

# DECK LOG

*Dahlgren Heritage Museum*



## Visit by The National Center of Women's Innovations

*By Alan Dean*

On Thursday, July 13th, the museum hosted a visit of a group from the National Center of Women's Innovations. Ms. Jane Plitt, Board Chair of the Center, and board member BK Fulton and his wife Jackie Stone met with Dahlgren Heritage Foundation President Ed Jones, Vice President Dr. Rob Gates, this author, and our docent Harry Black to tour the museum and learn more about the role Dr. Gladys West played in the development of the Global Positioning System.

Dr. Gates provided a brief history of the Base and pointed out some of the featured artifacts, like the GEOID. The complexity

L-R: Ed Jones, Dr. Rob Gates, Jane Plitt, Jackie Stone and BK Fulton

of the factors to determine location and the tools needed was also briefly discussed. Harry had brought in the instrument he used to determine location while over the ocean in a plane when he was in the Navy prior to GPS.

The Center is planning an inaugural gala in Pentagon City, VA, on Friday, October 27th, to honor Dr. West on her 93rd birthday (<https://womensinnovations.org/dr-gladys-b-west-gala/>) The keynote speaker will be Deborah Roberts, ABC national news correspondent. Proceeds from the gala will be used to build a mobile exhibit honoring the work of Dr. West that is scheduled to be unveiled on Juneteenth, 2024.

**Considering Donating Items  
to the Museum?**

Visit

<https://www.dahlgrenmuseum.org/donate-artifacts>



**Equipment Used – Mole 3D Scanner and Turntable by 3dMakerPro**

## Exploring the World of 3D Scanning

*By Alan Dean*

As a part of our strategic effort to become a museum without walls, this author and Sara Carlson, a granddaughter of Ira and Gladys West, began exploring creating 3D scans of featured artifacts to create online exhibits for the museum's new website. Sara delved into 3D scanning and printing during an internship at Dahlgren and volunteered to help. There were two artifacts in the recent West exhibit selected for this trial. One was a set of salt and pepper shakers (seen on the turntable in the equipment photo) from their wedding, and the other was the bride and groom cake topper. Each attempt was a learning experience as Sara used her expertise to enhance the scanning of the images, such as by using baby powder to make shiny surfaces provide more contrast. After a few hours, which seemed like minutes, and learning the quirks of the scanning equipment using the salt and pepper shakers, we decided to attempt a scan



**Sara Carlson Scanning**

of the cake topper. The result was better than we expected.

The equipment also included an attachment to perform color scanning of the object to reduce the colorizing post processing efforts. We plan to meet again at the museum at the end of August to begin exploring this equipment feature.

While we are several steps away from creating the first online exhibit using 3D scans, we have begun the journey. The scanning equipment was purchased using the Duff McDuff Green, Jr. Fund grant funds supplied by the Community Foundation of the Rappahannock River Region (<https://www.cfrrr.org/>).



**Side by Side Comparison – 3D Scan vs Object**



*Niamh has worked with us as a paid intern thanks to the Virginia Heritage Fund grant from the Community Foundation.*

*We are thankful for her impressive work as a valued member of our team and wish her the best of luck as she returns to college this month as a rising senior.*

## Intern's Summer Comes to a Close

By Niamh Connell

Throughout the summer I have photographed and cataloged objects and documents from the museum's collection. Since starting in late May, I have worked with eleven collections and over one thousand objects and documents. These collections range from magazines from World War II with articles on Dahlgren's war efforts to clippings from Dahlgren's newspaper dating back to the 1970s. While each item provides a unique perspective on Dahlgren and the work it has done over the past decades, they come together to portray a well-rounded image of both the scientific and personal achievements of the base.

Working with these documents has allowed me to learn more about the spirit of the base that the museum is striving to preserve. I personally enjoy reading about the various activities that occurred on base outside of work hours, like cleanup efforts and bowling leagues. Throughout my time at the museum, not only have I been able to work with dedicated people, but I have gotten to learn about a piece of Virginia history I was previously unfamiliar with.

