

PARK WATCH CLEANS UP

On Sept. 21, twenty-two members of the Green Spring Park Watch Patrol completed another fall cleanup of the section of Centerville Road running through the Green Spring site. As always in the fall, patrol members had a picnic afterwards. Coordinator Cliff Williams reported to Park Watch members on progress toward opening the west side of the Green Spring site to the public.

Daniel Lovelace, vice president of the Friends of Green Spring, then related the story of Samuel Clark, who fought in the Battle of Green Spring on July 6, 1781. Just 17 years old, Clark was “a true hero” according to Lovelace.

The Battle of Green Spring was one of the last major open field engagements of the American Revolution, involving some 6,000 men (1,500 American and 4,500 British), and producing more than two hundred casualties — including Clark. His skull was

fractured by a saber slash, but he recovered and lived into his 90s.

The next park cleanup will be in April 2003. Look for details in the the next of issue of this newsletter.



Green Spring Park Watch volunteers pick up litter along Centerville Road

Friends of

GREEN SPRING

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PLANS MOVE AHEAD FOR THE OPENING OF HISTORIC GREEN SPRING NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AND FRIENDS OF GREEN SPRING SET COURSE

The posting of official National Park Service signs at Green Spring on Sept. 4 heralded a new phase in the development of the 308-acre historic site, located at Route 5 and Centerville Road in James City County, Va.

“We want people to know that work is going forward on the site,” says Maj. Gen. Archie S. Cannon, Jr. (Ret.), president of the Friends of the National Park Service for Green Spring. “The park will be a great opportunity for education and a great place for families to enjoy the outdoors.”

The home of renowned 17th-century Virginia governor Sir William Berkeley, Green Spring witnessed the beginnings of American legislative government and our legal system, as well as diverse experiments in agriculture. Few other historic sites have been so deeply involved with creating the institutional “roots” of the United States we know today.

Designated by Congress as a unit of Colonial National Historical Park — earning the same status as Jamestown Island and Yorktown Battlefield — Green Spring is owned by the National Park Service (NPS). The Friends of Green Spring, incorporated in 1997, is a non-profit organization dedicated to raising funds to support opening Green Spring for public education and enjoyment.

“Green Spring is a national treasure waiting to be discovered,” says Clifford R. Williams, founder of the Friends organization.

“GRANDDADDY OF VIRGINIA PLANTATIONS”

With a resolution of support passed by the James City County Board of Supervisors in May, the NPS and Friends of Green Spring have been meeting over the summer and fall to plan for the site’s opening.

Beginning with an extensive archeological dig on the western half of the property (see related article, p. 2), the entire site will be developed incrementally over several years. Short-term plans call for construction of a parking lot, a small reception center and a network of trails with interpretive signs.

Similar to the Jamestown Fort site at Jamestown Island, the public will be able to view archeologists at work as they uncover and reinterpret the original foundations of Governor Berkeley’s manor house, built in the 1640s and dubbed by historian Martha McCartney as “the granddaddy of all Virginia plantations.”



MEMBERSHIP DRIVE TO BEGIN

To encourage local public involvement in the development of the site, the Friends of Green Spring will kick off a membership drive early in 2003. Look for the details in the next issue of this newsletter.

Building on the endorsement of the Virginia General Assembly, expressed in a resolution sponsored by Delegate Melanie Rapp, the Friends will work with state and Congressional legislators to garner government support for Green Spring. They will also continue to raise funds from foundations, corporations and individuals to support ongoing archeology and ensure the earliest possible opening of the site.

Green Spring Park Update

GREEN SPRING GAINS 112 ACRES THROUGH GIFT

Green Spring, owned by the Colonial National Historical Park since 1966, is now 308 acres instead of 196, thanks to the generosity of Marc B. Sharp, president of Greensprings Plantation, Inc., and his partners, Michelle Ball and John Diggs.

In a ceremony on Sept. 4 that also recognized new NPS signs at Green Spring, the additional acreage was presented to Alec Gould, superintendent of the CNHP, by Mr. Sharp, a member of the Friends of Green Spring Board of Directors. Mr. Gould expressed his gratitude

for the gift of land and his admiration for Mr. Sharp, his partners and staff members.

