

News From Red Hill

PUBLISHED BY THE PATRICK HENRY MEMORIAL FOUNDATION — BROOKNEAL, VA



P. Henry
RED HILL
PATRICK HENRY
NATIONAL MEMORIAL



CLOSING 2018 WITH A COZY CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

The Christmas Open House was the perfect way to kick off the holiday season with a colonial flair at Red Hill. It was a chilly overcast afternoon, but it did not stop our local visitors from enjoying the spirit of the season.

In the colonial era, the choice of and reasoning behind Christmas decorations was very simple. During the *(continued on page 13)*

In This Issue...

Red Hill Collection
Page 3

Living History
Spotlight
Page 4

2018 Year in Photos
Page 6

2018 Donor Thanks
Page 8

Faces of Red Hill
Page 15

VIRGINIA'S ENDANGERED ARTIFACTS TOP TEN LIST

We are pleased and honored to announce that Red Hill has been given the opportunity to participate in the Virginia Association of Museums Endangered Artifacts program this year. Our entry into the program was chosen as one of the top ten applicants to be entered into voting for the chance to win funding for the conservation of a particular item of historic value. The top ten list of artifacts was chosen by a review panel comprised of a representative from the VAM's partner organizations: Library of Virginia, Preservation Virginia, Virginia Depart-

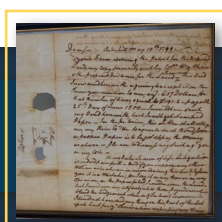
ment of Historic Resources, and the Virginia Conservation Association. The panel also includes an independent conservator. This year a total of 23 applications were received. Each panel member reviews each application using a rubric to score each. They then come together as a group, present their individual ratings, and discuss the items until they narrow the options down to ten. The final decision and winner will be determined by voting open to the public through the Virginia Association of Museums' website. The two institutions that receive *(continued on page 2)*

BB&B SUCCESS

Our 2018 Bluegrass, Barbecue, & Brew Festival was an absolute hit! The weather was perfect and the grounds were filled with over 1,700 visitors. Many were “returnees” from previous years’ festivals, some of whom attend *every* year as a tradition. We also had many who were new to both the festival and to Red Hill. The sun was shining and it was a beautiful day to be outside on our grounds. Our docents volunteered in many capacities by interpreting the historic buildings and grounds, pouring beer, helping visitors and assisting in other crucial duties throughout the day. Many of the guests took advantage of the tours in the historic buildings as part of their festival ticket. They also visited our

museum, viewed our orientation video and shopped in the museum gift shop.

This year the musical stage featured Breaking Grass, Nothin’ Fancy, and Joe Mullins and the Radio Ramblers. This was a return visit for Breaking Grass, always an audience favorite. It was also an encore for Nothin’ Fancy, who have an enthusiastic following and are very supportive of our event by letting us promote the BB&B at their September festival held in Buena Vista, VA every year. Joe Mullins and the Radio Ramblers quickly became impressed with Patrick Henry and Red Hill. Joe, a big history buff, took advantage of the docent tours between *(continued on page 14)*



ENDANGERED ARTIFACT LIST (CONT.)

(Continued from page 1)

the most votes will receive awards of \$4,000 and \$3,000 respectively toward the conservation of their endangered artifacts.

For our entry into the contest, Myra Trent wrote an application submitting the 1823 Plat of Red Hill. The plat includes a hand-drawn map of Red Hill with the original latitude/

longitude descriptions as well as key details about the placement of now-lost roads and natural identifiers. As Myra stated in her write-up of the artifact, “the preservation of this plat is essential to our ability to further interpret and restore the original property. The plat points out natural boundaries on the property that are

still here today. To have this artifact restored would mean that this piece of history will live on here at Red Hill. It will continue to tell a piece of the Henry story here in Campbell and Charlotte counties.” Bob Miller, appraiser with Farmer Auctions in Salem, VA came to Red Hill to appraise some other artifacts. He saw the plat

From the Red Hill Collection



DOROTHEA HENRY'S ENGLISH GUITAR

Upon entering the E. Stuart James Grant Museum at Red Hill, most objects can be easily identified. However, over Patrick Henry's fiddle hangs an instrument that belonged to Dorothea Henry. The instrument looks slightly like a mandolin. This unusual piece is called an English guitar, and it is very difficult to categorize into one family. Still today, there are debates over whether this instrument is considered a guitar or "cittern." If our instrument could be played, it would have a distinctly Irish tone, which closely relates it to the cittern. The instrument was introduced to English society in the 1750s, and though it was wildly popular at the end of the 18th century, its popularity faded soon after. The first showcase of the English guitar was in the 1753 play, "The Englishman in Paris."

