



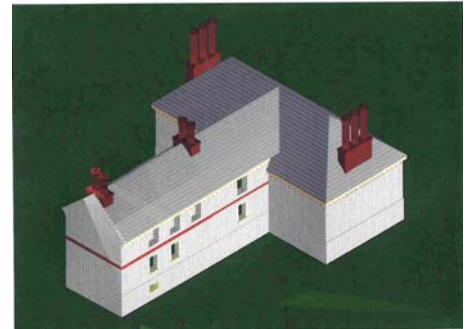
Year 2002 Update

Virginia Foundation for the Humanities Supports Fairfield



The Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and Public Policy approved a grant for \$6500 to the Fairfield Foundation in July. The funds will support the fabrication of interpretive signs at the manor house ruin and cover publication costs and other support for the overall project. The VFH is the first organization to support an extensive research project intended to analyze and create a digital 3-D model of the landscape surrounding Fairfield.

The model will be the centerpiece of a newly revised web site for Fairfield. Visitors will be able to take a virtual reality tour of the plantation, looking at different buildings and seeing how they changed



Preliminary 3-D Reconstruction of Fairfield

through time. The Fairfield Foundation will submit an additional grant application to the VFH in October to help support the design and production of the web site and 3-D model. We hope to raise the additional funds necessary to complete the project this fall.



Inside this issue:

Roller-Bottimore, Gwathmey, and Treacle Support Manor House Excavations	2
Article Published on Mysterious Tombstone	2
C.A. Barrs Construction Clears Fairfield Cemetery	2
Manor House Excavations Underway	3
Researching the Thrustons of Fairfield	3
Artifact of the Month: Excelsior Cast Iron Cooking Stove	3
Searching for Fairfield's Formal Garden	4

Fairfield Facts:

- Lewis Burwell I patented 2350 acres on Carter Creek in 1648
- His tomb is the oldest in Gloucester County, dated 1658
- His son, Lewis II, builds Fairfield in 1694

Fairfield Student Lecture Night a Success

The Fairfield Foundation had its first lecture night on May 16th and we packed the Rosewell Visitor Center for a great evening of learning about Fairfield Plantation. Nearly fifty people watched six high school students from Gloucester and two Petsworth Elementary School students present papers on their research and experiences at Fairfield. Afterwards, everyone was treated to an extravagant array of food and beverages arranged by

our amazing volunteer, Lyn Ripley. The papers included Nathan Miller's 3-D reconstruction, Jaime Cascante's architectural elevations of the manor house, Colin Riley's research on the unknown black tenants of Fairfield's final days, the Mike Pierce's history of Haynes/Burwell mill pond, Jen Goode's study of Fairfield's formal garden, and the debut of Lindsay Braisted's archaeology exhibit.

Roller-Bottimore, Gwathmey, and Treakle Foundations Support Manor House Excavations

The Roller-Bottimore Foundation "is glad to have this opportunity to help [the Fairfield] Foundation with this exciting project"

The Roller-Bottimore Foundation of Richmond, a charitable organization that supports historic preservation projects throughout Virginia, challenged the Fairfield Foundation with a \$25,000 matching grant to support the archaeological excavation of the manor house. A timely pledge from the Hunt Family Foundation, along with generous donations from the Peebles Family Fund, Ann Hohenberger, Carolyn and Richard Abbitt, Carl Barr, Bob and Lyn Ripley, helped us match the grant in May,

paving the way for work this summer. Special thanks are needed for Harry Wason and Stacy Lloyd, two of our board members who came through for us when we needed them most. This spring the J. Edwin Treakle Foundation and the Richard and Caroline T. Gwathmey Memorial Trust joined the Roller-Bottimore Foundation in supporting our excavations at Fairfield. Their support will help us continue our work throughout the summer.

Article Published on Mysterious Tombstone



Emanuel J. Thruston Jr.'s Tombstone

In February, Sara Troxel's troop of Daisies and Brownies came to Fairfield and discovered the rectangular marble tombstone of Emanuel J. Thruston Jr. They were immortalized in print with the publication of "The Thruston Family and the Tombstone Mystery" in the June 2002 issue of *The Family Tree Searcher*. This marks the first of many collaborations with the Gloucester Genealogical Society of Virginia, a locally based group that has produced

an extraordinary series of publications about the history of Gloucester County families. The article covers the discovery of the tombstone and leads the reader through our research on the man, his family, and the reasons for the stone's eventual placement within the destroyed cellar of Fairfield almost fifty years after his death. If you would like more information on this organization, please visit their website at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~vaggsv/vaggsv>.

C.A. Barrs Construction Clears Fairfield Cemetery



Clearing the Cemetery at Fairfield.

On May 2nd a crew from C.A. Barrs Construction helped clear the Burwell and Thruston cemetery at Fairfield. This roughly one-acre circular parcel of overgrown woods once held the table tombs of the Burwell family and served as the final resting place for the Thruston family. The table tombs and burials were removed to Abingdon Parish Church in 1911 after vandalism

and disrepair had severely damaged them. We discovered numerous carved stone and brick fragments, forming a rectangular scatter around the center of the parcel. This scatter, similar in size to the cemetery wall at Warner Hall, could represent a wall, or the remains of the table tombs.

