

COMMON Ground

PRESERVING OUR NATION'S HERITAGE SUMMER 2007



LANDFALL

A LOOK AT JOHN SMITH'S LEGACY THROUGH RECENT ARCHEOLOGICAL FINDINGS AND A WATER TRAIL TRACING HIS TRAVELS IN THE CHESAPEAKE
BELOW: THE VIEW FROM STINGRAY POINT, WHERE SMITH WAS STUNG BY THE SITE'S NAMESAKE

A Bold Endeavor

| BY PATRICK F. NOONAN |

IN THE SUMMER OF 1608, Captain John Smith left Jamestown in a small open boat to explore the Chesapeake, a world yet unknown to English settlers. This was a bold endeavor and a vital chapter of American history. Smith and company, through their combined efforts, gained a comprehensive view of the region and its people. This information was essential to Jamestown's survival and to European settlement in the region. **SMITH AND HIS CREW EMBODIED MANY OF THE VALUES** we think of as quintessentially American, especially the ability to pull together in the face of hardship. Perhaps Chief Justice John Marshall said it best: "When we consider that he sailed over 3,000 miles in an open boat; when we contemplate the dangers, and the hardships he encountered, and the fortitude, courage and patience with which he met them; when we reflect on the useful and important additions which he made to the stock of knowledge respecting America, then possessed by his countrymen; we shall not hesitate to say that few voyages of discovery, undertaken at any time, reflect more honor on those engaged in them, than this does on Captain Smith." **A SIMILAR SPIRIT OF COOPERATION PREVAILED** last year in the creation of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, America's first all-water national historic trail. As the concept gained momentum, more and more people saw how the trail couples the region's deep history and natural beauty to forge a lasting legacy in commemorating Jamestown's 400th anniversary. The Chesapeake community recognized tremendous opportunities for education, recreation, and small businesses. Some saw the trail's potential to brand the Chesapeake as an international destination for sustainable tourism. It captured the public's passion by putting people face-to-face with the bay's intricate ecosystem—and ongoing efforts to protect and restore it. **THERE WAS A NATURAL CONVERGENCE OF ENTHUSIASM** in this exciting new initiative. The region's local, state, and federal legislators, its business groups and nonprofit organizations, and its citizens from all around the bay found common ground with the trail. The National Park Service and the Department of the Interior, led by Director Mary Bomar and Secretary Kempthorne, provided outstanding leadership vital to the trail's creation. **THE TRAIL OPENS THE WAY FOR MODERN-DAY EXPLORERS** to follow Smith's 3,000-mile odyssey through the Chesapeake Bay and its

tributaries in Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and the District of Columbia. Trail partners have contributed an impressive array of maps, guides, exhibits, interactive games, and digital media. In addition, an innovative system of "smart buoys" developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Verizon Wireless, and other partners will serve as interpretive guideposts offering information on the area's cultural and natural history. The buoys will also transmit real-time data about environmental conditions, which will be used to gauge the bay's health. **THE TRAIL'S FORMAL PURPOSE** as identified by the National Park Service is to commemorate Smith's exploratory voyages on the bay and its tributaries in association with the founding of Jamestown, the first permanent British colony in North America. It also recognizes the Indian towns and culture of the

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17th century and—in calling attention to the bay's natural history (both historic and contemporary)—complements the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrail Network. **MOST WHO FOLLOW IN SMITH'S WAKE WILL SAMPLE** only a part of the route. But as is often the case with the Appalachian Trail, some modern-day explorers will traverse the entire length. Indeed, 12 adventurers begin a reenactment of Smith's 1608 voyages this May. Embarking from Jamestown in a replica of Smith's shallop, produced by Sultana Projects, Inc., the men and women of the crew will journey for 121 days as they inaugurate the trail. Their reenactment, which will come to over 20 communities, is a great opportunity for people to join the adventure. **TOGETHER, THE CHESAPEAKE COMMUNITY AND THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE** have charted a bright future. For the first time, the story of Jamestown will echo all along the shores of the Chesapeake, and in homes and classrooms across the nation.

Patrick F. Noonan is Chairman Emeritus of the Conservation Fund.

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Cover: Stingray Point, in Virginia near Jamestown, where John Smith—stung by the site's namesake—dined on the creature at his evening meal.

DAVID ANDREWS/NPS

UNEARTHING A HOTBED

MYTHIC SITE WITNESSED A CHANGING WAY OF LIFE IN AMERICA

One of the Civil War's most mythic and hotly contested places has been the focus of a three-year archeological investigation, now entering its final stages. Part of the historic federal armory at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park—long inaccessible to research—has been excavated, examined, and documented. Though only a small portion of a large factory complex, it offers an unprecedented opportunity to see how the facility—an early harbinger of a new way of life in America—operated. Researchers are beginning to analyze the more than 28,000 artifacts recovered, with a report to follow.

development in the industry. A host of private concerns sprouted up on nearby Virginus Island—a sawmill, flourmill, machine shop, two cotton mills, a tannery, and an iron foundry. Two railroads and the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal converged on Harpers Ferry, fueling a boom.



