

1735 TIMES

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CHRISTCHURCH1735.ORG

2023 ANNUAL APPEAL

65 Years in the Making

On a Tuesday morning in January 1958, the Reverend James F. Ferneyhough called a special meeting at the Grace Parish House in Kilmarnock. The matter concerned Christ Church, along with Grace one of the four churches Ferneyhough led as rector of Christ Church Parish. Ferneyhough and those who joined him sought to organize a foundation to administer funds donated to Christ Church and to formulate a long-term plan for its preservation.



Caretaker Wilson Green opens the church during Helen Bullock's visit in March 1958. Joining Green and Bullock (second from left) are Cyrus Chilton, Louise Belote Dawe and Gridley Dawe.

Less than two months later the group met again, this time joined by Helen Bullock and George Worthington from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. An architectural (and culinary) historian, Bullock regarded Christ Church as "so pre-eminently significant among the surviving colonial churches of America that it is a matter of more than local concern what happens to it in the future." Bullock helped the organization, initially called the Christ Church Foundation,

prepare by-laws and articles of incorporation which would be approved later that summer under its new name: Foundation for Historic Christ Church (FHCC).

Bullock connected the group with University of Virginia professors Fred Nichols and Elizabeth Coleman, who would undertake architectural (Nichols) and documentary (Coleman) research on Christ Church. Coleman's fees were to be \$1.50 an hour plus reimbursements for bus trips from Charlottesville to Richmond! Bullock also established archaeology as a priority, helping to bring in Pinky Harrington from the National Park Service, whose excavations a year later would locate the original wall that enclosed the churchyard.

With Worthington, Bullock encouraged the acquisition of amenity lands around the church, a task founding board member and future president Richard T. Herndon began immediately. Within two years, Herndon had acquired more than 12 acres west and south of the church.

While the board would not adopt all of her recommendations, including a plan for a "year round church" complete with heating and lighting, Bullock proved to be the *sine qua non* in FHCC's founding. Her push to ground everything in historical, architectural and archaeological research remains central to our mission, and her emphasis on amenity lands provided the impetus to create the beautiful campus thousands of guests see each year.

As we celebrate our 65th anniversary, we remember Helen Bullock and the charter members who founded this remarkable organization. Your gift to the 2023 Annual Appeal (envelope enclosed) honors their vision and ensures that Christ Church remains a site of national significance for generations to come. Thank you.

Ed Feddeman
President

Robert J. Teagle
Executive Director

Harris Gift Supports Interpretation, Preservation Projects

A generous donation from Steve and Ann Harris is supporting new projects in interpretation and preservation. The first of these is a panel that marks the site of Robert Carter's brick kilns. Designed by Riggs Ward in Richmond and located on a walkway leading from the parking lot, the panel is now one of the first parts of the Christ Church story guests see as they make their way to the museum. Visitors can read an entry in Carter's diary about the kilns and learn about the brickmaking process from molding to firing.

The Harris' gift also funded a new Visitor Guide that includes a walking tour of the grounds with thirteen stops highlighting different parts of the church's architecture and history. Visitors can pick up a copy in a display case by the museum entrance.

Remaining funds will support a new temporary exhibition in the museum and work on Christ Church's next major preservation project: conservation of its Aquia sandstone sills, imposts, capitals, bases and steps. Thank you, Steve and Ann!



Save the Date

Saturday, April 27: 4 p.m.

The Wren Masters

The Wren Masters, a baroque quartet from Williamsburg, return to Historic Christ Church on Saturday, April 27 with "Baroque with a French Twist." Spanning the entire baroque era, the Wren Masters take the audience on a journey from the dazzling new inventions in the early 1600s by composers such as Frescobaldi to the string virtuosity of Jean-Marie LeClair and mature baroque music by Handel, culminating with the late baroque stylishness in quartets by Rameau and Telemann.

Hailed by *The Washington Post* for their "crisp ensemble, mellowness, and stylistic awareness," the Wren Masters include Susan Via on baroque violin, harpsichordist Tom Marshall, Ruth van Baak Griffioen on recorder, and Brady Lanier on viola da gamba.



"Historic Christ Church is the quintessential performance space for baroque music. Our 18th century instruments and the music we play, written centuries ago, always instantly feel at home in this building that originated from the same era. It is one of the Wren Masters' favorite performance venues. And we always enjoy performing and interacting with the appreciative and engaging HCC audiences."

