



- 116th Annual Membership Meeting
- May 21, 2005
- 2005's Eleven Most Endangered Sites in Virginia

Hayfield, Caroline County

Hayfield has strong associations with the Civil War including visits by Generals Lee and Jackson.

Hayfield is considered one of the last great unrestored antebellum mansions on the Rappahannock. The home was built circa 1750 by Lawrence Battaile on land that was part of a grant to John Battaile. The house was once known as “the finest in Caroline County” as recently as the 1970s when it began its unfortunate decline. The mansion and the surrounding site retain much of their original character as an agricultural setting on the banks of the Rappahannock. Several early 20th century outbuildings and the tree-lined drive to Rt. 17 are still intact. Hayfield also has strong associations with the Civil War including visits by Generals Lee and Jackson. The home itself is a close neighbor and contemporary of several National Register houses in Caroline County, including Moss Neck, Santee and Prospect Hill. Hayfield itself has never been placed on any historical register due in part to the fact that a mining company has owned it for over 30 years.



The massive Georgian brick house has been derelict for over 20 years, has suffered several bouts of vandalism, and is a prime example of “demolition by neglect.” Currently, Hayfield is part of a 350-acre farm owned by a sand and gravel mining company that holds a valid mining permit for the property. The mining company considers the sand and gravel under and around the house more valuable than the house itself and could begin operations to remove it at anytime.

2005's Eleven Most Endangered Sites in Virginia

Every year Virginia loses countless historic sites to inappropriate development and the ravages of time. Irreplaceable buildings, landscapes, bridges, towns, neighborhoods and even cities are in danger. APVA Preservation Virginia's listing of the "Most Endangered Sites in Virginia" focuses attention on the Commonwealth's most sensitive historic resources. Eleven sites were selected for the 2005 designation in this year's program.

What sets these sites apart is less their unique character than their capacity to represent so many other similar sites across the Commonwealth.

The designations for the 2005 "Most Endangered Sites in Virginia" are listed below by location.