Near left: Archeological site with the train station in the background. Far left: Molded clay tobacco pipe, made in the mid-late 19th century, excavated outside the smith and forging shop. The fluted design was common. Right: Idyllic scene of Harpers Ferry, painted around 1835.

In 2001 the National Park Service acquired a six-acre tract from the B&O Railroad, whose embankment had obscured much of the armory. The investigation focused on remains that hadn't been covered up, of a warehouse built in 1841 and a smith and forging shop, once the largest structure, built in 1845.

The property was the site of the armory engine house, later known as "John Brown's Fort," where the abolitionist and his followers barricaded themselves during their raid. Archeologists also set out to discover the location of a 100-foot-long warehouse associated with the ferry run by Robert Harper. The project has answered long-standing questions about the exact locations of the workshops, what their dimensions were, and how well they are preserved today, facts not previously known due to contradictions in the historical record.

George Washington, a local landowner looking to spur development, sited the armory here against the counsel of his advisors, says Stephen Potter, NPS regional archeologist. In 1799, what was once called "an abominable little village" was transformed into a government-backed industrial center. Hundreds of thousands of pistols, rifles, and muskets came out of Harpers Ferry, whose facility was crowded with a workforce that at times numbered 400.

Making firearms was a craft passed down through generations. Early on at Harpers Ferry, gunsmiths met their quotas, then went home. Technology changed that. The war department contracted New England inventor John H. Hall to build workshops equipped with the latest precision machinery, pioneering the use of interchangeable parts for weapons. Hall's straight cutter, an early version of the modern milling machine, was a major

But all was not happy. "Former craftsmen were now just machine tenders," says project archeologist Andrew Lee, their pastoral existence ruled by timeclocks. The management changes, including the appointment of a military superintendent in the 1840s, sparked a long period of unrest, punctuated by a strike. One worker became a local folk hero after assassinating the superintendent. Secession debates brought more stress to the border community, and prosperity ended with the onset of the Civil War.

In 1859, John Brown and his band seized the armory, intending to arm a guerrilla force in the Blue Ridge Mountains, a warning of the seismic shock to come. Less than 24 hours after Virginia seceded in April 1861, Confederate militia advanced on Harpers Ferry. The federal garrison, outnumbered and with no reinforcements on the way, retreated to Maryland across the Potomac, setting fire to the armory. While much was destroyed, the Confederates rescued some of the machinery and tools, which were sent south.





Left: Bird's eye view of the excavation. Left below: The smith and forging shop, ca. 1886. Right below: Part of the excavation.

DUE TO ITS STRATEGIC LOCATION AT THE HEAD OF THE SHENANDOAH Valley—and the presence of the canal and railroad—Harpers Ferry was a coveted prize, possessing one of the few water passageways through the Blue Ridge. Whoever controlled the town controlled the railroad, and the B&O was a critical transportation corridor.

Harpers Ferry was a flashpoint throughout the war, at times a refugee camp for African Americans escaping slavery. A surprise raid by Stonewall Jackson captured thousands of Union troops and a large cache of supplies. The town changed hands eight times, and by 1865 was in ruins. The government abandoned its holdings and floods, scavenging, and the effects of time erased a good part of the armory.

system—including a cast-iron hydrant dating to the 1850s. The artifacts span the site's entire history, encompassing the Native American presence. They include rifle parts, tools, china commemorating the founding of the B&O Railroad, Civil War items, and an apothecary's weight for measuring doses of medicine. Industrial waste—slag and coal—is present, too. "We've also found clothing buttons and beautiful bone-handled toothbrushes," says Mia Parsons, the National Park Service archeologist who oversaw the work. The project offers a wealth of opportunities to learn more about the factory way of life that took root here.

THE PICTURE WILL BECOME CLEARER AS ARTIFACT ANALYSIS, NOW IN THE early stages, progresses. But the clues are tantalizing. While no dia-



THE ARTIFACTS SPAN THE SITE'S ENTIRE HISTORY, ENCOMPASSING THE NATIVE AMERICAN PRESENCE. THEY INCLUDE RIFLE PARTS, TOOLS, CHINA COMMEMORATING THE FOUNDING OF THE B&O RAILROAD, CIVIL WAR ITEMS, AND AN APOTHECARY'S WEIGHT FOR MEASURING DOSES OF MEDICINE. INDUSTRIAL WASTE—SLAG AND COAL—IS PRESENT, TOO.

During an 1894 track realignment, the B&O covered much of the site with an earth and rubble embankment. Some years later, to draw tourists, the railroad planted shrubs, trees, and flowers, with outlines on the ground to show where the buildings had been and signs to explain the history. In 1931, when the train station moved upstream, an enlargement of the embankment further obscured the armory.

Congress designated Harpers Ferry a national monument in 1944, but by that time, the grounds were completely overgrown, the site largely unchanged until the park acquired it five years ago.