By 1760, the English guitar became the most common instrument played by women at home. Dorothea Henry and Nelly Custis, the granddaughter of George Washington, are just two examples of countless colonial women who played this instrument. Dorothea's has all the characteristics of an English guitar. It has twelve frets, a deep pear-shaped body, a flat back, watch-key tuning, and a keyboard mechanism mounted to the side of the soundhole. Upon Patrick's death, this piece was given to his sister, Jane Henry Meredith, who lived with her husband Colonel Samuel Meredith II at Winton, Amherst County, Virginia. The guitar was passed through the Meredith family until 1968 when Winton was sold at a public auction. The guitar was purchased from the auction winners by the Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation several months later. The guitar has been on display in the E. Stuart James Grant Museum Room at Red Hill since 1968.



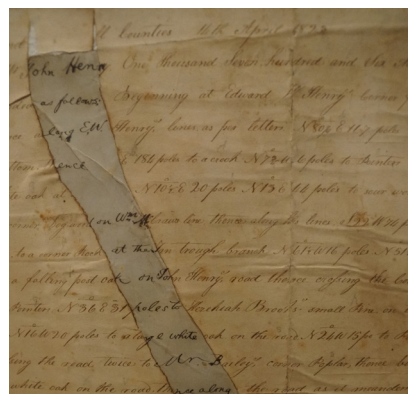
“

...a beautiful day to be outside on our grounds.

”

hanging in the museum and pointed out that the restoration and preservation done prior to the 1980s is now putting this artifact at risk for further deterioration.

The poorly restored document could be brought back to life by using new techniques. The plat would be digitized (continued on page 12)



BUILDING UPDATE: FINISHING TOUCHES

We are very excited to offer our final building update regarding the Eugene B. Casey Education and Events Center, as we expect to be fully

moved into the space by the time you are reading this newsletter! At this writing, final touches are being completed on the building, which now

includes a beautiful poured concrete patio. The front and back porches are particularly lovely, as both boast columns made from lumber cut right



Living History at Red Hill



Blacksmithing

Blacksmithing, without a doubt, is one of the most-loved stations by students on Living History days. Even in the blacksmith shop, surrounded by coal, fire, and smoke, students can still experience history hands-on. Our docents begin by explaining that in 1798, there were no big-box hardware stores and no repairmen. All hardware had to be handmade, including hinges, door-pulls, utensils for the kitchen, and horseshoes. All repairs on any metal items also had to be done in the blacksmith shop on the plantation.

Because so much of the work and daily life on the plantation relied on the items produced by the blacksmith, it was a highly respected and coveted job to have in the colonial era. Without their skill and training

it would have been difficult to go on with any of the other operations of the farm. On a plantation the size of Red Hill, the blacksmith's shop was usually manned by one trained blacksmith and his apprentice. An apprentice was a young boy learning the trade of blacksmithing who would work with the blacksmith for a period of three years before he could work on his own. The apprentice's father would pay Patrick Henry for the privilege of having his son study under the resident blacksmith. Today our students are surprised to learn that in 1798, the weekly wage for a blacksmith working up to 16 hours per day, was \$1.20. They recognize quickly that this amount would not even buy a bottle of soda out of a vending machine. Our docents are quick to point out,

however, that in 1798, an acre of land could be purchased for around \$2.00.

Actually, the apprenticeship model isn't so different from how James Marstin, our current blacksmith at Red Hill, learned his trade! His predecessor learned his blacksmithing skills by attending classes at the John Campbell Folk School in North Carolina. When he returned, he passed on what he had learned—much like the blacksmith in Henry's day. Between that apprenticeship training and continuing to perfect his craft through practice, Mr. Marstin eventually took over the job as the sole docent leading the blacksmithing station. Luckily, he usually has other docents assisting him with the bellows and the fire so he can focus all his attention on the (continued on page 12)

In each issue "Living History at Red Hill" will introduce our readers to one of the living history programs that our visitors encounter.

here on the property.