2005's Eleven Most Endangered Sites in Virginia

Hayfield, Caroline County

Longdale Furnace Iron Company, Clifton Forge

Worsham Street Bridge, Danville

**Shenandoah Flood Plain/Richards Farm,
Front Royal**

**Dr. Robert Walter Johnson Home & Tennis Court,
Lynchburg**

Pocahontas Company Store, Pocahontas

Adams, Payne & Gleaves Livery Stable #2, Roanoke

Virginia Tech/Catawba Hospital Farm, Roanoke

Windsor Castle and the Town of Smithfield, Smithfield

Town of Forestville & The Zirkle Mill, Forestville

Longdale Furnace Iron Company, Clifton Forge

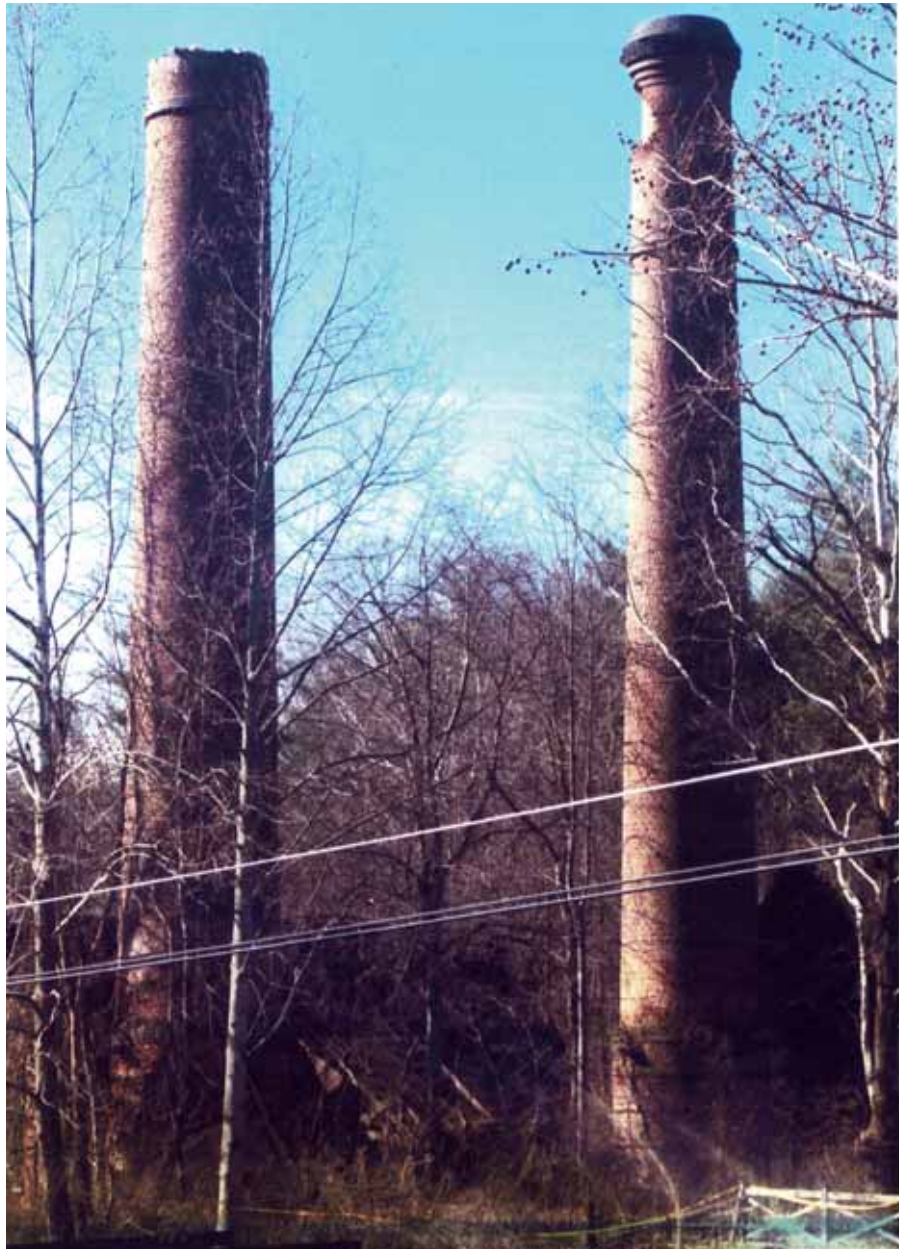
The Valley of Virginia in the early 1800s was particularly suited to iron mining because it contained several minerals and forestry for fuel. The Longdale Ironworks represents a key point in Virginia's history and helped fuel the way for Western Expansion.

The history of Longdale began in 1827, when "Lucy Selina," a cold-blast furnace, was constructed. The furnace was named after the wives of the owners, John Jordon and John Irvine. The owners purchased approximately 8,800 acres in Alleghany and Botetourt Counties for the purpose of constructing an iron work. In 1852, after the Jordon and Irvine Iron Company dissolved, a newer, larger hot-blast furnace, named "The Australia," became functional. The furnaces at Longdale were used to produce iron for the Confederate cause during the Civil War. Joseph R. Anderson of Tredegar Iron Works bought the furnaces to supply the Confederate forces with rails, cannons, and munitions until the war ended.

In 1870, William Firmstone bought the Iron Works and during this time the complex experienced a boom. By the 1880s Longdale employed between 200 and 400 workers. In 1874, the Lucy Selina was updated and renamed Longdale No. 1 and produced the first coke smelt iron in Virginia. A second coke furnace, Longdale No. 2, was also constructed at this time. With the introduction of the coke furnaces, Alleghany County became the lead iron producer in the state. The county's population rose over 65% during the 1870s. These two coke-fueled furnaces were in use until 1911, when competition from companies in Pennsylvania and Ohio made them obsolete.

With the introduction of the coke furnaces, Alleghany County became the lead iron producer in the state.