IN THE FIRST SEASON OF WORK, LEE SAYS, ARCHEOLOGISTS FOCUSED ON getting an overall picture, locating the corners of buildings, entranceways, and streets. The park's rich collection of historic maps and photographs was invaluable. Archeologists uncovered large blocks of the two buildings, gaining orientation by finding the intersections of foundation walls. They also examined the stratigraphy, complicated by the large amounts of fill.

In the second season, they explored the interior spaces, including the floor of the inspector's office in the smith and forging shop, made of brick laid in a herringbone pattern. The archeologists found a brick-lined trench designed to exhaust smoke from the forges, a flue to supply air to them, and a fire suppression

grams or photos of the work stations survive, archeologists now know the floor patterns, a potential clue to what went on inside the buildings. "We know where the armorers and forges stood," says Parsons, "but it's hard to tell at this point what the working conditions were." Once analysis is complete, archeologists hope to have a better understanding of working conditions and manufacturing technology.

The trench in the floor of the smith and forging shop—which had been a warehouse during the campaign of Union general Sheridan—contained a wealth of artifacts "in the best condition of any we've seen," says archeologist Michelle Hammer, including soldiers' accoutrements, unfired ammunition, and numerous pharmaceutical bottles. The pristine condition may be because they were never used. "It's a time capsule," says Hammer. At project's end, after the site is mapped using GIS, it will likely be backfilled to aid preservation. Park planners are working on interpretive displays with the archeologists, who hope to expand exploration to the remains of workshops upstream.

For more information, contact Mia Parsons, email mia_parsons@nps.gov. Also visit the website of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park at www.nps.gov/hafe.

ALL PHOTOS THIS SPREAD: HARPERS FERRY NHP

SWEET TRANSFORMATION

CAMBRIDGE CANDY COMPLEX SWITCHES FROM SWEETS TO SCIENCE

From the 240-foot-long laboratory to the inlaid stone double helix winding through the lobby's French limestone flooring, the Novartis research facility in Cambridge, Massachusetts, exudes the idea of pure science. But because of its successful renovation—and sugary past—to many the place is pure sweetness.



Far left: The Necco factory in its early days. Near left: The water tower, striped with candy wafers, before the redesign.

THE TANKS OF CORN SYRUP AND CHOCOLATE MAY BE LONG GONE, BUT THE six-story structure was once home to the New England Confectionery Company—Necco—birthplace to millions of those famous conversation hearts and other classic candies such as Sky Bars, Clark Bars, and Necco Wafers. That is, before the 3.3 acre site underwent a \$175 million transformation into the research headquarters for Basel, Switzerland-based Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research, after Necco relocated to nearby Revere.

Jeffrey Lockwood, executive director of communications at the drug giant, says the decision to move into the 500,000-square-foot building, right next to MIT, was a no-brainer. “It’s the old adage of location, location, location—we’re now in the biotech center of the universe,” says Lockwood. Converting the structure from a manufacturing plant, built in 1927, to a state-of-the-art lab wasn’t the easiest of renovations. Modern medical research is a lot more complex than candy-making.

“Turning a candy factory into a very high-tech lab requires an enormous increase in mechanical equipment,” adds Scott Simpson, principal and CEO at Stubbins Associates, the architectural firm that redesigned the interior. But because it was large enough for 700 employees, and because of the prime location, the company was up for the challenge. Federal preservation tax incentives played a role in the motivation. Because of the incentives program—administered by the National Park Service and the IRS in partnership with state historic preservation offices—the landmark building was eligible for up to 20 percent of the total cost in tax credit savings. To qualify for the credits, buildings must be income-producing, and the work must be approved by the National Park Service as meeting the rehabilitation standards set by the Secretary of the Interior.

Right: Scientists move from floor to floor in candy-dispenser-shaped elevators.

RIGHT JEFF GOLDBERG/ESTO, LEFT NECCO



BELOW JEFF GOLDBERG/ESTO, RIGHT NECCO



THE RENOVATION GOT OFF TO A SLIGHTLY STICKY START BECAUSE OF ALL THE SUGAR RESIDUE BUILT UP ON THE FLOORS AND WALLS OVER THE YEARS. SO THE FIRST STEP WAS TO CLEAN EVERY INCH. "THE BUILDING SMELLED VERY SWEET INSIDE," SIMPSON SAYS.

The renovation got off to a slightly sticky start because of all the sugar residue built up on the floors and walls over the years. So the first step was to clean every inch. "The building smelled very sweet inside," Simpson says.

AND NO WONDER—IT HAD BEEN MAKING CANDY FOR OVER 70 YEARS. F.C. Lutze, an engineer at Lockwood, Greene & Co., designed the brick and limestone-clad structure in 1925, possibly influenced by designs shown at the Paris Exposition des Arts Decoratifs, held that same year. And when it opened two years later, Cambridge and the surrounding area was a candy mecca, with 32 confectioneries already inside the city. The Fanny Farmer and Squirrel

Brand candy companies were just a few of Necco's neighbors. Today, a factory a block away still produces some popular chocolate treats, including Junior Mints and Tootsie Rolls, but the region's once thriving candy industry started dissipating in the 1950s, to be replaced by other industries like biotechnology.

