

1735 TIMES

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CHRISTCHURCH1735.ORG

2021 Annual Appeal

Inspiration

Bonnie Dawson, this year’s Louise Belote Dawe Award winner, has worn many hats for the Foundation for Historic Christ Church: docent coordinator, board member, vice-president, president, and chair of numerous committees and special events.

But Bonnie’s journey began as a docent on a memorable Easter Sunday in 2003. It was her first shift. At that time the museum entrance faced the south doorway, and docents were trained when they saw visitors inside the church who had not stopped at the museum to go greet them and invite them to tour the museum. Spotting a woman standing in the crossing at the aisles, Bonnie dutifully marched off towards the church, but as she approached the south doorway she stopped in her tracks. “Floating out in the beautiful spring air,” Bonnie remembered, “was a fabulous, lyric soprano voice singing Amazing Grace.”

Each of us has a similar story of inspiration, that “special moment” as Bonnie calls it, that brought us to be a volunteer, a supporter, a friend of Historic Christ Church. It might be the architecture, the history, a family connection, or the memories of a loved one who volunteered or is buried here.

Reflecting on her many years of service, Bonnie asked “what inspires us to stay, to succeed in spite of difficult times – the



Foundation President Jill Worth presents the 2021 Dawe Award to Bonnie Dawson, joined by her husband Wally.

inspiration to search for meaning in our shared history, to share the story of this place and its people?” Indeed, it is the Christ Church story – a unique one of place and people, past and present – and the responsibility to share it with the next generation that inspires us.

Your gift to the 2021 Annual Appeal (envelope enclosed) will help us preserve Christ Church and share its inspiring story with visitors of all ages and backgrounds. Thank you for your continued friendship and support. We look forward to seeing you at Historic Christ Church in the coming year.

Jill M. Worth
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President, FHCC

Robert J. Teagle
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Executive Director

New Tools for 2022



Visitors next spring will have new tools to help them find their way around our historic campus. A visitors’ guide will highlight Christ Church’s architecture and construction through a map that leads guests through stops at the brick kilns, the churchyard wall, the west door, the Carter tombs and more. The guide will be especially useful when HCC&M is closed for the season, allowing guests to tour the site on their own when docents are not available.

The modern burying ground presents a similar challenge: family members and friends sometimes arrive knowing only the name of the interred individual but not the location of the grave site. If their visit falls on a weekend or outside normal operating hours, typically there is no one who can direct them to the site. To aid these searches, Burying Ground Manager Paula Stallard is developing an alphabetical listing of the names of those interred that identifies the Section, Lot and Site numbers for each burial. A cross-referenced list sorted by Section-Lot-Site will show the physical location of each grave site within one of the burying ground’s three sections.

A third document in development is a map of the memorial and honorary bricks in the courtyard. Volunteers Jo and Dick Manson have recorded the names and locations of each brick and divided the courtyard into eight sections that will be identified by special bricks. Like the burying ground, when visitors inquire about a particular brick, the map will guide them to the proper location.

These new guides will be available in a protected case in the pavilion between the Chase and Carter centers that is easily accessible regardless of whether the offices and museum are open.

Hometown Star Performs at Christ Church

Soprano Willsonia Boyer (third from left), who grew up literally right across the street from the church but now resides in New York City, joins family members following her stunning performance inside Christ Church in October. Accompanied by Suzanne Daniel, the program of “An Afternoon of Arts Songs and Arias” featured a mix of patriotic songs, Lieder and melodies, American art songs and Negro spirituals. Boyer treated the audience with a resounding encore of “Summertime.”

Boyer’s performance is part of the 2021-2022 *Bringing Music to Life Series* and is funded by the River Counties Community Foundation with additional support from the J. Edwin Treacle Foundation and the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. The series



continues April 23, 2022 with The Wren Masters, a baroque quartet from Williamsburg, who will be making their third appearance at Historic Christ Church.

To see selections from Boyer’s performance please visit YouTube and search for “Christ Church 1735 videos.”

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2021 Highlights



Digital Collections – Val Verburg scans a black and white photograph taken from Historic Christ Church’s west gates in 1976. Verburg and fellow volunteer Kaggy Chase scanned portions of the photograph collection over the winter. The collection includes color and black and white photographs dating to the 1880s. The images help trace the story of Christ Church’s preservation over a century and a half.