We would like to offer thanks to Jamerson-Lewis Construction Co. and their diligent employees for their

beautiful work, as well as all of the subcontractors who worked on the project. Special thanks also to William Cook, Jutson Paulette, and James

Marstin for their contributions.

If you are interested in renting out the space, please contact Myra Trent at trent@redhill.org, or by

“

...surrounded by coal, fire, and smoke...

”

phone at 434-376-2044. Please mark your calendars for our official Grand Opening to the public on April 27th, 2019.

Check out the photos of this process from start to finish! It's amazing looking back at each step between breaking ground and now. We can't wait to share photos in the future of events hosted in the Eugene B. Casey Education and Events Center, and we hope each of you will have the chance to attend one in 2019! 🖨️

CONSTRUCTION START TO FINISH

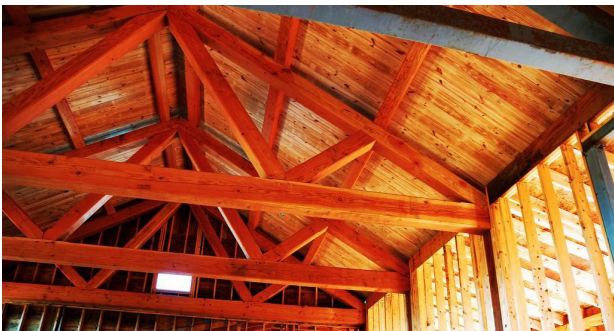
SEPTEMBER 2017: BREAKING GROUND!



JANUARY 2018: FOUNDATIONS WERE POURED



JUNE 2018: TRUSSES AND ROOF ADDED



MARCH 2018: BUILDING BEGAN



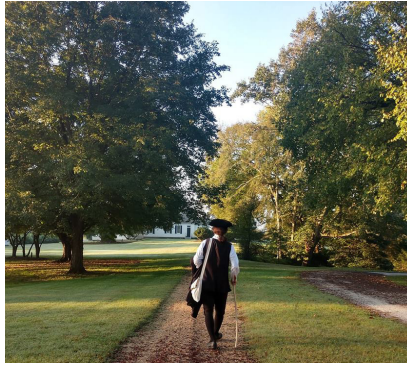
JANUARY, 2019: FINISHING TOUCHES!





RED HILL 2018





YEAR IN PHOTOS



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For Giving to Support the Legacy of Patrick Henry

While Red Hill is the National Memorial to Patrick Henry, so designated by the United States Congress and the President, the Foundation receives no government support and depends on the thoughtful contributions of organizations and individuals like those represented on the following pages.

The following is a list of 2018 gifts, grants, and bequests received January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018. If your name is not listed, it may be because: we made a mistake; you asked that your gift remain anonymous; or your gift was recorded before or after the dates stated above. Every effort is given to ensure the accuracy of this contributions list. If we have overlooked your name or made an error, please accept our apologies and advise Hope Marstin, Chief Operating Officer, at 800.514.7463 or om@redhill.org.

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BLACKSMITHING (CONT.)

(Continued from page 4)

white-hot iron!

Next, students learn about the tools a blacksmith would use. This includes coal, steel, the forge, bellows, hammers, and the anvil. Though coal was mined in the colonies, steel was imported from Europe at this time. Today there are still important factors in maintaining the forge so that it functions properly. The bellows especially, which are made of leather, are a key part of the function of the forge. They have to be pumped constantly while working in order to keep the fire hot enough to heat the iron to a temperature that makes it workable. To do that, the bellows have to stay soft and flexible and not be allowed to get stiff with disuse.

The children are then taught about how heat changes metal. Our docents show that you can tell the temperature of metal based on what color it is. For example, at 800 degrees, the metal turns red, 900 degrees, orange, 1000 degrees, yellow, and at 1100 degrees, the metal turns white and is then molten. Our docents invite the strongest boys in the class to try to bend the metal before heat is added and, of course, they cannot. Once they realize it cannot be done, a girl in the class is invited to bend the molten metal. She succeeds with one hand, which always brings a smile to the child's face.