Ed Tsoi, senior principal of Tsoi/Kobus & Associates, Inc., the firm in charge of renovating the building's exterior, says that thanks to its modern-style construction—the structure was "one of the first reinforced concrete structures"—the masonry was in excellent shape. Because the tax program requires as much preservation as possible, Tsoi says they spent a lot of time with the



Left above: Novartis employees peer out into the six-story atrium. Above: The signature Necco sign.

National Park Service and the Cambridge planning department, in a joint effort to update the structure while keeping the historic integrity intact. Especially tricky were the windows, which had been replaced at some point with glass block. To meet today's energy-efficiency standards, the firm had to find similar aluminum windows that would replicate the original industrial ones. "There was some detective work involved," Tsoi says.

The inside, however—other than the concrete mushroom columns and a section of glass-partitioned offices—looks dramatically different. Everyone seems to agree that the most stunning change is the creation of an amoeba-shaped, six-story atrium,

which turned the dark, somewhat dreary interior into an oasis of light and transparency. And transparency is just what Novartis wanted. "In order to be successful in the biotech industry, it's really a team effort. There needs to be as much interaction and cross-pollination of ideas as possible," Lockwood says.

"It really is the heart of the project and a unique architectural feature," Tsoi says.

ROUND GLASS "BUBBLE" CONFERENCE ROOMS, OPEN-SPACED LABORATORIES, and at least one see-through glass wall in all private offices add to the effect. The circular glass elevators resemble candy dispensers. Lockwood points to the water tower as the signature nod to the past, originally wrapped up as a colorful roll of wafers. Novartis held a competition on how the structure could signify the new purpose. "We wanted to rebrand the tower—and Cambridge—from a candy center to a life science center," he says.

A double helix, one of the 500 ideas that were submitted, is now painted on the tower, sporting the same bright colors in the candy roll. The neighboring 20,000-square-foot power plant building, once used for the factory's boilers, has been converted to a 180-seat auditorium and full-service cafeteria. The main lobby café suggests the sweet past with a wall-sized photograph of Necco employees hard at work.

The transformation, which took only 18 months start to finish, has been recognized with several awards including the 2005 Laboratory of the Year award (in the "Adaptive Reuse" category) and the Business Week/Architectural Record 2007 Award for Design Excellence. And it is indeed worthy of those achievements, says Simpson. "The building is the same basic structure as before and its bones are very much in evidence," he says. "But its whole personality has changed dramatically—into a much lighter and brighter space."

Since it began in 1976, the federal historic preservation tax incentives program has approved tens of thousands of rehabilitation projects, and has served as a leading program in the revitalization of all kinds of historic properties including vacant or under-served schools, churches, and houses. The program has also helped increase the amount of affordable housing in historic buildings for moderate and low-income individuals. Preservationists who are planning to renovate a historic structure, or just want to know more about the program, can log on to the National Park Service technical preservation services website at www.cr.nps.gov/HPS/tps/tax/ for more detailed information.

HOUSE ON THE HILL

AN INSIDE LOOK AT ROBERT E. LEE'S LIFE ALONG THE POTOMAC

When Robert E. Lee's oldest daughter, Mary Custis Lee, left the family estate to visit with friends and family, she would announce her arrival with a calling card, as was the etiquette of the day. And until recently, tourists calling upon Mary's childhood home, Arlington House, could see Mary's silver card case, engraved with her initials. Today, though they can't see it in person—the house, while open during renovation, has its belongings in storage—they can do the next best thing: take a look at a new online exhibit.



Left: Ca.1855 Colt revolver and bullet mold, part of a gun set given to Lee as a gift from West Point, where he served as commandant. Right: Benjamin J. Lossing's painting of Lee's home, Arlington House, as it looked in 1853.

ABOVE AND ABOVE RIGHT ARHO 123, RIGHT ARHO 2231-2232

THE EXHIBIT, PRODUCED BY ARLINGTON HOUSE STAFF IN ASSOCIATION with the National Park Service museum management program, features over 200 of the site's thousands of objects, some shown inside the house as they looked in Lee's time.

Many artifacts, such as Lee's ca. 1855 Colt revolver—a gift from West Point commemorating his promotion to commandant, a position he held from 1852 to 1855—are from his days as a captain in the U.S. Army. Lee served in the Mexican War (1846-48) before the posting at his alma mater, and later led a contingent that quelled John Brown's raid.

Though most people associate the general exclusively with the Civil War, this exhibit examines a more carefree time of his life, when he spent three decades here with his wife, Mary Anna Randolph Custis, great-granddaughter of Martha Washington. "The house really challenges visitors to reexamine Lee as a person," says Matthew Penrod, supervisory park ranger at the site. Witness to many happy occasions including Lee's marriage and the birth of six of their seven children, the estate was much loved by the entire fam-

ily. Agnes, another of Lee's four daughters, once wrote that "Arlington with its commanding views, fine old trees, and luxuriant woods can favorably compare with any home I've seen!" The Greek Revival house—now surrounded by Arlington National Cemetery—looks out on Washington, DC from a breathtaking perch on the Virginia side of the Potomac.