The Great Debate – Volunteers Marilyn Loomis (left) and Kathie Galgano join Patrick Henry (left) and Thomas Jefferson after the two statesmen debated “The Question of Religious Freedom” inside Christ Church in September. Richard Schumann (Henry) and Bill Barker (Jefferson) brought to life the momentous debates of 1784-1785 over Henry’s general assessment bill that advocated religious taxation to support “Teachers of the Christian Religion.”

Religion of the Powhatans – Anthropologist Margaret Williamson Huber presents “Religion of the Powhatan Indians of Virginia” in May as part of the 2021 Sunday Speaker Series. Huber described Powhatan rituals and symbolism and their importance in Powhatan governance. Huber’s talk was the first in-person educational event at Historic Christ Church since February 2020.



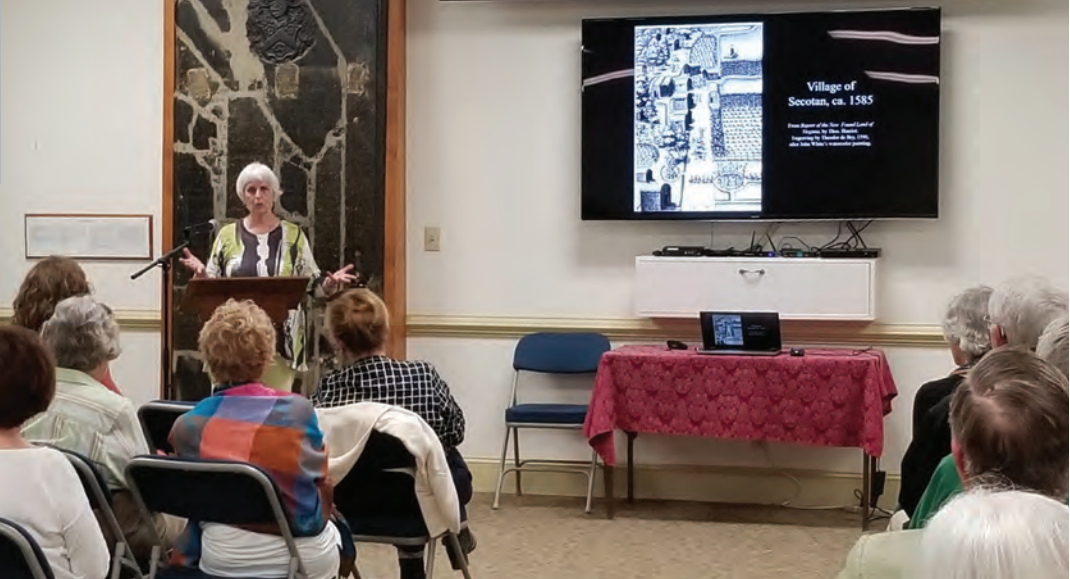
Campus Improvements – Philip Hinson of Hinson’s Lawn Care pressure washes the herb garden border and sidewalks leading past the Bayne Center into the courtyard. Hinson’s work was part of campus improvement projects that included carpet cleaning in the Carter Center and rehanging of portraits and Foundation memorabilia in the Bayne Center.



West Gates Restored – Craftsmen reinstall the iconic red gates at Christ Church’s west entrance in July following an extended period of repair and restoration. Dating to 1997, this is the second set of gates at the west entrance (the first set was installed in 1966 following reconstruction of the original churchyard wall). Portions of wood and metal had deteriorated, causing the gates to pull away from the heavy posts that anchor them on each side. Thanks to Connemara Corporation for a generous gift that funded the repairs and reinstallation.



Boxwood Border – Herb Garden chair Val Verburg (second from left) and Northern Neck Master Gardeners Helen Johnson, Marge Gibson, Sally Beard, Jo Ann Perkins, and Leslie Damon gather as they plant a new boxwood border around the herb garden in April. The herb garden restoration began in the spring of 2020 under a new partnership Verburg and Gibson forged between Historic Christ Church and the Northern Neck Master Gardeners.



Cedar Allée – A February storm knocked down one of the cedars along the allée west of the church. Planted by the Garden Club of Virginia (GCV) in 1967, the cedars evoke the tree-lined drive from Corotoman several miles west to Christ Church. Working with the GCV, Jeffrey O’Dell of Mountain Laurel Landscaping planted a new cedar in this spot in June.