—Susan Via and
Ruth van Baak Griffioen,
Wren Masters



2 Rising Damp Project Update

3 Preservation Update: Door Conservation

4 Upcoming Events

Rising Damp Project Update

A year ago, contractor Shawn Parsley with Parsley’s SiteWorks, LLC began clearing trees behind the Chase Center in the first step to installing the subsurface drainage system that will finally address the issue of rising damp threatening Christ Church. We are happy to report that all archaeological excavations have been completed and the drainage system has been installed. Check out some of the project highlights here:

Monitoring Drain Lines – Water captured around the church travels via gravity through drain lines to an outfall south of the Chase Center. Archaeologist Katie Brauckmann (blue shirt) and her team opened test units and monitored each drain line to map features and recover any artifacts present.



Installing the Drain Lines – Crew members from Parsley’s SiteWorks, LLC excavate along the churchyard wall to install drain lines that run from the west door and a catch basin in the southwest churchyard to the outfall south.



VDOT Headwall – A catch basin in the north-east churchyard captures the large amounts of water that pond there, diverting it through a pipe that runs under the churchyard wall to this exit point that feeds into a VDOT culvert along Christ Church Road (Rt. 646).

System Design – A waterproof membrane inserted into a reglet joint below grade runs down the foundation wall, lining the gutter pans and tying into another membrane that directs water outside the drip line back to the pans and drain lines. Metal grates keep the area open for water flow. An AirDrain geocell drainage mat sandwiched between two filter fabrics lies above the metal grates, with a 9-inch layer of sand topped by grass completing the system.



Installing the Gutter Pans – Sebastian Rhoades (left) and Brian Treschl carefully maneuver a gutter pan into place by the Carter tombs. Made of glass fiber reinforced concrete, these gutter pans underpin the entire system and create the slope needed to carry water. This stretch of the system is the longest run, capturing and diverting water all the way from the north door, along the east wall by the tombs, and to an exit drain by the south door.

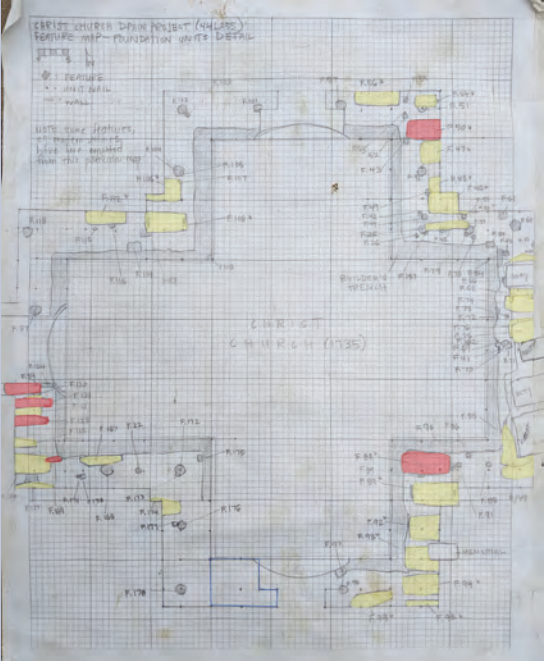


System Test – Taken a day after heavy rains in June, water ponds in the churchyard but the northwest corner of the church where the drainage system had been installed in the spring (rectangular shaped, light-yellow grass) remains clear of the standing water that typically pooled here from the drip line and valleys.

Outfall – Relying solely on gravity, the drainage system transports water over 300 feet to the outfall. With a design that is completely underground and an outfall point tucked into the woods behind the Chase Center, the system protects the historic viewshed.



Burial Map – In their excavations to clear the project area around the church, archaeologists discovered 41 unmarked burials. Graves marked in yellow on this feature map drawn by Katie Brauckmann lay at a depth or location that did not require exhumation from the project area. Those marked in red (as well as another burial in the south door drain line) all had to be removed before the drainage system could be installed. Scientists at Towson University and the University of Connecticut are currently conducting forensic and aDNA analyses of the remains, which will be reinterred in the churchyard.

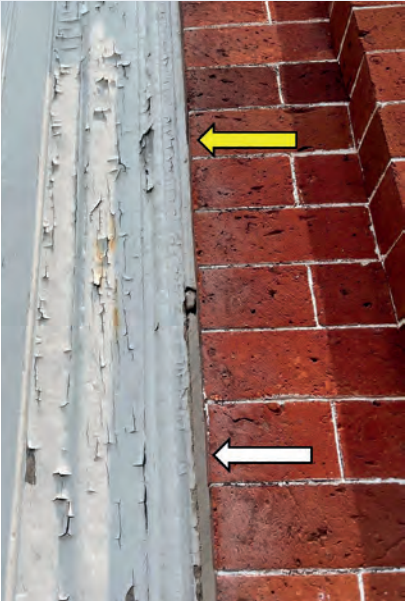


Preservation Update

Door Conservation

While making repairs to the south door last year, architectural conservator and master carpenter John Jeanes noticed a line of caulk running between the door frame and the rubbed brick frontispieces that distinguish Christ Church’s three doorways. Jeanes and historic masonry conservator Ray Cannetti cautioned that this caulk traps moisture and can lead to damage in the brickwork. Jeanes advised the Foundation to remove the caulk and replace it with a historically accurate lime mortar.