**Dahlgren Heritage Museum's**

**Dueling Pianos**

**Saturday  
November 11th**

**Estate at  
White Hall Vineyard**

**Stay tuned for  
times and  
ticket information  
on our upcoming  
fundraising event  
with The Flying  
Ivories.**

**THE FLYING IVORIES**





## A Propelling Artifact

*By Dr. Rob Gates*

One of the prominent artifacts at the museum is the propeller from a Curtiss NC-9H seaplane that flew unmanned at Dahlgren on September 15, 1924.

Carl Norden came to Dahlgren to work on his bombsight but, because of his previous work on unmanned aircraft, was asked to install his control system on the NC-9H and mate it with a radio system that had been developed by the Naval Aircraft Radio Laboratory (later part of the Naval Research Laboratory). After two successful flights with a safety pilot that morning, Lieutenant John J. Ballantine remotely controlled the airplane as it took off, maneuvered, and landed. This was the first unmanned aircraft to do all of these functions.

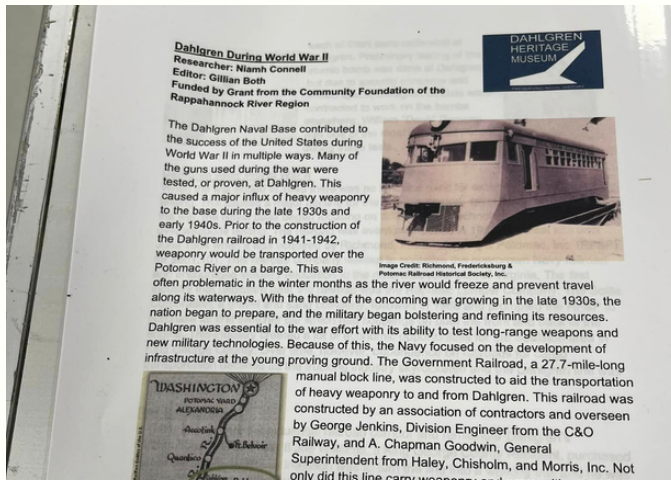
Visit the museum to see this unique artifact Wednesday through Sunday, 10 am to 4 pm.



**BEGINNING OCTOBER 2023  
WE INVITE YOU TO  
CELEBRATE WITH US  
THE 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE  
DAHLGREN HERITAGE  
MUSEUM**

**DETAILS TO COME!**





Items to be included in the time capsule at the new King George County courthouse.



## Museum Representation in County Time Capsule

By Alan Dean

The Dahlgren Heritage Museum, in partnership with the Dahlgren Railroad Heritage Trail (<https://www.dahlgrenrail.org/>), submitted a railroad spike and a history of the Dahlgren Railroad written by our own Gillian Both for inclusion in a King George County time capsule. This time capsule will be placed in the base of the flagpole to be erected in front of the new courthouse on Route 3. A shoutout to Jim Lynch of the Dahlgren Railroad Heritage Trail and Renee Parker of the King George Historical Society (<https://kinggeorgehistory.org/>) for helping to make this happen.



### GUIDED BUS TOURS

We are offering three more tours of Naval Support Facility Dahlgren this year. Tours leave from the museum promptly at 11 a.m. All tours are free, but you must register to attend: visit <https://www.dahlgrenmuseum.org/events-calendar> for details. Donations are always encouraged!

#### Remaining 2023 Tour Dates:

Saturday, August 19th  
 Saturday, September 16th  
 Saturday, October 21st

## 2023 - 2024 Membership

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Thank you for your support of the Dahlgren Heritage Foundation! With your help we are educating the community on the Dahlgren story, running a museum, and working towards hosting more interesting and exciting events.

We wouldn't be able to do any of this without you. We look forward to another great year, and we are thankful for your membership. Donate by mailing a check to: P. O. Box 816, Dahlgren, VA 22448 or visit [www.dahlgrenmuseum.org](http://www.dahlgrenmuseum.org) and click Membership.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Individual Membership \$25.00 \_\_\_\_\_

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I would like to make an additional tax deductible donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to volunteer at Dahlgren Museum and fundraising events.