Today the furnaces are still intact but sit abandoned and decaying. Washington and Lee University has conducted evaluations of the site and the surrounding area to piece together the important history of this area. The Longdale Furnace Iron Company is a rare example of a key industry that was once the lifeblood of the Commonwealth. It is a story tied to the economic and social history and one that is under-studied.

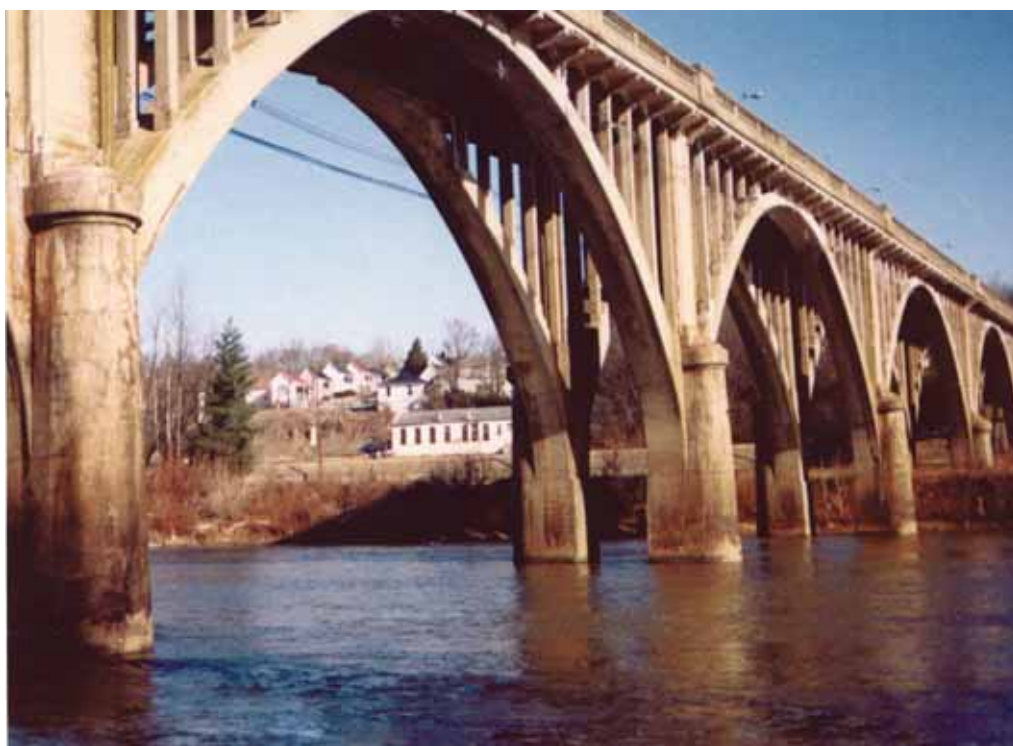


Together, the Worsham and Main Street Bridges represent the only place in the world that boasts two Luten-designed bridges side by side.

Worsham Street Bridge, Danville

The Worsham Street Bridge dates from 1928, and was completed a year after its sister bridge just upriver, the Main Street Bridge. When completed in 1928, the Worsham complimented the Main Street Bridge, which carried not only private motor vehicles, but also the city's electric streetcars. The Worsham was designed to carry automobiles as well as farm vehicles, including wagons drawn by horses that might have been frightened by the streetcars. The Worsham's importance to the City's transportation network has been enhanced several times over the past 75 years to help in facilitating traffic to the heart of downtown, the Tobacco Historic District.

Not only does the bridge have a colorful past, but it is a masterpiece of early-20th-century bridge design by the Indiana-based engineer, Daniel B. Luten. It is significant among the Virginia survivors of Luten's designs, with his trademark long-span bridge with open spandrels. The Main Street span being rehabbed just upstream is reportedly the longest Luten-designed bridge in Virginia and its sister span under threat, the Worsham, is reputedly the highest. Together



they represent the only place in the world that boasts two Luten-designed bridges side by side.