In June, Kevin Nieto and Robert Hall, talented masons who have worked with Cannetti for years and who undertook the repointing on the rising damp project, removed the caulk then sealed the gap between the brickwork and door frame with a lime mortar formulated of burned oyster shells and sand. Nieto and Hall’s work cleared the way for the doors to be repainted. In September, Sam Johnson and his team lightly sanded the doors to remove decayed paint and applied fresh coats that match the eggshell white determined by paint analysis to be the original color of Christ Church’s exterior woodwork.



Top Right: Before the doors could be repainted, masons had to remove the caulking between the brickwork (yellow arrow) and replace it with a historically accurate lime mortar (white arrow).

Top Left: Masons Kevin Nieto (left) and Robert Hall remove caulking from the north door. Note the brickwork just above the doorframe is a replacement.

Bottom Right: Dakota Walker (left) and Alex Folan paint the west doors and frame.

Myth and Memory at Christ Church

Myths often abound at historic sites. From the proverbial “George Washington slept here” to Jefferson and his fellow revolutionaries sending the original copy of the Declaration of Independence to King George III, who promptly tore it up (thankfully the Declaration is safe and sound in the National Archives), legends can become ingrained in public memory, distorting the historical record and diverting attention from the important stories a site or object have to tell.

Christ Church has its own share of tales. Accounts a century and a half old to some as recent as 1989 repeat the “tradition” that “no member of the congregation dared to enter Christ Church” until Robert Carter arrived in his six-horse carriage and took his seat in his large pew opposite the pulpit. Written records and dendrochronology make this an impossibility: when Carter died in August of 1732, the building was still two and a half years away from being finished with likely only its brick walls up and carpenters busy framing the intricate roof system with timbers felled in the fall of 1731 and winter of 1732.



Another favorite that circulates to this day is that of poor David Miles, the plasterer who tragically fell to his death while working on the ceiling and was buried at the center crossing despite his demise taking place in 1674, more than six decades before Christ Church’s completion!

Sometimes, however, what may seem apocryphal or only a loosely documented oral history converges with the historical record. Many a local who grew up around Christ Church in the early twentieth century recalled seeing cattle in the churchyard and even the church, whose doors apparently were left wide open for all. While these stories may have seemed fanciful, photographic evidence bore the truth. Postcards from the early twentieth century and photographs in the archives at Colonial Williamsburg indeed document cattle roaming the churchyard, at that time unprotected by sufficient fencing. To paraphrase a former executive director at Christ Church, here is a strange case of bovinity and divinity coming together, documented in photographs that make this tale fact not fiction.



Top: While the postcard errs at the top with a construction date for the church of 1674 (and a misspelling of Kilmarnock), this image from ca. 1911 confirms the presence of cows wandering the churchyard, a story oft repeated in oral histories and personal remembrances about Christ Church. (Courtesy of Gary Jenkins).

Bottom: This photograph by Colonial Williamsburg architect Singleton Peabody Moorehead (1900-1964) captures a cow grazing in the churchyard. The presence of the Carter tombs in fragments on the east side of the church dates this photograph at no older than 1926. (The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation)

COLLECTION Spotlight



Donated to Historic Christ Church in 1976 by Mary Childs, who lived next to the site of Robert Carter’s Corotoman mansion, this fragment comes from a Bartmann jug, or “bearded man” jug. Manufactured in Frechen, Germany, Bartmann jugs were a salt-glazed stoneware that had been dipped in an iron-oxide prior to being kiln fired. The iron-oxide gave the jugs their distinctive mottle color that ranged from a reddish to a dark brown.

Rhenish potters produced Bartmann jugs from the mid-sixteenth to the close of the seventeenth century. Consumers used them for wine or beer. Bartmann jugs ranged in capacity from one pint to five gallons, with the pint and quart size the most common.

By the turn of the seventeenth century, Bartmann jugs had become a leading export to London markets. Jamestown Rediscovery’s Senior Curator Merry Outlaw estimates that in the year 1600, when London’s population was only about 200,000, Amsterdam merchants who controlled the trade shipped an astonishing 100,000 Bartmann jugs to the city. Archaeologist Noël Hume said Bartmann jugs were “the Englishman’s most common form of bottle until the advent of the glass bottle in the mid-seventeenth century.”

