



HOMESTEAD HIGHLIGHTS

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 8

AUGUST 2009

On Exhibit

The R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Collection continues on exhibition through September 25. Eighteen oil paintings from the 1940s depict scenes from tobacco harvesting and selling are on display. Exhibition booklets with information about the artists are available to visitors.

The Homestead Postcard Club Exhibit:



Amusement Parks

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RJR Collection Opening A Huge Success

The oil paintings that were donated to the Virginia Tech Foundation from the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company made a beautiful display in the main hall of the Continuing Education Center at the August 2 exhibition opening. Susan M. Ivey, chair, president and chief executive officer of Reynolds American Inc., and chair of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company commented that the Reynolds Homestead was the ideal destination for maintaining the artwork. A crowd of 180 enjoyed the reception featuring drinks, hors d'oeuvres, and piano selections performed by Cecil Murray Akers.

Ray Smoot, Chief Operating Officer of the Virginia Tech Foundation gave remarks of appreciation stating, "The Virginia Tech Foundation is honored to receive this significant collection of paintings from the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, which are illustrative of the cultural and economic history of tobacco farming in America – in which the Reynolds Homestead played a most significant part."

"That was a very nice reception. I am sure everyone enjoyed it. The paintings are wonderful and I look forward to my next visit where I will be able to study them closer."—Steve Casagrande, attending with his wife Connie.

Tobacco Farm Life Museum Featured

"The History Around Us" series at the Reynolds Homestead will feature the Tobacco Farm Life Museum of Virginia from South Hill on Wednesday, August 5, from 12:00 noon until 1:00 p.m. The program is co-sponsored by the Patrick County Historical Society.

The Tobacco Farm Life Museum was



(L to R): John Dooley, Susan Ivey, Kay Dunkley and Ray Smoot

The paintings – which show various aspects of harvesting, hanging and selling tobacco – are from the American Regionalism movement that was prominent in the 1930s and 1940s.

Regionalists, sometimes called American scene painters, concentrated on the realistic depiction of life in the Midwest and South, derived from a patriotic desire to establish a genuine American art free from European influence. Their works are realistic portrayals of rural America that often express the despair and loneliness of the Great Depression.

Artists featured in the exhibition include Arnold Blanch, Clarence Holbrook Carter, James Chapin, John Stockton de Martelly, Cosmo de Salvo, John Philip Falter, Irwin D. Hoffman, David Stone Martin, George Schreiber, Zoltan Leslie Sepeshy, and Lawrence Beall Smith.

The collection of oil paintings will be on display through September 25th and everyone is invited to view this generous donation of paintings. "With plans to reconstruct the tobacco barn, the artwork will provide impressive visual imagery into the history of



Sandra and Norm Palmer enjoy the opening.

planting, harvesting, and selling tobacco," states John Dooley, the Vice President for Outreach and International Affairs at Virginia Tech.

good old days down on the family farm during the 1900s.

Bring a bag lunch and enjoy this presentation about a very significant historical museum. Groups are welcome. The program lasts one hour and is free.

LEARNING-DISCOVERY-ENGAGEMENT

A Message from Director Kay Dunkley

One of the priorities identified by the long range planning committee is the reconstruction of the tobacco barn. The 19th century barn was disassembled log by log in November 2006 for two reasons—it was in drastic need of repair and also was unfortunately located close to a forest research project. During the dismantling, the hewn logs were treated, tagged, and placed in a safe location closer to the historic home. The stone used for the foundation was also saved. The barn will be reconstructed across the road from the family cemetery.

Although few signs of the tobacco crop presently remain on the property, reconstructing the barn will genuinely boost the tourist experience and will help interpret life on the property when Hardin Reynolds and his family were farming thousands of acres of tobacco during the mid 1800s. Having the barn as a part of the guided tour will give individuals a realistic view of the typical day in the lives of those who lived, worked, and maintained this historic property. We have solicited the expertise of the log conservationist, John Larson, Vice President for Restoration at Old Salem Museums and Gardens in Winston-Salem, to assemble the logs and prepare for erecting the building.

John feels the logs and rock foundation are in good enough shape to preserve and his plan also includes using several logs from another tobacco barn located on the property.



The timing of the reconstruction is significant. Hearing the interpretative story of how leaf tobacco was flue cured will fit nicely as individuals view the paintings on display in the Continuing Education Center. The collection of oil paintings depicting the harvesting, hanging, and selling of tobacco were recently donated to the Virginia Tech Foundation by the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company.

