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Fairfield  Foundation

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Thanks to Staff Archaeologist Meredith Mahoney for helping put together this issue of the newsletter



Fundraising Challenge

Fairfield Awarded Three Grants for Research and Construction Projects

Building the protective structure is the Fairfield Foundation's most ambitious project to date. From the outset, the Board of Directors and Staff committed themselves to spending the time and resources necessary to ensure long term success with real, tangible results. We understood that preserving and interpreting the plantation manor house would require ample amounts of hard work and money. While we've always been blessed with volunteers and friends supplying the former, it wasn't until recently that we had significant monetary support for this project. Through the generosity of The Cabell Foundation and the Seay Foundation we are challenged to match \$62,500 by June 2008. These funds, matched with contributions from supporters like yourself and other private



Conservation of wall sections like this are an integral part of our plans to preserve and protect the ruin.

foundations, will allow us to complete excavations and construct the protective structure above the manor house ruins. We've already received grants from the Fred Lee Brown Charitable Foundation and the J. Edwin Treakle Foundation to help match a portion of these challenges, but we need much more support to reach our goal.

An integral part of "The Future of Fairfield Plantation" project, though, includes assessing the condition of the manor house ruin and stabilizing the brick and mortar so that future generations of visitors to Fairfield may see the remains of one of Virginia's most enigmatic colonial homes. Archaeological excavations continue to reveal how the building was constructed, lived in, and destroyed between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries. As each new section of foundation is exposed, we are challenged to document, assess, and conserve the fragile fabric of this once stately manor house, home to one of the colony's wealthiest and politically influential families in the 1700s and home to African-American tenant farmers in the late 1800s- a part of our heritage we sorely need to learn more about.

We hope you will consider contributing directly towards the conservation of this important house. Every dollar contributed will be matched by the donations of the Cabell and Seay Foundations, making your support worth that much more—and bringing us one step closer to protecting the Fairfield manor house.

Fairfield Fundraiser at Warner Hall

The Fairfield Foundation launched its 2007 fundraising campaign with a wine and hors d'oeuvres event at the Inn at Warner Hall on March 15th. The event sought to bring in new donors as well as encourage additional support from existing foundation members. The Fairfield staff mingled with guests and provided updates on current research, and Virginia Historical Society president and CEO, Charles F. Bryan presented special remarks. Dr. Bryan applauded the Fairfield Foundation's efforts to protect and interpret the plantation site, explaining that "institutions like this are beacons of *freedom of the past*...they are places open to all people to learn the lessons of history freely and without censorship." While we live in an era of unprecedented efforts to preserve the past, the threats are many. Although you may not have thought of it this way, donations to the Fairfield Foundation and other forms of support, including in-kind contributions and volunteering, strengthens an important freedom we enjoy—the freedom of the past.

The event also served as a forum to present future plans for Fairfield Plantation. Attendees viewed Bob Butler's model of the protective structure which will shelter the manor house foundation (and archaeologists) from the elements. The model, constructed with great attention to detail, provides an illustration of the structure and platforms which will allow visitors to view the site in a manner safe both for people and the fragile archaeological resources. Information regarding the environmentally friendly, LEED standard construction of the structure was also available. Other exhibits at the event included Digital Fairfield, a three-dimensional digital representation of architectural changes to the house over time, the Women of Fairfield exhibit, and a display of wine bottles and punch bowls—artifacts befitting of the wine theme of the event.



Dave Brown and Bob Butler with the model of the protective structure.



Close-up of the Fairfield model showing possible viewing platform.

Over 50 new and veteran donors attended the event which raised over \$2500 towards continued excavation and construction of the protective structure at the site. A small step towards the \$100,000 goal for the year, the event successfully increased awareness of future plans for the site. The model of the protective structure and information regarding its construction are available for viewing at the foundation's lab at the Rosewell Visitor Center. Look for more information regarding the structure and future fundraising events and strategies in upcoming newsletters.

Archaeology & Abingdon Glebe

Each year the Fairfield Foundation is fortunate to participate in public archaeology programs that benefit the local community beyond the boundaries of historic Fairfield Plantation. Throughout the spring, staff and volunteers, with the help of Professor Martin Gallivan's archaeology students from the College of William and Mary, participated in a survey of Abingdon Glebe. The property and its magnificent early eighteenth-century glebe house are a testament to the role the Anglican church played in Gloucester County during the colonial period. The remarkably intact structure, with its T-shaped plan and rare closet-like extensions or wings, is still surrounded by over thirty acres of fields and forest allowing it to quietly hide behind the hustle and bustle of chaotic U.S. Route 17.