The exhibit also examines the lives of two other families linked to the site. When Martha Washington died, her grandson—George Washington Parke Custis—had hoped to buy Mount Vernon, but it went to a nephew instead. So Custis started construction on Arlington House. Deeply influenced by the president, who was a father figure, Custis dubbed his new home "Mount Washington" and furnished it with as many items from Mount Vernon as he could. A reflection of the adoration he felt for Washington, the exhibit includes many of the first president's everyday belongings, such as his tent bags and silverware box.

The original 1,100-acre plot on which the house sits, which has long since dwindled to around 19 acres because of the cemetery and other

ALL PHOTOS: CAROL M. HIGGSMITH FOR THE NPS MUSEUM MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



H. J. Thomsen 1853

Burlington College



development, looks out on Washington with John F. Kennedy's gravesite and the eternal flame notched into the hillside immediately below. The late president remarked while visiting the site that he "could stay here forever."

ROBERT E. LEE, HIMSELF A DISTANT RELATION OF CUSTIS AS WELL AS THE childhood sweetheart of his future wife, moved into the house after their wedding in 1831, where his Custis in-laws continued to live until their deaths. Although both Lee and his family left the house at various times because of his military commitments elsewhere, they did not permanently move out until 1861, right after the start of the war. Lee left the house forever on April 22, to join the Confederacy, two days after writing his resignation to the U.S. Army and vowing his loyalty to Virginia. "Though

returned years later, sometimes anonymously. Descendants of relatives, friends, and former slaves also returned artifacts. Still, Mary Troy, curator at Arlington House, says there is "still a lot out there," which the staff hopes to eventually re-acquire.

THE ARTIFACTS ARE A CLEAR WINDOW INTO THE HARDSHIPS OF 19TH CENTURY life. The candlesticks, snuffer, and crystal two-light candelabrum make it easy to picture the house shrouded in darkness after the sun went down, and while the Lees lived very comfortably, such contrivances as the ca. 1790 foot stove, the brass bedwarmer, and several chamber pots are all reminders of the lack of today's modern conveniences.

Several items document the lives of African Americans at Arlington House. Custis owned more than 60 slaves, who were freed within

Left: The writing chair where Lee is thought to have written his resignation. Near right: Ca. 1820 cellarette for storing and serving liquor. Far right: Globe made by the Cary Brothers of England.



opposed to secession and a deprecating war, I could take no part in the invasion of the Southern States," he wrote to Secretary Francis Blair, in response to Lincoln's offer of command over the Union forces.

No doubt Lee's loyalties were conflicted. He loved his West Point memorabilia so much that in 1855 he had one of the parlors at Arlington House redecorated to remind him of his beloved academy (including the Colt revolver, engraved with his initials, which came in a wood case with a brass bullet mold). But the most famous object of all is his mahogany writing chair, where it is believed he wrote his resignation letter.

Mrs. Lee stayed on for another month, hurriedly packing and moving what possessions she could, before the Union soldiers arrived on May 24. While she saved many heirlooms, Union soldiers and curious passers-by carried off a lot. During several periods before the war department claimed the house in 1925, it was wide open. Many of the items—such as Mary Custis Lee's wooden toilet and sewing box, adorned with her initials—were stolen, then

five years following his death in 1857, as stipulated in his will. Visitors to the site can see the quarters of Selina Gray, who attended the house, located in an outbuilding directly behind it. While furnished with period pieces that illustrate how a house servant was sometimes the lucky recipient of throwaway items, it is also shockingly small for a family of eight. An archeological excavation of the ground underneath the brick-floored room revealed fragments of Cincinnati ware, originally brought to the house from Mount Vernon, and assorted pieces of china.

Preparing food—probably following the recipes of Lee's godmother Mary Randolph, who wrote the first American cookbook—was one of the main chores of Selina Gray and other house slaves. Many of the family's kitchenwares are featured in the exhibit. Several serving pieces, such as the Rococo revival sauceboat and the Sheffield silver plated salt dishes, are adorned with the Lee family crest—a squirrel burying an acorn. The squirrel, preparing for the long winter months ahead, is symbolic of the family's motto: "*Ne Incautus Futuri*," or "Not Unmindful of the Future."

Education, for both the Lee children and the family's enslaved African Americans, was extremely important to Mrs. Lee and her mother. There is plenty of evidence of that in the several teaching implements, including a book set used by Mrs. Lee during her own childhood, an "arithmeticon" chart with black dots used for teaching the children math, and a Cary globe dating to 1800. Some say the globe, currently stored on the property, has the distinction of having "never left the house," but that likely isn't true. According to Troy, there are references to it having left for conservation in the 1920s when the house was first turned into a museum, but "it is the one item that has been here the longest," she says. "It was wedged up around the rafters in the attic and somehow missed by every-

acres as Arlington National Cemetery. After a lawsuit, the estate was returned to Lee's oldest son, who sold it back to the government. Army officials used the house and grounds until the 1900s, when it was first restored by the war department. The property was transferred to the National Park Service in 1934.