Currently, the Worsham Street Bridge is under immediate threat of demolition from the City of Danville. In October of 2004, City Council voted—despite considerable public opposition to ask VDOT to proceed with demolition of the bridge. Since VDOT has been asked to initiate the process of demolition, it is obligated to obtain necessary environmental permits, triggering a Section 106 Review. This process could take two years. The Friends of Worsham Street Bridge are fighting to save this important entryway to the Tobacco Historic District.

Shenandoah Flood Plain / Richards Farm - the Gateway, Front Royal

Situated on the flood plain of the south fork of the Shenandoah River, these 121 acres of pristine land are the first impression that individuals have as they enter into the Shenandoah Valley. The site, located in the village of Riverton, which is within the town of Front Royal, has been deemed an historic site by the Commonwealth of Virginia. The area is constantly changing but forever remains a part of the local heritage. The Gateway is a mapped wetlands area.

In the summer, the trees that line the river banks provide refuge for wildlife and birds. In the fall, the changing colors of the leaves give a breathtaking view of the area, with tall picturesque mountains in the background. Winter provides a frosty landscape with ice crystals on every tree.

There is a battle to preserve the site from commercial development. The threat of increased noise pollution and traffic, and safety issues for an elementary school concern citizens, as does the loss of this increasingly rare natural environment.

Recently, the area has been rezoned for commercial use by the former members of the town council at the request of Wal-Mart, in order to build an 184,000-foot retail center. Since this rezoning, Wal-Mart now has the power to complete the purchase transaction for the property. Save our Gateways has filed a suit on this issue and the current town council sides for the protection of this beautiful site. Several groups are in support as well, realizing that the aesthetic value of this viewshed is priceless and irreplaceable.



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Dr. Robert Walter Johnson Home and Tennis Court, Lynchburg

The Johnson house was built in 1911, and is characteristic of the American Foursquare Style. The former tennis courts are located on a full city lot. While the house still stands, the surrounding homes have become rental properties, and the neighborhood has diminished in its stature. The Johnson house has been vacant for 3-4 years, and the tennis court is all but indistinguishable.

In 2002 the Dr. Robert Walter Johnson House and Tennis Court was placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

While the house itself may not seem significant, the activities that occurred at this residence are monumental. The property was the primary residence of Dr. Robert Walter Johnson, a Lynchburg physician

and general practitioner. Dr. Johnson and his son trained major tennis stars Arthur Ashe and Althea Gibson, the first male and female African Americans to win at Wimbledon. They both credited Dr. Johnson with instilling them with the discipline and the desire to be the best that they could be in spite of long odds, including racial barriers erected by society at this time. This home provided the general summer training ground for promising tennis athletes. This residence was also a stopover for notable African American entertainers and others traveling through southern states at a time when most blacks were not allowed to stay in hotels. There are unconfirmed reports that visitors to Dr. Johnson's home included Duke Ellington, Jackie Robinson, Lionel Hampton and Roy Campanella.

Since 2002, the Lynchburg Historical Foundation has been working with the City and other interested parties to save this significant piece of history. The Foundation hopes to restore the tennis court for young tennis players, and find a complimentary adaptive reuse for the house. The proposed pending Local Historic District Overlay designation would protect the property from inappropriate alterations.



Pocahontas Company Store, Pocahontas

Historians consider the company store the center of community life in a coal town. The store was the focal point of economic and social activity and a place for residents of the coal town to shop and converse with neighbors.

In February 1884, the Southwest Virginia Improvement Company built the Pocahontas Company Store on the corner of Water and Center Streets in Pocahontas, Virginia. The company store became “the heart of the town.” It was the gathering place for the people of Pocahontas. The store made available food, clothing, furniture, appliances, and a shop to purchase tools and supplies. The Pocahontas Company Store became the anchor of the town as competition from other local stores moved into the area.

Today, the façade and the historical integrity of the building remain, but the company store is experiencing structural deterioration and is in need of immediate stabilization. The store is in the Pocahontas Historic District, which is on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. Like many coal mining towns, the shift away from the coal mining industry means the population of the town is left to find its livelihood from other means. With



the restoration of the company store, Pocahontas hopes to stimulate heritage tourism within the region.