Annual Meeting – Volunteers Patrick Heffernan and Pam Lillquist join historian Jon Kukla following his address at the Foundation’s 63rd Annual Meeting in September. Kukla discussed Patrick Henry’s varied religious experiences, including Henry’s lifelong devotion to the Church of England and his attendance with his mother at Presbyterian services led by the Reverend Samuel Davies. Here Kukla signs a copy of his acclaimed biography *Patrick Henry: Champion of Liberty*.

Preservation Updates

Compass Windows

In October conservators with Landmark Preservation in Savannah began work on Christ Church’s twelve massive compass windows. Considered some of the finest examples from colonial Virginia, the windows retain their original sash, sash weights, and frames. Architectural historian Mark Wenger describes the scale of the sashes and the individual muntins as “extraordinary for Virginia.”

Funded by an anonymous foundation that has supported Virginia history for over four decades, the project involves the removal of all failed paint finishes and glazing, the replacement of non-historic glass with authentic restoration glass, and the repair of any deteriorated areas in the wood. The team will sand and consolidate all wood surfaces with an alkyd resin before applying two coats of paint that match the historic white color on the exterior sash (on the interior, the windows retain their original exposed black walnut surface).



John Jeanes measures a molding profile on the south door frame.



Conservators with Landmark Preservation remove failed glazing on the compass windows in the northeast corner of the church.

South Door Repairs

Master craftsmen John Jeanes and Jack Abeel are working to repair the south door frame. Jeanes and Abeel will cut away a deteriorated portion of a 20th-century repair at the base of the door jamb and insert a new piece of molding drawn by Jeanes and fabricated by Abeel in his custom millwork shop in Petersburg. The rotted section is from a repair made in the twentieth century. The south and north doors are original to the church, while those at the west entrance date to the nineteenth century.

Jeanes directed the restoration of James Madison’s Montpelier in 2004-2009 and was part of the team that reconstructed George Washington’s boyhood home at Ferry Farm. Abeel has over thirty years’ experience in historic timber restoration.

Rising Damp Progress

In April, Lucas Hoffman from 2RW began installation of the HOBO RX 3000 moisture data logging station. The system connects via ethernet and provides real-time access to current temperature and humidity conditions inside Christ Church, in the crawl space and crawl space soil below the pews, and in the soils on the exterior of the church. This data will provide important baseline readings prior to the installation of the subsurface drainage system.

In May archaeologists undertook preliminary excavations to determine conditions below grade and inspect the church’s foundation. The team dug at the two wettest areas of the building: the northeast corner, where water accumulation has penetrated the chancel and stained woodwork there, and the southwest corner, which measures high moisture readings and over the past two decades has experienced the most mortar deterioration in its brickwork. The goals were to see how wet the building was below grade in these selected spots and to evaluate the need for mortar repointing below grade before contractors install the drainage system.

The archaeologists returned in early November to begin excavations for the drain lines that will carry water away from the church and yard. The team opened a small trench in a low area in the southwest yard and recently completed a trench line along the south door walkway. These excavations (and more that follow along the west walkway and northeast yard) will document and recover cultural resources and features in these areas before installation of the drainage system. Findings thus far include a Native American ceramic piece and projectile point, a few well preserved handwrought nails, soil layers from the builder’s trench and 1735 church construction period, and a ring fragment.



Archaeologist Katie Brauckmann stands in a test unit in the northeast corner of Christ Church. Brauckmann and her team excavated this area and a portion along the southwest walls to determine conditions below grade. The team found mortar deterioration visible here in the northeast corner but not along the southwest walls.



Engineer Lucas Hoffman of 2RW installs moisture monitors in soils along the drip line in the southeast corner of the church.

COLLECTION Spotlight

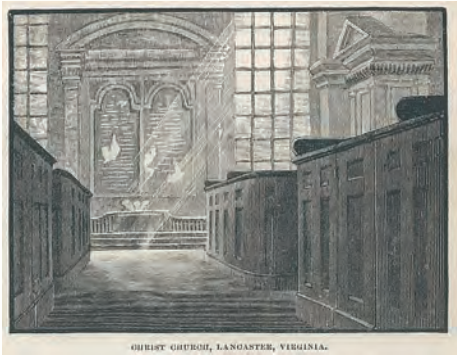


Docents at Historic Christ Church & Museum are careful to point out the *communion table* to visitors, as Christ Church would not have had an *altar*. Anglican theology as presented in the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* indicated that a service of Holy Communion was not a material sacrifice such as would take place upon an “altar.” Thomas Cranmer, who coauthored the prayer book in 1549, sought to rid the Church of England of all Roman Catholic influence—the doctrines concerning the Mass being perhaps the most visible.