The additional 112 acres abuts Green Spring on the east, extending from Route 5 northward between the original park property and Greensprings Plantation golf course. Consisting of dense woods and wetlands, the gift of land is a fine addition for hiking and birding, and as an all-around wildlife habitat. It is an area once used by Governor Sir William Berkeley for experimenting with rice culture.

ARCHEOLOGISTS UNCOVER NEW CLUES

In late fall 2000, archeologists returned to Green Spring after a forty-year hiatus, armed with far more sophisticated knowledge and tools to uncover the secrets of Governor Berkeley's mansion.

Dr. Andrew Veech of the National Park Service headed up the archeological team, which included students from the College of William and Mary. Ivor Noel Hume, retired director of archeology for Colonial Williamsburg, provided valuable counsel.

On Aug. 15 of this year, Veech and Hume reported on the latest archeological findings to the Friends of Green Spring and members of the Park Watch patrol. Hume presented new conjectures about how the governor's mansion evolved from its initial construction in the mid-17th century.

"The mansion complex is really two houses," Hume said, "Reigning over the whole thing is Lady Frances Berkeley." Lady Frances made the first additions to the house; the descendants of her third husband, Philip Ludwell I, demolished much of the original mansion. Hume pointed out remnants of a colonnade that once graced the house.

Hume also explained that the new archeological excavations had revealed the three-stage development of landscape architecture on the site, following the latest trends from England. "There is no other place like it in America," he said.

Andrew Veech then reported on excavations to test a theory about the connections between a long brick garden wall and three square outbuildings. What the archeologists discovered was a very deliberate plan: the outbuildings are spaced exactly 42 feet apart along the wall. Moreover, each building is larger, creating what

landscape architects call "forced perspective." From the porch of the mansion, the buildings would have appeared to be the same size.

The archeological program has been jointly funded by the National Park Service and the Friends of Green Spring. Private contributors include the National Society Daughters of American Colonists and the Rouse-Bottom Foundation.

"You've got an architectural gem here, and you've got a landscape architectural gem," Hume told his audience. "I think the nation is going to be very appreciate of the Friends' efforts."



NPS archeologist Andrew Veech points out an 18th-century wall (above) and 17th-century foundation stone (left) uncovered in recent excavations at the Green Spring site.

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GREEN SPRING

Colonial National Historical Park

A Moment in Time

THE INIMITABLE LADY FRANCES A 17TH-CENTURY WOMAN AHEAD OF HER TIME



An early portrait of Lady Frances showed her to be an attractive young woman with reddish-blond hair and blue eyes. (Private collection. Photograph courtesy of the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts)

In April 1670, 64-year-old Virginia Governor Sir William Berkeley married for a second time (his first wife's name and fate remain a mystery). Berkeley's bride was 36-year-old Frances Culpeper Stevens, widow of former Carolinas Governor Samuel Stevens.

"Lady" Frances, whose politics and personality were a match for her new husband's, successfully ignored most of the 17th-century conventions expected of women of her class. A cousin of Virginia Governor Sir Thomas Culpeper, Frances apparently married rather late in her life, and none of her marriages produced any children. In addition, she was careful to make sure that her marriage contracts included favorable long-term financial arrangements, including retaining title to Berkeley's mansion at Green

Spring (which she rented to two succeeding governors). She famously described the mansion as "...the finest seat in America (and) the only tolerable place for a Governor."

As Sir William's consort for seven years, Lady Frances loyally supported her increasingly irascible and truculent husband during the final years of his tenure in office, culminating in the violent 1676 mutiny known today as Bacon's Rebellion. After a Royal Commission arrived in Virginia to put down the rebellion, Berkeley was escorted to England to face an official inquiry. He died in late 1677 before his wife could join in his appeal.

In 1680, Lady Frances married one of Berkeley's lieutenants, Philip Ludwell I, and nine years later she helped arrange Ludwell's appointment as Governor of Virginia. She is remembered to this day as the only woman in Virginia history to marry three Colonial Governors.

Lady Frances died in 1691 at the age of 57 and was buried in the cemetery of Jamestown Church, where fragments of her tomb cover are still on display near the church's tower.

For additional information regarding Lady Frances, see: Martha McCartney, *The History of Green Spring Plantation*, Colonial National Historical Park (NPS, 1989). To purchase, call (757) 221-0800.