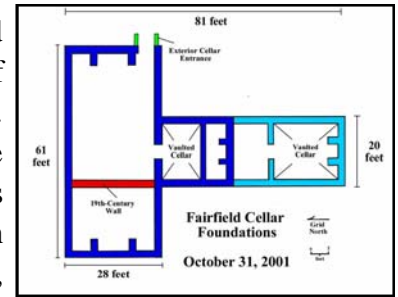


Manor House Excavations Underway

In June, the Fairfield Foundation staff began large-scale excavations focusing on the manor house ruin. The goal of the summer's research is to uncover the relationship between the 1694 T-shaped portion of the building and the rectangular addition to the south. We also hope to discover details concerning the different construction methods for the manor house's two vaulted cellars.

Test excavations in 2001 identified thick layers of brick rubble and mortar from the dismantling of the building. These destruction layers cover

a significant deposit of charcoal and burned material dating to the fall of 1897 when the house caught fire. The artifacts recovered from these test excavations included numerous glass bottles, ceramics, iron can fragments, and personal goods, such as buttons, thimbles, and coins. The most surprising find was an Excelsior cast-iron cooking stove (see article on page 3). We hope to find more of these items as we excavate portions of the cellar this summer.



Foundation Plan of Fairfield

Researching the Thrustons of Fairfield: Investigating the Robert Reade Thruston Papers

On May 10th, the Fairfield crew visited Hyde Park, the home of Ann Thruston Scott in Nottoway County. Ms. Scott is a direct descendant of Emanuel J. Thruston, Jr. of Millwood (see tombstone article) and of Robert Thruston of Fairfield, who purchased Fairfield from the Burwell family in 1787. Her father, Robert Reade Thruston, retained an amazing collection of family papers dating from the seventeenth through twentieth centuries. Topics included

family business, the early settlement of Guinea and Gloucester Point, and the lives of the Thruston family at Fairfield and nearby Millwood. Ms. Scott is an amazing woman who retained a wealth of information on her family's past and was very helpful in sharing her knowledge and collection with us. We look forward to working with her more and conducting further research on her family's papers.

Volunteers At Fairfield

- Over 100 volunteers have worked more than 3000 hours helping the Fairfield Foundation since November 2000
- Over 100 4th and 5th grade students from Petsworth Elementary School participated in educational programs
- Volunteers helped the Fairfield archaeologists find over 50,000 artifacts and dig over 5,000 cubic feet of soil at the site.

Stove Fragments in the Cellar.



Artifact of the Month: Excelsior Cast Iron Cooking Stove

Recently, over 40 fragments of a cast-iron Excelsior Cook Blast Stove were discovered in the cellar at Fairfield. Found within the layer of ash and charcoal from the 1897 fire, the stove was likely the main cooking surface for the building's residents. But was it the source of the fire? That is yet to be seen.

1880 Letterhead Illustration



FAIRFIELD FOUNDATION, INC.

P.O. Box 157
White Marsh VA 23183

Phone: 804-694-4775
Email: fairfield@ccsinc.com



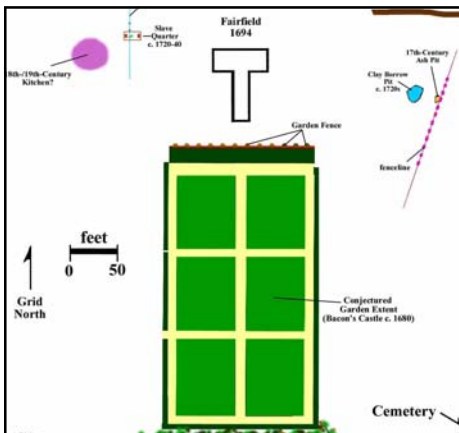
An 1847 Sketch of Fairfield



The Ruins of Fairfield with the York River in the Background.

Check Us Out On The Web!
<http://fsweb.wm.edu/fairfield/>

Searching for Fairfield's Formal Garden



Hypothetical Reconstruction of the Formal Gardens at Fairfield.

"We walked in the garden about an hour"
— William Byrd, May 4, 1709

In the summer of 2001, archaeologists discovered the remains of a formal garden at Fairfield. Over 70 feet of the garden's northeast corner was uncovered, revealing a substantial fence line with numerous repairs. The garden fence had large 10-inch square posts set at 10-foot intervals.

As part of this summer's excavations, a search was conducted for the northwest corner of the garden. Approximately 165 feet west of the northeast corner was found a similar post. While the overall length of the garden is still unknown, a comparison with other eighteenth-century gardens at Bacon's Castle, Kingsmill, and Carter's Grove suggests a length of

at least 330 feet. Future excavations will focus on confirming the garden's dimensions, internal layout, and the plants grown within it. A digital reconstruction and on-site interpretive signs will use this data to present the Fairfield gardens to visitors.



18th-century Garden Urn Fragment Attributed to Fairfield.