

BEVERDAM HERITAGE DAYS FOUNDATION

Spring-Summer 2008 Issue

MAJOR ACQUISITION!!

News break!!! In late May, Retta Smith officially and legally transferred the ownership of her extensive and local antique collection to the Beaverdam Heritage Days Foundation. Started by her father, Howard Spencer, this extraordinary assortment of Americana antiques, much of it local, now has a "home" with BHDF. We are honored and grateful, and are working diligently to provide the physical home and grounds to make it accessible to the public.

THE FRANK PLEASANTS GIFT TO THE BEVERDAM HERITAGE DAYS FOUNDATION

Frank Pleasants was a man of all seasons, when it came to the support of the Beaverdam community which was a great part of what he deemed dear to his heart. As a young man he was very active in the support of the young people and their involvement in church activities.

Frank Pleasants came from humble roots as far as monetary resources but was very wealthy in terms of friends in the community. He made some return on his investments centered around the land that was to become part of Lake Anna. From this investment he was able to support a number of causes he deemed to be important. Frank Pleasants was very active in the Ruritan Organization

giving generously of both time and money to support the various activities under taken by this organization. He gave freely to a number of other community projects.

Floyd Bauserman, the executor of the Pleasants Foundation, informed the Beaverdam Heritage Days Foundation (BHDF) of a gift of \$75,000.00 from the Pleasants Foundation. While this is one of a many contributions to improve activities in the Beaverdam Community, it was certainly an important step toward building the John Lewis Thompson Learning Center and the Pop's Country Store Museum. The BHDF appreciates the consideration by Floyd Bauserman in making this award on behalf of the Pleasants Foundation. Further, it appreciates the efforts of Bucky Stanley and Vernon Cabe in helping to make the designator of the award aware of the goals and objectives of the BHDF program that lead to this important sum of money.

Frank Pleasants will be duly recognized by the Beaverdam Heritage Days Foundation as a key sponsor of the important effort. The BHDF will do everything possible in carrying out a program that it deems worthy of Frank Pleasants high standards for the Beaverdam Community. Frank played a great part over several decades of his life and the legacy that continues following his death.

***EACH OF YOU
CAN HELP BUILD.....***

Yes, each of you can help build.....

**THE JOHN LEWIS THOMPSON
LEARNING CENTER
&
POP'S COUNTRY STORE
MUSEUM**

IN BEAVERDAM, VIRGINIA

It is estimated that this Newsletter will reach 4500 households in western Hanover County. Contributions both large and small are significant and will be greatly appreciated!

THINK ABOUT THIS:

- If each household contributed an average of \$5.00 it would amount to \$22,500.00.
- If each household contributed an average of \$10.00 it would amount to \$45,000.00.
- If each household contributed an average of \$20.00 it would amount to \$90,000.00.

The Center & Museum will be built in Beaverdam but will serve many in the Richmond Metropolitan area. It will cater especially to student groups and provide in-service programs for teachers regarding the past history and culture of this rural area.

A valuable antique collection and land on which to locate the center and museum are being gifted to the Beaverdam Heritage Days Foundation (BHDF). Through the writing of grants and donations from individuals, organizations and businesses, the Foundation has raised about \$150,000.00 to purchase materials, supplies and labor to build the center and museum estimated to cost about \$200,000.00.

Again, look at the figures cited above and see how your gift to BHDF, P. O. Box 132, Beaverdam, VA 23015 can help achieve this most significant initiative for our area. Thank you for your help and consideration!

Thank You! -- The Foundation would like to publicly acknowledge the following LOCAL individuals for giving a vast amount their time and specialized knowledge in the last few months: Stephen R.Hanson, W. C. Lang, and Mary Beth Williams. These are in alphabetical order, because all have contributed in equally important ways. Without them, BHDF would not be looking at the very real possibility of starting construction perhaps as early as 2008!

Steve Hanson, Class A contractor, has already volunteered to oversee the construction of the museum at no cost. Steve has also been instrumental during the last twelve months in coordinating with Hanover County Planning Commission as well as the five Thompson heirs in accomplishing the rezoning of the property as well as obtaining necessary signatures on all documents required. He made multiple trips to Fredericksburg and even drove to Raleigh, NC to obtain notarized signatures, as well as attending numerous meetings with Hanover officials in order to provide proper documentation required for rezoning as well as the simultaneous application for the conditional use permit. Steve is usually stretched from Fauquier to King George Counties, Gloucester, Caroline, and Westmoreland due to the tendency of folks to build log homes in more out of the way locations. The Foundation is most appreciative of the time he has dedicated to the planning of our facility with Hanover County. *(Steve is married to Pat Coffey, BHDF VP.)*

October 11, 2008 save the date!