With gloves and safety goggles on, every student gets the opportunity to help make a nail. They each get several tries at tapping the hammer on the molten metal as our docents shape it. The teacher gets to keep the nail for their classroom as a reminder of their trip to Red Hill. 🖊️



ENDANGERED ARTIFACT LIST (CONT.)

(Continued from page 3)

so we could show it without ever taking it out of the museum. It would also be transcribed so we would know exactly what it says.

Being nominated for this award is a huge honor for Red Hill. Online voting was held throughout January, and we are thrilled by the

possibility of winning the funding for the conservation of this significant piece. But even more important we are pleased by our inclusion in the Top Ten list, and the recognition of our ongoing work here at Red Hill to preserve a genuine relic of Virginia's history. We hope we will be

considered again next year if offered an opportunity to participate in this program! 🖊️

CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE (CONT.)

(continued from cover)

bleakest part of the year when most plants were (and are) bare and dormant for the winter, folks would decorate with whatever natural color was still filling the landscape. Garlands of evergreen pine and sprigs of holly dotted with red were fragrant and colorful, helping to give a festive air to celebrations of the holiday amidst the white and grey of December! For our annual Open House, the Red Hill Garden Club volunteers did a beautiful job of decorating the Patrick Henry House and other historic buildings with live foliage and other natural flora to provide a feel of Colonial America.

Children participated in another old-fashioned Christmas tradition of making Colonial ornaments by putting cloves in oranges. These ornaments, known as pomanders, are incredibly fragrant and long-lasting. The scent of citrus and clove that they provide when fresh doesn't fade as the oranges dry (or "cure"), so the pomanders can last a long time—even for years! They make colorful ornaments hanging from a ribbon, or can even be used once dry in drawers to keep linens and clothes smelling fresh and clean. Of course for the kids the most fun part was poking the cloves into the oranges to make fun designs!

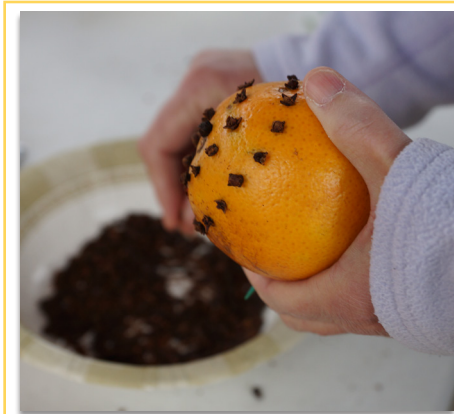
The Auxiliary provided home-made cookies and warm mulled cider

inside the hearth kitchen for everyone to enjoy. The Charlotte County Lions Club provided hearty stew for guests to eat. Docents in period costume provided tours in all the historic buildings as well as the museum and answered questions about Patrick Henry, Red Hill, and the Colonial period in general. Guests were also able to participate in living history through blacksmithing, spinning, weaving, and other hands-on activities.

Live music was provided by Lloyd Holt, a local musician, who sang Christmas carols that afternoon to keep everyone in the holiday spirit as they strolled between the buildings and enjoyed the different presentations.



“...garlands of evergreen pine and sprigs of holly...”



BB&B (CONT.)

(Continued from page 2)

his music sets. All three bands made it clear to staff they would love to return to our 2019 BB&B Festival on November 2nd!

In addition to the live music, craft beer, cider, and wine tasting, many craft vendors attended. Local artisans sold their hand-made pottery, candles, soaps, jewelry, and much more. Many of these vendors return every year because they enjoy the location, the music, and the crowd.

Barbecue and food vendors provided visitors with a variety of smoked meats, fried catfish, fried pickles, slaw, macaroni and cheese, kettle corn, and other selections. Barbecue is always a favorite among the crowd, but other items seem to please most everyone, too. Blue Ridge Beverage was our new craft beer sponsor this year and provided the beverages. They went out of their way to help the staff and make sure we had a successful festival.