Combining the tour of the tobacco barn along with viewing the artwork gives illustrious meaning to the history of tobacco farming.

In order for the project to be accomplished, additional funds are needed. We are hopeful that private donations and grant monies can be secured so that the barn can be in place before the end of the 2009 calendar year. If interested in making a contribution to this project, please contact me at kdunkley@vt.edu.

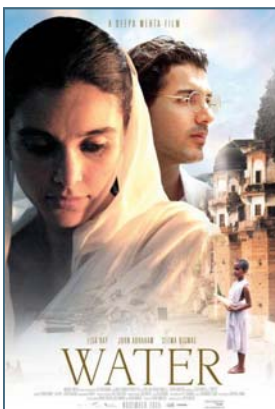
In addition, if anyone is interested in watching the barn being constructed, let us know. This event is a great teachable moment—come learn, discover, and be engaged!



Above: Kyle Peer, Forestry Superintendent, helps measure and identify logs in the barn to aid in reconstruction.

Center Photo: The tobacco barn in 2006 before it was dismantled.

Dinner and a Movie Night: Guest Chef Ben Dawson



Plan to attend **Dinner & a Movie Night** on Thursday, August 20. The featured movie is “Water” (2005), an Oscar-nominated drama which takes place in 1938 India. This wonderful tale is about several women, including a young banished teenage widow, who determine to make cultural and religious changes as Gandhi’s party is making inroads in women’s rights.

Our Guest Chef for the evening is **Ben Dawson**, graduate of Le Cordon Bleu in Atlanta, who is now chef at Wild Magnolias in Martinsville. Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts in Atlanta

is partnered with the internationally renowned Le Cordon Bleu, founded as a cooking school in Paris in 1895. Ben will be preparing traditional Indonesian cuisine.

Dinner is \$10 per person and reservations are required. Dinner will be served promptly at 6:00 pm (note time change from previous months) and the movie begins at 7:00 pm and is free. Food donations for the Patrick County Food Bank are appreciated.

Summer Camps a Success

This summer at the Reynolds Homestead, children from all over had the chance to be dramatic, travel back in time, explore nature, and create great works of art. The Homestead held four different camps for children ages five to twelve. Each camp was an opportunity for children to do something a little different and educational during the two month break from school.

The first camp for the summer was the **Act Out! Theatre Camp** taught by two Radford University drama majors, Rachel Blankenship and Josh Younger. The campers learned the basic skills of acting through a variety of theatre games and also had the chance to try their hands at stage makeup. The campers also learned about set design and had the opportunity to become playwrights by writing their own play. At the end of the week, they performed their play *Campfire Stories* for their families and friends.

TimeTravelers Camp was the next camp held at the Reynolds Homestead. Staffers from the Homestead took twelve campers to local places of interest and historical significance. The campers visited six sites over three days, including the Carroll County Courthouse, the Patrick County

Historical Society, Fairy Stone State Park, the Danville Art and History Museum, and the Danville Science Center. They also had the opportunity to take in a show at Ferrum College's Blue Ridge Dinner Theatre. At the end of camp, the children received a t-shirt, a certificate signed by Governor Kaine and a passport that chronicled their many adventures over the three days.



Melissa Pendleton learns about stage makeup from Josh Younger at Theatre Camp.

Youth Nature Camp entertained the youngest campers of the summer. Children from ages five to eight explored the world around them and experienced nature with all five senses. Led by Vicki and Megan Bowman, the campers went on a scavenger hunt around the Homestead property, made their very own fossils, and tried their hand at controlling the weather with homemade rain sticks.

This Can is a Frog! Art Camp was the final camp of the summer. Linda Daumen, an art teacher in the Patrick County Public Schools, taught campers that art can be found in everyday objects. The campers made collages from magazines to express their own individual styles and tastes, recycled popsicle sticks to make God's Eyes, built their own paper mache animals, and made decorative masks from cardboard boxes, detergent lids, and marker lids. They also became sculptors by taking old wire hangers that were clued to wood blocks and stretching knee-high pantyhose over the hangers to make abstract sculptures. Art Camp concluded with an art show for families and friends.

The summer camps at the Reynolds Homestead were a great success this year, and the staff looks forward to fantastic summer camps next year!



Cordelia Schoen and Lauren Brown prepare for their hike of Stuart's Knob at Fairy Stone.