The Prayer Book commanded the people to communicate at least three times per year. Great consequence was attributed to the depravity of mankind, as the minister exhorted that, for all who had not truly repented of every sin, “receiving of the holy Communion” would “nothing else but increase [their] damnation...and bring [them] to destruction both of body and soul.” The architecture of Christ Church reflects this very Protestant emphasis. Visitors often remark that the building, though beautiful, is surprisingly unadorned, almost austere.

The communion table itself is made of walnut and is believed to be original to the church. In 1838 Assistant Bishop William Meade reported that “the old walnut Communion-table...stands firm and unimpaired.” Posted directly above were the Ten Commandments, which canon law required “be set up on the East end of every Church and Chapel, where the people may best see and read the same,” as well as the Lord’s Prayer and Apostles’ Creed.

In 1789, the newly organized Protestant Episcopal Church printed its own version of the prayer book, and by the time it was revised in 1928, the word “altar” was no longer considered wholly incorrect. The current edition of the prayer book uses both terms and in common parlance both are acceptable.



Harper’s New Monthly Magazine from July 1878 shows the communion table with the bowl to the baptismal font – at that time separated from its base – resting on top of it.

John H. Hunt II Chesapeake History Forum

The Foundation for Historic Christ Church lost one of its great friends in March with the passing of John Herbert Hunt II. John served in a variety of leadership positions over his 35 years with the Foundation. His grace, integrity and devotion to the mission inspired volunteers and staff alike.

Shortly after his passing, the Foundation commissioned Baltimore artist Paul Bertholet to paint a portrait of John (right) that would hang in the Bayne Center alongside other champions of the church. The Foundation also decided that the many gifts made in John’s memory would be used to support preservation initiatives dear to John and to create educational programs that bear his name.

Among John’s loves were the many hours he and his beloved wife Page spent cruising the Chesapeake Bay. Fittingly, in 2022 the Foundation will premiere the *John H. Hunt II Chesapeake History Forum*. The series will bring scholars from a variety of disciplines to Historic Christ Church to speak on the landscapes, peoples and stories that shaped the Chesapeake from its formation millions of years ago to the present. Look for an announcement of the first program early next year!



Christ Church turn of the 20th century –
Discovered by Henry Lane Hull in a house in Kilmarnock, this painting shows Christ Church from the north with a small white fence running along the churchyard and the partially crumbling walls of the Kelley plot to the west. The painting is one of three the Foundation owns that date to the turn of the 20th century and may be from the same unidentified artist.



Since 1735, as it came from the hands of its builders
A Virginia and National Historic Landmark
Listed on the
National Register of Historic Places

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From the President



Jill Worth, President

With the leadership of Executive Director Robert Teagle, we continue to move forward in our mission of preservation, research, and education. Staff members Paula Stallard and Nat McMaster are wonderful additions and have technical skill sets that have made our organization run much more smoothly.

In this last year volunteers revitalized the herb garden, scanned the photograph collection, and improved campus facilities. Members of the research committee continued with new projects and to respond to inquiries from the public. The Book Club has read selections ranging from Ed Bond’s *Damned Souls in a Tobacco Colony* to Jon Sensbach’s remarkable story of Rebecca Proppen, an enslaved woman in the Caribbean who gained her freedom and became an itinerant missionary to hundreds of Africans on St. Thomas. Meeting via Zoom has allowed people far distant from our campus to participate regularly and for Ed, Jon and other authors to join the discussions.

We’re back open to visitors and have enjoyed sharing Christ Church with guests from across the country, but we’re still cautious and take the continuing Covid protocols very seriously. In the fall we hosted a memorable debate between Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson and a concert by soprano Willsonia Boyer in what was one of the great musical performances in Christ Church history!

Our volunteers continue to be the *sine qua non* of FHCC. Their dedication – their attitudes – their energy – their flexibility: I can’t thank them enough.

Nothing would be possible without the support of each of you. These are difficult times for everyone, but the need to support the mission of the Foundation for Historic Christ Church and to continue to preserve our unique historic property remains the same. Please give what you can for this year’s Annual Appeal, and if you have already given we thank you very much!

Have a wonderful holiday season and stay healthy...

Jill M. Worth
President, FHCC