The restoration, the first in 80 years, will include a climate control system to protect the thousands of antiques from factors such as heat and humidity. "The idea is to treat the house itself as an artifact," Penrod says, adding that an additional goal is to make the site more interactive for its almost half a million annual visitors. "We want to allow people to walk into the rooms, and also have an area with computers where they can learn more," he says.



Above: Mary Custis Lee's silver calling card case. Above right: Sheffield silver salt dishes adorned with the Lee crest. Right: Sauceboat also bearing the signature squirrel and acorn.

one." With its peeling brown gauze skin and faded lettering around a wooden calendar ring, Troy says the globe will probably be removed again for further treatment.

The family belongings that have been returned to the house over the years evoke the sense of what it must have been like to live on a southern plantation, and many items such as the chess set and imported paint box suggest a comfortable existence. Horse riding, painting, and music were all family hobbies, as was entertaining guests. The Lees hosted several notable figures including President Franklin Pierce, Sam Houston, and author Lydia Sigourney. But the serenity of the property—and its future—were to be shattered by the war.

IN 1864, WHEN MRS. LEE, SUFFERING FROM DEBILITATING RHEUMATOID arthritis, was unable to pay taxes on the house in person, the federal government confiscated the estate, officially designating 200

Though the house will be empty for the next three years, in addition to the online exhibit there are a number of evocative items on display at a small on-site museum. They include a lock of Lee's hair, along with hair from his favorite horse, Traveller, and a silver cup from one of Mr. Custis' annual sheep shearing contests. Penrod emphasizes that it's important for people to see Arlington House as more than just a furniture museum. "When you look at the objects," he says, "you realize it's not just the family's stuff, but a way of life."

The Arlington House exhibit can be accessed through the website of the National Park Service museum management program, at www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/arho. In addition to the artifact photos, viewers can call up a wealth of biographical information on Robert E. Lee through such features as a family tree and a timeline of significant events. "Teaching with Museum Collections" lesson plans, developed by the program, are also posted, as are family recipes such as "Sally Lunn" and "Owendaw Cornbread."

FAR LEFT ARHO 3282, NEAR LEFT ARHO 2226-2227, RIGHT ARHO 5116





ALL PHOTOS DAVID ANDREWS/INPS EXCEPT AS NOTED

LANDFALL

JAMESTOWN AND THE BEGINNINGS OF AMERICA BY JOE BAKER

In the late afternoon of May 13th, 1607, a young sailor from London holds a bowline in his hand and prepares to step from the gunwale as the ship glides in closer to the bank. His name is lost to history. He is perhaps one of the “divers others,” men whose names never appeared in any of the narratives of those adventurers aboard the three tiny vessels that recently completed their grueling, four month crossing of the Atlantic. The deep channel here abuts the forested bank, and they can tie up without running the ships aground. The young man steps lightly from the bow of the ship onto dry land and prepares to affix the line. He is, of course, unaware of the great historical reach of this moment. What he has just done is establish a tenuous toehold for the first enduring British colony in the New World. He has taken the first stride on shaky sea-legs toward establishing what will become America. Nothing has been the same since.

LEFT: REPLICA OF THE SUSAN CONSTANT, ONE OF THE THREE SHIPS THAT BROUGHT THE JAMESTOWN SETTLERS ACROSS THE ATLANTIC, MOORED AT THE STATE-RUN JAMESTOWN SETTLEMENT, A LIVING HISTORY MUSEUM AND SITE.



BY VIRTUE OF HISTORICAL ACCIDENT,

THE STORY OF JAMESTOWN IS BY TURNS EXHILARATING AND HARROWING, inspiring and dolorous. Within its first 15 years, the groundwork of the American economic system, political organization, and language was laid, and the American tradition of exploration and discovery had sunk its roots, too. Those same years saw the colony nearly destroyed by political in-fighting along with the introduction of African slaves to North America and a brutal war with the original inhabitants of the land. The story of Jamestown is every bit as complex and ambiguous as anything after it.

Some of this complexity is reflected in the roughly 140 men packed into those three small vessels, and in the organization that put them there. Jamestown was not the product of a government initiative, but of private enterprise bound on showing a profit. A group of investors, chartered by the Crown as the Virginia Company, bankrolled the expedition and appointed the council that was to govern the new colony. They were charged with extracting resources and establishing industries that would provide a quick return on the investment. The council consisted of six men with military backgrounds, and all but one were noblemen. The commoner, and also the youngest at 27, was John Smith. He had made a name for himself as a soldier in the Balkans, the Netherlands, and France.

Smith comes down to us as self-absorbed and bombastic. His own writings, one of the era's most important records, lend some credence to that characterization. He was tough, disciplined, and resourceful, qualities that served the little colony well during its first precarious years.

ABOVE: THE ISLAND'S MARSHY TERRAIN, THE JAMES RIVER AND THE SITE OF THE SETTLEMENT ARE JUST BEYOND THE TREES.