W. C. Lang...what can we say? "Git 'er done!" W. C. is there for us to do whatever is necessary time and time and time again! This is the man who arranged for power with Beaverdam Fire Department, ran the necessary cabling, and provided backup generators at Beaverdam Heritage Day 2007. This is the man who provides heavy equipment, over and over, and the "know-how" to operate it when we need brush cleared for access, as well as bush-hogging and heavy clean up at the gravesite area of the Thompson property. This is the man who stacked the best of the salvaged bricks before they disappeared. This is the man who provided pallets again for other bricks salvaged on the Thompson property and the equipment to remove them to a secure location. If the Foundation were paying for these services and equipment rental, the entire project cost would be significantly higher. We are most grateful to W.C. for these acts of kindness and many more.

Mary Beth Williams, Attorney-at-Law, has been involved in assisting Beaverdam Heritage Days Foundation on numerous legal matters. We are so grateful that she volunteered to assist us in this extremely crucial aspect of planning. Early in 2007, she was instrumental in advising the Foundation regarding the transfer of the land as well as the transfer of Retta Smith's Americana collection. Mary Beth was gratefully received at meetings (including the Thompson family, Mrs. Smith's family and BHDF President, Joe Exline) which were necessary to lay the critical groundwork for the actual transfer of ownership of both the real estate and the collection to BHDF. The Foundation is most appreciative for Mary Beth's pro bono assistance in moving us all towards the common goal of assurance of a physical home for display of Retta Smith's collection, and at the same time, assurance that the

property being donated by the Thompson family would be utilized for the intended purpose. (*Mary Beth is married to Jeff Williams, BHDF member and bandleader of The Atkinsons.*)

Special Distinction --During the last few months, both Henry Ferry (BHDF Treasurer) and Vivian Ferry have spent countless hours on paperwork required for our tax status 501-c-3. In addition, these folks are the ones who make sure all our financial information is in order each year for the purpose of filing taxes. We thank them for their time and diligence on this often thankless job!

How will our children know who they are.....if they don't know where they came from?

---John Steinbeck

Rezoning Status --This spring, the Hanover Planning Commission recommended, and the Hanover County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the rezoning of the Thompson property to commercial. Formerly zoned as A-1, the property had to be rezoned in order for the Thompson family to actually divide the land and donate approximately 2 acres to BHDF.

The next step is to formally divide the property. Melvin Spain, surveyor with Downing & Company of Ashland, did the survey of the entire 9.23 acres and established a line that would provide BHDF with the approximately 2 acres sufficient for building the museum as well as required drain fields on both sections of the family property. A detailed site plan is being drawn as this newsletter goes to print in order to meet requirements for dividing the property. Only when the actual division of the property occurs, can BHDF then apply for the building permit. If everything goes smoothly, that will happen in early September 2008.

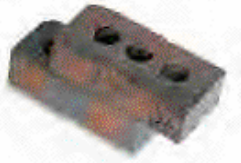
**Save the date!
October 11, 2008**



Tree buffer already in place--

In April, BHDF members planted 15 Leyland Cypress trees behind the graveyard. This back portion of the property borders a residence and farm.

We want to be good neighbors at this very early point in time! Normally, such plantings are shown on the site plan for approval by Hanover County during the building permit phase (see Rezoning article) and not planted until the final landscaping required after construction. Many thanks go to Bev Geiger and Rick Vaden for saving the day by providing a post-hole digger and operator. Those with shovels there on that day are *especially* grateful!



Bricks for Sale!--I have a sad story to share with you. Last month when the brick committee went to clean the used bricks from the recently demolished Thompson building, we discovered that the bricks, which were neatly stacked on the site & for sale as a fund-raiser, had disappeared!

Despite the no trespassing signs, someone must have thought that it was very nice to have them already stacked up so that they did not have to climb through the rubble.

The Foundation will be pleased to reward anyone who helps us recover those bricks with their own engraved brick to be placed in a prestigious position. *Even better...we'd simply love to see them returned !*

The Beaverdam Heritage Foundation is selling bricks as a fund-raiser for the John Lewis Thompson Learning Center and Pop's Country Store. This is a wonderful way to remember your ancestors and to honor a friend or relative in your life!