Bartmann jugs had medallions (many with dates) along the middle of the body that featured the coats of arms of countries, cities, monarchs, and wealthy patrons. Like English wine bottles, the jugs’ appearance changed over time. Earlier ones tended to be more globular in shape with a lifelike depiction of a bearded man’s face along the neck. By the 1620–1630s, the jugs took on an elongated pear shape with the bearded face now more crude and monstrous. Dating to ca. 1690, Christ Church’s fragment reflects this later design.



Bartmann jugs mistakenly became known as Bellarmines, a reference to the despised cardinal Roberto Bellarmine, whose face some believed to be in caricature as the bearded man on the neck. But one of the oldest surviving jugs carries a medallion dated 1550 when Bellarmine was just eight years old, making this connection with the cardinal a later development. (British Museum, 1594)*

**Ivor Noël Hume, A Guide to Artifacts of Colonial America, p.55–57 and Here Lies Virginia: An Archaeologist’s View of Colonial Life and History, p.286–289.*

Theater Pew Gets an Addition

Guests typically begin their visit to Historic Christ Church & Museum by watching an orientation video in an open theater that is a replica of one of the church pews. Visitors can see the classic film written and narrated by newsman Roger Mudd, or they can view a family-friendly video designed to teach our youngest visitors about Christ Church’s architecture and its role in American history.



The theater pew got an addition this summer when Johnathan Ford of Richmond Digital Color used a laser level to install perhaps the most iconic quotation in Christ Church’s history. Bishop Meade’s timeless question “Where is the house, built in these degenerate days of slight modern architecture, which may compare with Old Christ Church, either within or without?” now greets visitors as they enter the pew, setting the stage as they begin their tour of the museum and church.



Kate Livie and her husband Ben Ford (right) join Page Hunt and her son Broadaddus following Livie’s presentation on the “Oyster Wars of the Chesapeake Bay” at the 2023 John H. Hunt II Chesapeake History Forum.

Upcoming Events



NNK250 Signature Speaker Series
March 10 | 2:00 p.m.

Dr. Steve Harris-Scott of George Mason University presents “A Place Apart: Bound Labor in Virginia’s Upper Northern Neck, 1645-1710,” talk two in a five-part series that kicks off the Northern Neck’s commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the United States’ founding.

Spring Training
March 19–21 | 8:30 a.m.–Noon

Join the HCC&M volunteer team for our annual spring continuing education sessions as we get ready for the 2024 visitor season. Enjoy engaging presentations on the history of Christ Church and colonial Virginia by leading scholars. Participate in hands-on workshops with your fellow volunteers. Play HCC&M Jeopardy™ and win a prize.



Visitor Season Begins
April 5 | 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Carter Reception Center & Museum. Guided Tours of 1735 church. Gift shop favorites.

Wren Masters
April 27 | 4:00 p.m.

Wren Masters perform “Baroque with a French Twist” inside Christ Church. Reception in the churchyard at intermission.

Kirkin of the Tartan | April TBA

Traditional Scottish blessing & celebration. Full tartan/Scottish church service. Bagpipes, drums, & marching parade with the Kilmarnock District & Pipe Band and the St. Andrew’s Society of Williamsburg.

Virginia in the Eighteenth Century
May 1, 8 and 15 | 10:00 a.m.–Noon

Rappahannock Institute for Lifelong Learning (RILL) class led by Robert Teagle.



66th Annual Meeting of the Foundation for Historic Christ Church
May 16 | 4:00 p.m.

Memorial Day Service
May 27 | Music: 11:00 a.m.
Service: 11:30 a.m.

Sponsored by the Northern Neck Chapter, Military Officers Association of America; the Foundation for Historic Christ Church, Inc.; and Grace Episcopal Church, Kilmarnock.



“Raise the Roof”
June 29 | 1:00–6:00 p.m.

Craft Beers, Wine, BBQ with fixings or veggie fare, homemade ice cream and live music at one of Virginia’s most historic sites.

Public Reading of the Declaration of Independence
July 3 | 4:00 p.m.

Patriotic celebration and reading of the Declaration of Independence inside Historic Christ Church. With the Cobbs Hall Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Richard Henry Lee Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution



John H. Hunt II Chesapeake History Forum
FALL TBD

Library of Virginia historian and musician Gregg Kimball returns with a program on the history of Virginia blues music. Enjoy craft cocktails and culinary delights at this special evening of music and storytelling.

The Holly & The Ivy
December 2 | 3:30 p.m.

Celebrate the season at Historic Christ Church with traditional songs, carols, and music. Join in this seasonal songfest in the beautifully “greened” church. Featuring members of The Chesapeake Chorale and the Christchurch School Cantorion. Dress warmly. Refreshments follow. Admission: 2 non-perishable items for the Healthy Harvest Food Bank.



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

**Foundation for
Historic Christ Church, Inc.**

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