Smith's confidence and curiosity led him to undertake two long voyages into the unknown world of the Chesapeake. Given the circumstances, these were brazenly reckless acts, but they produced the first maps of the bay's complicated shoreline and tributaries, the first written record of the native cultures and natural bounty of the great estuary, and—four centuries later—America's first national historic water trail.

The momentous events at Jamestown have historically eclipsed Smith's adventures in the tidewater. By an Act of Congress, the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail was established to commemorate this major chapter of exploration. Featuring historic sites, landscapes, and interpretive media, it will follow Smith's excursions throughout the bay, planting a new awareness of its history and fragile environment. Through partnerships and innovative planning, it hopes to heighten understanding of local culture as well as foster heritage tourism, sustainable development, and a healthier relationship with the bay. The trail is just one of a host of elements in the buildup to the 400th anniversary of the Jamestown landing, a meditation on America's beginnings that includes a visit from Queen Elizabeth.

Much of what we know of daily life at Jamestown was literally discovered by digging. By virtue of historical accident, the archeological

site of Jamestown is exceptionally well preserved. The settlement, which grew to become Virginia's first capital, was gradually abandoned for outlying towns and plantations as the century wore on. The better situated Williamsburg became the new capital in 1699, and Jamestown became farmland. In the late 19th century, the nonprofit Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities purchased over 20 acres. The remainder, some 1,500 acres, was acquired by the National Park Service in the 1930s with the establishment of Colonial National Historical Park. There was never any large scale development; what was beneath the fields and forests lay undisturbed for centuries.

Jamestown began to attract the attention of archeologists before the turn of the 20th century, and it has hardly abated since. Amazing collections of well-preserved artifacts—and the discovery of some of North America's earliest colonial building foundations—have astonished both archeologists and the public for a long time. Two giants of

BOTTOM LEFT: SITE OF "NEW TOWNE," THE NAME THE SETTLEMENT TOOK AFTER EXPANDING OUTSIDE THE FORT. BOTTOM RIGHT: RECONSTRUCTION OF THE "GLASSE HOUSE," DEMONSTRATION SITE FOR ONE OF JAMESTOWN'S FIRST INDUSTRIES.

Despite the warm relations that typified this reconnaissance, the seeds were planted for what came later. During earlier landings, the party had been ambushed by natives; two English were wounded. Another attack, after the arrival at Jamestown, killed two settlers. The tribes had some experience dealing with Europeans, primarily with Spanish and earlier

THE ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE OF JAMESTOWN IS EXCEPTIONALLY WELL PRESERVED. THE SETTLEMENT, WHICH GREW TO BECOME VIRGINIA'S FIRST CAPITAL, WAS GRADUALLY ABANDONED FOR OUTLYING TOWNS AND PLANTATIONS AS THE CENTURY WORE ON . . . THERE WAS NEVER ANY LARGE SCALE DEVELOPMENT; WHAT WAS BENEATH THE FIELDS AND FORESTS LAY UNDISTURBED FOR CENTURIES.

LEFT AND BELOW JAMESTOWN NHS



National Park Service archeology cut their professional teeth here. J.C. Harrington, who practically invented modern historical archeology, worked at Jamestown between 1936 and 1941. John Cotter, for whom the agency's award for archeological excellence is named, worked there in the '50s. Yet some of the most spectacular discoveries have come in the last 15 years or so.

WHILE THE COLONISTS WERE BUILDING THEIR FORT, SMITH DISCOVERED A number of native settlements up the James. His group was generally well received. The villages belonged to a confederacy of perhaps 13,000 Algonkian-speaking people led by a charismatic "great king" who lived in the village of Werowocomoco on the next large river north. His name was Wahunseanacawh. He has come down to us as Powhatan.

British forays. Some of those encounters were also violent. While the local peoples were eager to acquire trade goods, they were wary of the long-term intentions, and determined to defend their territory.

The colonists carried their own suspicions and prejudices. The written records are replete with words like "savages" and "heathens." The two worldviews could not have been more different. The Powhatans saw themselves as part of the natural and spiritual world. The English saw themselves above nature, exercising a God-given dominion over it. To them, the new world was wide open, ripe for the taking. The notion that the Powhatans had a birthright to the land didn't enter many minds. These divergent ways of seeing were mutually exclusive. There was bound to be trouble.

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THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE COMPLETED ITS ARCHEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF Jamestown in the early 1990s, an exhaustive compilation of a century of investigation. Older data were combined with a newer set acquired with geoarcheological methods like ground-penetrating radar, soil core sampling, paleobotany, tree ring dating, and some old-fashioned test excavation. Researchers also conducted a thorough review of historic maps and documents. Says National Park Service archeologist Andrew Veech, “The survey defined the research questions we wanted to ask of this site well into the future as well as how we want to protect what we have here.” The assessment produced some surprises. Among the hundreds of features identified are what might be the earliest known slave quarters in British North America and a Paleoindian presence on the island shortly after the retreat of the glaciers.