As with all of our events, we could not have this festival without our many volunteers! Not only do the Patrick Henry Auxiliary members volunteer, but many

other local friends and family as well. A big thank you to everyone who assisted the staff! 🦄



FACES OF RED HILL

15

JENNY FOSTER



One of the frequent themes you'll notice when visitors talk about their experience at Red Hill is how often they'll mention the people who made their trip so special. We're lucky to have a dedicated and enthusiastic team of volunteers through our Red Hill Auxiliary who report time and time again to bring Red Hill to life for our guests. A typically passionate volunteer is Jenny Foster, one of our docents in charge of the Hearth Cooking demonstration for Living History days.

The Hearth Cooking station during living history days is a demonstration of how meals were prepared during the Colonial era—cooked using the heat of the fire on the large hearth in the separate kitchen build-

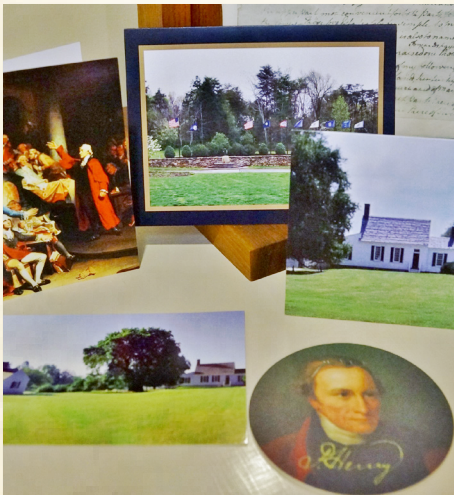
ing. It's a fun station that demonstrates for students how different many aspects of daily life were for the Henry family. And it's not the kind of skill you can pick up just anywhere! In order to learn the methods used in the eighteenth century, Jenny actually attended a special training at the John C. Campbell Folk School in the mountains of North Carolina. Jenny's dedication to teaching students about Red Hill comes from her own love of history. "I love the history," she says, "and knowing we have this authentic gem in our community. I like to think of how plantation life was back then. There was a total absence of modern conveniences: no grocery store, no local doctor, no appliances that simplify our lives."

Aside from her work with the Auxiliary, Jenny has many fond memories of time spent at Red Hill with her own family! She first visited Red Hill back when her daughters were elementary school age, and now enjoys getting to return with her grandsons. Thanks to them, one of her favorite places on the grounds, she tells us, is "the little dell. My two grandsons, Cole and Luke, and I carry a picnic here and enjoy the wildlife. Sometimes, even 'Blackie' the snake makes an appearance, which delights them!"

Visit us for one of our Living History Days in 2019—Jenny will be delighted to show you how to cook like it's 1799! 🐍

In an effort to recognize the people whose devotion and passion keep the site running, the Newsletter features a "Faces of Red Hill" series that introduces readers to the individuals who help Red Hill to thrive.

“...cook like it's 1799!”



30% OFF Notecards Set of 10

Receive 30% off a notecard set: your choice of the Henry House, Rothermel's *Patrick Henry Before the Virginia House of Burgesses*, or the bust of Patrick Henry featured in the Visitor Center Courtyard. With each set receive two free postcards and a coaster set.

VALID THROUGH APRIL 1, 2019

Red Hill

the Patrick Henry National Memorial

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The Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation is a non-profit corporation devoted to education and preservation. The Foundation will promote through education and research programs the life, character, times, philosophy and contributions to posterity of Patrick Henry. As part of that mission, the Foundation is charged with maintaining and interpreting Red Hill, Patrick Henry's last home and burial place, as an historic site. A copy of the Foundation's most recent financial statement is available from the State Division of Consumer Affairs, Box 1163, Richmond, Virginia 23206.

Officers of the Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation

Chair: Mark Holman

Vice Chair: Gene Smith

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HOST YOUR NEXT EVENT AT RED HILL !

You can now book the newly completed Eugene B. Casey Education and Events Center at Red Hill for your private event! The brand new facility makes for a memorable location, nestled right at the heart of the gorgeous Red Hill grounds. Contact Myra Trent to discuss booking the space at 1-800-514-7463 or by email at trent@redhill.org.

Upcoming Events

April 27th

**EUGENE B. CASEY EDUCATION
AND EVENT CENTER OPENING**

Help us celebrate our new building from
11am to 3pm.

May 29th

14TH ANNUAL

NATURALIZATION CEREMONY

Witness the final step in the process of
becoming a naturalized U.S. Citizen, and
welcome the new citizens as they
celebrate their new status in the country.