The bricks will be placed along the walkway to the John Lewis Thompson Cemetery and in other "not-to-be-missed" locations on the property that is located along the railroad tracks near the Beaverdam Depot in Historic Beaverdam. The proceeds collected will go toward the cost of constructing and maintaining the new building.

Forms can be obtained on our website <http://www.beaverdam-heritage.org>. Just click on the bricks to bring up the pdf form. Print it out and complete the form, enclose your check and mail it to the address listed on page 5. We will send you a thank you note that you may use as a possible tax deduction. The recipient will have the selected name engraved on a brick that will last for eternity!

Corinne Dixon
Brick Committee Chair

*****Late Breaking News*****

The BHDF Board was recently notified that we will receive a \$5,000.00 grant (payable in July). **Thanks, Hanover County!**

Thanks also to BHDF Advisor Bucky Stanley for his guidance and reminding us to apply in time!

Vendors & Exhibitors!--Rates for booth spaces are the same this year: \$50, \$60, or \$70. One change being considered is effecting \$100 rental for any applications later than October 1.

Why? The vendor/exhibitor layout is done weeks in advance to insure our historical exhibitors and food vendors are in appropriate locations. We do our best to not have similar wares or services next to or across from each other.

The stage will remain in the same place as last year, so we are also considering an overall change in the entire layout to improve traffic and enhance audibility of the stage announcements.

Contact Pat Coffey at 804 449-1704 or KachinaT@aol.com for information. Letters will be mailed to prior participants in the very near future. The application is also on our website. Early paid applications get the best spots!

If you are a **FOOD VENDOR**, do not wait for a letter!

More Information:

www.beaverdam-heritage.org

Also, see the Richmond Times-Dispatch "**Beaverdam's new stuff:** Hanover town gets old collection, new location for heritage celebration"

Monday, Mar 24, 2008 - 12:05 AM

By JANET CAGGIANO

TIMES-DISPATCH STAFF WRITER

- Want to do something different this summer?**
- Want some spending money?**
- Want to help out a non-profit organization?**
- Want a significant accomplishment on your resume?**
- Want to make a DVD/Video?**

If you checked "yes" or if you know someone who might be interested...

Keep reading...

Who: BHDF

What: Document an Americana collection in DVD/CD format (5 copies). Work with collection owner & interviewer. Scope: estimated 40 hours to record; estimated 40 hours to edit; access to be coordinated.

When: Summer 2008

Where: about 15 minutes from Ashland

Why: BHDF has acquired a large collection of local Americana and will be housing it in a museum (The John Lewis Thompson Learning Center & Pop's Country Store) in the heart of Beaverdam. The DVD will serve as an archive for future generations. Portions will be an introductory presentation to visiting tourists, and portions will be utilized for virtual tours and as an educational resource.

Advantages: Experience on your resume! Permanent recognition for your efforts in the credits. Satisfaction of playing major role in preserving history for future generations...and oh yes....GAS MONEY!

Contact: Joe Exline, President
JEXLINE@aol.com
Beaverdam Heritage Days Foundation
P. O. Box 132, Beaverdam, VA 23015
(804) 227-3442

**The Upcoming
Beaverdam Heritage Days Event--**

This year the 13th annual Beaverdam Heritage Day event will be more exciting than ever!

Back by popular demand, our very own local group, The Atkinsons, will be featured. The Atkinsons, led by Jeff Williams of Beaverdam, have performed regularly at such venues as Poe's Pub, Café Diem, Canal Club and Shenanigan's. For more information, see their website at:

<http://www.theatkinsons.us/home.htm>.

Jeff will again be wearing two additional hats as he manages the stage & setup between acts, and as he once again provides the sound system for the rest of the musicians as well as non-musical acts.

Save the date - October 11, 2008

Back with us for the TWELTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR are The West Hanover Boys and Old Dominion Revue. It is difficult to put into mere words how grateful we are for their ongoing support!

The Mountain Men were a big hit with both kids and adults, and will be back with us. These fine men also provide us with security by arriving the day before and camping out in the field laid out for the big event!

Back again is our very own BHDF member Charlie "I Cry" Taylor to emcee the day's activities. Also, onstage will be the Native American Dancers, elegant and meaningful: Sequoia and Lindsey Fortune of the Rappahannock Tribe.

Oxen rides? YES! See you there! Check our website as we update it periodically with more confirmed historical exhibits and entertainment.