Fairy Stone Concert: Simple Gifts of the Blue Ridge

It wouldn't be summer without the annual Reynolds Homestead concert performed by "Simple Gifts of



the Blue Ridge" at Fairy Stone Park! This year's performance will take place on Friday, August 21, at 7:30 pm, and will be held in the park amphitheatre or a nearby picnic shelter in the event of rain. This remarkable group from Blacksburg delights the listener with traditional folk music performed through song, hammered dulcimers, guitars,

flute, acoustic bass, and percussion. The musicians, who have been together for many years, clearly enjoy entertaining the crowd with songs from Appalachia, Europe, "world music", and some original tunes. This is a concert guaranteed to please family members of all ages. The event is free, though Park admission rates apply.

This event is co-sponsored by SunTrust Bank in Stuart.

"Thank you for taking us to all those great places. I'm looking forward to next year."
Nicholas Hooker
TimeTravelers Camp

August 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 RJR Collection Opening 2-4 p.m.	3 Photography Club 6:30	4	5 History Around Us: Tobacco Farm Museum 12 noon to 1 pm	6	7	8 Virginia State Peach Festival Rotary Field 5:30 p.m.
9	10 Rural Music Coalition 6:30	11 Great Books II 6:30 to 8 pm	12 Volunteer Fair 12-3 p.m. Postcard Club 7 pm	13	14	15
16 Poetry Salon 3:00 p.m.	17 Decorative Painters 9:30	18	19	20 Dinner & A Movie 6:00/7:00	21 Fairy Stone Concert: Simple Gifts 7:30	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Become a Volunteer Today!

Volunteer Fair August 12

What is a talent that you would like to share with your community? Perhaps you have a green thumb that could create a butterfly garden for children to enjoy. Maybe you are a secret chef who would love to share your talents with the community.

The Reynolds Homestead is looking for volunteers in the community who would like to share their talents with their fellow citizens and be a part of helping the Homestead grow in its services to the area. The staff will be holding a **Volunteer Fair on Wednesday, August 12th from 12:00 noon until 3:00 p.m.** for those interested in seeing what opportunities are available.

"We have opportunities for just about anyone who would like to spend time here," says Program Coordinator Lisa Martin. "Retired teachers might enjoy working with our youth programs, gardeners would enjoy working in our historic herb garden or restoring the Friendship Garden, and history buffs will be excited about our plans to reconstruct a tobacco barn on the property and our plans to enhance the Cemetery of Slaves and Descendants to share that story with the community."

Those who volunteer at the Reynolds Homestead will also earn rewards for their time, says Beth Ford, historical resources assistant. "We have a reward program for volunteers based on the number of hours they serve. They can earn free tickets to events, even free rentals of the facility as their hours add up."

The Homestead offers free trips to visit other historic sites. Last spring volunteers visited Smithfield Plantation and this fall will visit Reynolda House. "These trips give us all a chance to see how other sites are doing things and to see if we can learn more to incorporate at the Homestead," Ford notes.

This past spring, the Homestead focused on recruiting volunteer historic interpreters for the property and the staff was very pleased with the results. "We have several interpreters now who have really added to the value of our tours," says Ford. The historic guides volunteer on weekends and for special events to offer tours of the Rock Spring Plantation House.

The Homestead is now focusing on other areas where volunteers could be crucial to programming success. "We have a very small staff here," says Martin, "and volunteers are just essential to our being able to offer substantial and important programming to the citizens of Patrick and Henry counties. Even just having

someone to assist in the office when one of us is on vacation is a tremendous help."

Some areas that the Homestead staff is looking for assistance include children's programming, gardening, research and participation in historic projects, office work, helping organize and hang art exhibitions, and even being an interpreter.

"Pretty much everything we do here could use volunteer help," says Martin. "This community is so talented and has such wonderful and giving people, I know we have something to offer most anyone looking to share with their community."

The Volunteer Fair will feature booths created by each of the staff, showing the different opportunities available at the Homestead. A light luncheon buffet will be served throughout the afternoon, so anyone interested can just come out and see what the Homestead has to offer and enjoy refreshments at the same time.

The Fair will be held in the Continuing Education Center from noon until 3:00 p.m. on August 12th. Anyone interested in participating as a volunteer, but unable to attend the fair, should contact Lisa Martin at (276) 694-7181 ext. 22.