling food and whiskey and witnesses for cases boarding overnight at Hanover Tavern next door. Court days brought people together who might not have seen one another since the last court day, and it provided a welcome opportunity for "entertainment" and gossip.