Within these surrounding fields, and in the yard areas immediately adjacent to the glebe house, are concentrations of artifacts from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that help tell the story of this farm and its occupants both during its use by local clergy as well as its life in private hands after the dissolution of the church following the Revolutionary War. In July, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation architectural historian Carl Lounsbury returned to the site with students from the College of William and Mary to compile measured drawings of the glebe, adding this important structure to the database of colonial buildings and providing yet another wonderful opportunity to learn from Gloucester County's past.



William and Mary students digging at Abingdon Glebe

Off to Grad School

Sarah Heinsman came to the Fairfield Foundation in the summer of 2006 bringing superior field and interpretative skills and a propensity for punctuality previously unknown to the Fairfield staff. Sarah's research interests and experience in prehistoric archaeology were significant assets, and she led surveys and excavations of Virginia Indian resources at Fairfield. Her excavations identified rare Middle/Late Woodland period pit features and provided the data for an upcoming article in the Archeological Society of Virginia Quarterly Bulletin. Sarah is now completing a M.A. in Elementary Education at the College of William and Mary. We are certain she will become a valued teacher. Good luck Sarah!



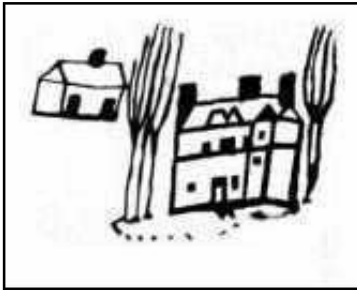
Sarah at Rosewell

Good Food and Good Times at the River Gourmet

Walk into the River Gourmet at White Marsh during lunchtime on a Thursday and you are bound to find the Fairfield Foundation staff. We are indebted to the River Gourmet, and not just because they always know what we want to drink and never question our dirty appearance! The folks at the River Gourmet are truly friends and supporters. Margie and her wonderful staff graciously provide the inquisitive public with our brochures and newsletters and are in the process of adding a large picture of the Fairfield Manor house to the existing historic photographs in the restaurant. If you've never been, we encourage you to go and experience the friendly service, wonderful sandwiches, salads, and desserts (we are especially fond of the Fudge Bottom Pie)!

Membership News

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1847 Sketch of Fairfield



Copies of the Fairfield Plantation Interactive Site Tour are still available for purchase. If you have not ordered a copy please do so today. The CD-Rom is available for \$15 plus \$2 shipping and handling. Orders of 3 or more are only \$12 each.

Ordering Info:
fairfield@inna.net

or

(804) 694-4775

Your generous contributions are making possible our exciting and important excavations, our work with high school and college interns and other groups, and soon a book on the first years of excavation and research at Fairfield. Thanks to everybody who has generously donated time and resources to the Fairfield Foundation.

Gifts of any size are welcome, and are fully tax deductible. Please pass on this information to anyone you know who may be interested.

Thank you!

Visit us on the web at: www.fairfieldfoundation.org

Annual Giving Levels

Basic: \$15

Family: \$25

Friends of Fairfield: \$30 - \$99

Carter Creek Society: \$100-\$499

Landmark Society: \$500-\$999

1694 Society: \$1000-\$2499

Lewis Burwell Society: \$2500+

Welcome to New and Renewed Members

Basic

Lois Winter

Jennifer Cook

Jeffrey and Barbara Smigel

Betsy Carter

Family

Dave and Sam Meredith

Robert Bigelow

James Finneran

Robert and Susan Edwards

Hugh Dischinger

Rodney and Karen Lorence

Landmark Society

Lynn and Bob Ripley

Judy Ford

Lewis Burwell Society

Harry Wason

Friends

Janice Whiting

Carter Creek Society

Ware Episcopal Church

Elizabeth Page Aldrich

The Fairfield Foundation is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization dedicated to the archaeological study of the Burwell plantation in Gloucester County, known as Fairfield/Carter's Creek. The foundation has launched an extended investigation into all aspects of this colonial plantation, with the goal of studying, preserving, and presenting this new knowledge to the public.