Just now, all the attention’s on Jamestown, but Charles County will have its turn. 2008 marks the county’s 350th anniversary and a year-long celebration is in the works.

Members of the 350th Executive Planning Committee attended the end of last Tuesday’s Board of Commissioners meeting while Committee Chairwoman Bobbie Baldus and Director of Economic Development John Reardon announced plans for the celebration. Ms. Baldus was also there to secure the commissioners’ involvement as costumed participants in a re-enactment of the reading of the proclamation of 1658 to create the county.

‘[That was] the most enthusiasm I’ve seen from a committee’ quipped Board of Commissioners President Wayne Cooper. The commissioners were impressed with the array of events and the particular care the committee is taking to involve all the areas of the county.

The county is providing $50,000 to fund the celebration and the committee is seeking matching funds from the State. They are also looking for additional private sponsorships.

Ms. Baldus’ information and enthusiasm left the board in a good mood. The report prompted several minutes of uncharacteristic ‘goofing off’ to the stunned amusement of local reporters. There was a good deal of jovial grumbling and laughter over period costuming, powdered wigs, and historical authenticity in the roles the commissioners would play during the anniversary’s events.

Commissioners Edith Patterson and Reuben Collins feel that the 350th Anniversary is an excellent tourism opportunity.

‘It’s a great way to promote the county,’ Collins told The Bay Net.

Patterson added, “It’ll attract people down here this year, next year and for years to come.”

The schedule of events starts in 2008 with a Black-Tie Gala at the historic Mt. Victoria estate on the anniversary date of the county’s official incorporation, May 10th. The celebration continues through November with displays, fireworks, re-enactments, tours, and a parade.

Watch TheBayNet.com for a full schedule of events.