The company store stands as a reminder of the bustling life of an active coal mining community. The building is the cornerstone for all restoration projects in Pocahontas. Although the building stands in a state of disrepair, Historic Pocahontas Incorporated is actively working to raise funds to stabilize and restore the building. They hope that the restoration of the building will lead to further economic development by way of tourism for the Pocahontas Historic District.

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This Southern treasure is a premier artifact in the most comprehensive collection of Confederate artifacts anywhere in the nation.

White House of the Confederacy, Richmond

The White House of the Confederacy, the official residence of the first and only President of the Confederate States of America and his family during the Civil War, is one of the nation's finest historic, architectural and decorative treasures. Within walking distance of the Virginia Capitol and other legislative meeting places, the White House's context is as important as its architectural features. Jefferson Davis chose this home for its proximity to its influential neighbors and decision makers.

Originally built in 1818 for John Brockenbrough, a prominent banker in Richmond, and attributed to neo-classical architect Robert Mills, the house has undergone many changes in its lifetime. Now restored to its 1861 configuration, this architectural gem has stood at this location for nearly 200 years and is designated a National Historic Landmark.

Unfortunately, encroaching development has obscured the viewshed that once added grace and charm to the home and its environs. The White House now sits surrounded



by multi-story structures housing Virginia Commonwealth University's Medical College of Virginia campus. Plans for another towering neighbor have led the Museum of the Confederacy leadership to consider radical alternatives, possibly including a move of the structure itself. The future of the house and its neighborhood is far from certain. Great wisdom will be required in reaching decisions over the best course of protection and preservation of the house and its context.

Adams, Payne & Gable Livery Stable #2, Roanoke

The Old Livery Stable is a long, two - story, brick building that was constructed around 1900.

The stable was an important part of the daily operations of Adams, Payne & Gleaves, a building materials supplier. The site at one time included a brick and kiln yard and a planing mill. The livery's purpose was to house the horses of Adams, Payne & Gleaves. It is the earliest surviving livery stable in Roanoke and provides us with a significant link to the horse-drawn economy of Roanoke in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

The livery stable is at the eastern edge of a large tract of land which has been acquired by a biomedical company for future development. The Roanoke Redevelopment Authority and Housing Authority have started the process of acquiring the building, along with the rest of the property and the adjacent land. The removal of scrap iron from the Virginia Scrap Iron site next door to the livery has begun. The Authority will seek funds from Roanoke City Council to purchase the site for future use by another owner. The Authority intends to demolish the flour mill buildings, jeopardizing the livery stable unless another use is found for the buildings. The Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation is working to save this building and hopes to find a developer who will be interested in using tax credits for adaptive reuse of the livery stable, such as a restaurant or other public building.

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Virginia Tech / Catawba Hospital Farm, Roanoke



The Catawba Hospital Farm is comprised of over 300 acres of pasture/hayfields and almost 150 acres of forested hillside at the foot of Catawba Mountain. The cluster of barns, cottages and other farm structures has been a central feature of the scenic Catawba Valley for the last century. It is enjoyed by many who frequently drive through the pastoral landscape.

The farm was built after the former Catawba Sanitarium opened nearby in 1909. It operated to provide dairy and meat products for consumption

by the patients and staff. When the sanitarium shifted its emphasis from tuberculosis to geriatric and mental care, the farm was converted to use by Virginia Tech in 1982 and this continued into the 1990s. The barns represent the rural character of a suburban area which may change as former farmland is developed.

The barns and associated structures are architectural reminders of a lifestyle that is fast disappearing from the Catawba Valley. Because of its highly visible location, it has become symbolic of many like

complexes in the region and offers an opportunity for developers and preservationists to plan together for the long-term use of the site. The preservation of this grouping would send a strong and reassuring signal to neighboring owners to respect the past and preserve the structures that help tell the story of the lifestyles of many previous generations.

Windsor Castle and the Town of Smithfield, Smithfield

Built circa 1750 by Arthur Smith IV, founder of Smithfield, the Windsor Castle manor house, some of its dependencies and its surrounding 186 acres are all that is left of the original 1450-acre land grant of 1637. The bluff overlooking the juncture of Pagan River and Cypress Creek, and on which Windsor Castle now sits today, was once called “King of All Places.” The manor house reflects a charming blend of 18th century four-over-four Tidewater Virginia colonial architecture.

It is the third-oldest remaining structure in Smithfield and probably the fourth-oldest in the county. Furthermore, the farm land surrounding the site is a significant protective buffer between the Smithfield Historic District and the newer sections of town.

The Town of Smithfield is one of the gems of small town life in southside Virginia. Situated on the border between the rapidly developing Tidewater communities and the still - rural areas of Southside, Smithfield has managed to retain its charm and sense of community. These same factors, as well as the availability of the Windsor Castle tract within walking



distance of historic downtown, make it an attractive place for developers. Current proposals for intensive development of the Windsor Castle tract of land, while respectful of the Windsor Castle house, are out of scale with the community that they seek to join. If built as proposed, these developments could overwhelm the town and forever change the character of the entire community.

Citizens are resisting the proposed scale and working with local officials to allow for growth but keep it within parameters that respect the identity of the community. It is hoped that the Town of Smithfield, its citizens and those who would develop this tract of land continue efforts to seek a solution that respects the scale of the Town, to demonstrate that responsible development can preserve historic structures, allow for community growth, and protect the character of the surrounding community.

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Located in the lower portion of Shenandoah County, the town of Forestville consists of several homes, a town church, general store, post office, schoolhouse, a cemetery and the Zirkle Mill, all dating to the late 1700s.

The town of Forestville itself was founded in the 1830s on the land once owned by Andrew Zirkle, one of the original settlers in the area. The town contains many examples of construction of the early era, with some log and frame construction.

Town of Forestville and the Zirkle Mill, Forestville

Many of the farms that surround Forestville are owned by the descendants of the original settlers. The cemetery contains the remains of the second generation of these settlers and their descendants, some of whom are Revolutionary and Civil War veterans. Forestville evolved from a frontier, to a prosperous town at an important crossroads, and is now a sleepy village.

The Andrew Zirkle Mill was listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register in 1982 and the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. The Zirkle Mill “is a significant artifact of the Shenandoah Valley’s 19th-century flour manufacturing industry and a picturesque survivor of a fast disappearing building form,” according to its nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Most notable is the fact that the Zirkle Mill is the only surviving mill that was spared in the infamous burning of the Shenandoah Valley by Union Troops

during the Civil War. The mill operated continuously for 200 years before being retired in the 1950s, a victim of modernized factories. The mill still contains equipment from the entire 200-year-existence and is in excellent condition. Preserved and interpreted in its original setting, it can continue to serve Virginia and Shenandoah County. Removed from its setting, it will be stricken from both registers and will leave a gaping hole in the historic

character of Forestville.

This is unfortunately the case today. The Andrew Zirkle Mill is in immediate and imminent danger of being dismantled and moved from its current location to become the “centerpiece” of a new “village exhibit” representing life in the early 1800s at the Frontier Cultural Museum in Staunton. The mill would be the only authentic pre-1800s building in the exhibit. Plans also show that the museum will be removing equipment from periods later than 1850.

The Frontier Cultural Museum has entered into an agreement to purchase, dismantle and transport the mill building from Forestville to the museum grounds. This action is planned for spring of 2005.

Not only will the mill lose its designations on the Landmarks Register and the National Register, but the historical context of the structure, which is just as important as the structure itself, will be lost if it is

removed from its current site. The town of Forestville has existed for many years around the Andrew Zirkle Mill, which predates its formation. Removing this structure would destroy the very essence of the town of Forestville and its extensive history.

The Save the Zirkle Mill Foundation and hundreds of concerned citizens have banded together in an effort to preserve the mill and the Town of Forestville. It is their hope to purchase the mill and restore it to operating capacity so that the mill can be part of a new tourism program called “Frontier Trail” which would be established throughout the Shenandoah Valley, similar to the popular Civil War Trail.