Widely regarded as the birthplace of democracy, Jamestown also held the seeds of destruction for Powhatan’s people. To get a sense of

ty of the place. Trade items of copper alloy and glass, and its close correspondence to historic maps, make identification a near certainty. It’s not simply that this place was Powhatan’s town that makes Werowocomoco so interesting. Martin Gullivan, the William and Mary professor who is directing the excavations, describes the work as “the archeology of landscape and space, and especially, how space was used.” The numbers of artifacts dating to the Jamestown era are quite modest. The site is much older than Jamestown and Powhatan, probably established in the 13th century. The excavations have uncovered evidence of an immense set of ditches possibly arrayed in a D-shape. Interestingly, the 1608 Zuniga Map, based on a John Smith sketch, depicts the location of Werowocomoco with a large D-shaped symbol.

The purpose of these ditches was not defensive: any adult could simply step across them. And the artifacts discovered here are different than those found in the village, perhaps indicating ritual feasting.

John Smith’s own observations of Werowocomoco are replete with references to elaborate rituals conducted by “priests.” Gullivan believes the ditches are a “ritualized location” having to do with the maintenance of political status among Powhatan’s people. Werowocomoco may have been a religious and political center that anchored the confederacy, the site helping to bind the secular and sacred parts of the society into a cohesive whole.

A more complete understanding of this sacred landscape may

come as work continues, but there is little doubt about how the newly arrived English affected life there. As Gullivan observed, “There’s only a two year window of interaction between Werowocomoco and the Jamestown colonists.” By 1609, the centuries-old town was abandoned.

The findings at Jamestown—by a team led by Bill Kelso—are just as momentous. Archeology is Kelso’s second career. His first, as a high school history teacher, is evident in his facility for engaging the public in the remarkable discoveries he’s made. In 1994, Kelso began test excavations in search of the original fort. Most experts thought this was the wildest of goose chases. Over a century and a half of popu-



what was lost, you must look north, to the other side of the Virginia Peninsula, along the York River.

The archeological site of Werowocomoco, Powhatan’s town, was tentatively identified in the 1970s from artifacts picked up by an archeologist in a plowed field and along the river. In the '90s, the property owners consulted the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, which immediately recognized its importance. By 2001 the Werowocomoco Research Group had been formed consisting of staff from the state and the College of William and Mary. One of its first priorities was involving the descendants of Powhatan’s people. The Virginia Indian Advisory Board was formed to provide guidance and interpretation as work at Werowocomoco proceeded. The discoveries have been remarkable. There is little doubt as to the identi-

FAR LEFT: FROM A BRIEF AND TRUE REPORT OF THE NEW FOUND LAND OF VIRGINIA, 1590. NEAR LEFT AND RIGHT: BLACK POINT, ON THE ISLAND’S TIP.





NOW, NEARLY 13 YEARS LATER, WORK CONTINUES AT ONE

OF THE MOST ASTONISHING ARCHEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES IN THE UNITED STATES. THE REMAINS OF NEARLY THE ENTIRE FORT, IN THE SHAPE OF A TRIANGLE, WERE FOUND BENEATH THE LAWNS AND WALKWAYS OF THE PROPERTY.

lar opinion put the remains in the James River, a victim of erosion. But Kelso couldn't find any clear evidence that the fort was destroyed. Records indicated that a church—now reconstructed—once stood close to the fort, so that is where they began to look.

The archeologists immediately encountered evidence of a line of heavy posts, once a wooden fortification. Adjacent excavations found building foundations, a well, and European artifacts from the first decade of the 17th century. Now, nearly 13 years later, work continues at one of the most astonishing archeological discoveries in the United States. The remains of nearly the entire fort, in the shape of a triangle, were found beneath the lawns and walkways of the property. The organization has done its best to share the rediscovery with the public. Thousands of visitors have viewed the excavations; websites, television programs, books, and magazine articles have brought millions of people face-to-face with the earliest evidence of English colonization in America.

Kelso remains an enthusiastic proponent of telling Jamestown's story because of the influence the settlement had on the very underpinnings of our nation. When he and I spoke, the Virginia legislature had just journeyed from Richmond to ceremonially convene at Jamestown. Kelso observes that "the same legislature has convened every year since 1619, a continuous record longer than any other elected deliberative body in the world. What brought colonists to Jamestown was the knowledge that, if you could get yourself here, you could get land. If you got land you could vote, and maybe even stand for election. Jamestown represented a new set of possibilities for a lot of people." So what is being uncovered at Jamestown isn't just the fort. The roots of American democracy are coming to light as well.

LEFT: BOTTLES ON DISPLAY AT THE MUSEUM OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF VIRGINIA ANTIQUITIES, LOCATED AT THE SITE. ABOVE LEFT: A BALING SEAL—MARK OF APPROVAL FOR BALES OF TOBACCO AND FLAX—UNCOVERED DURING A FIVE-YEAR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ARCHEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT IN THE 1990S. ABOVE RIGHT: SURVEY ARCHEOLOGISTS TAKE READINGS WITH A MAGNETOMETER.



ABOVE AND RIGHT TONY BELCASTRO



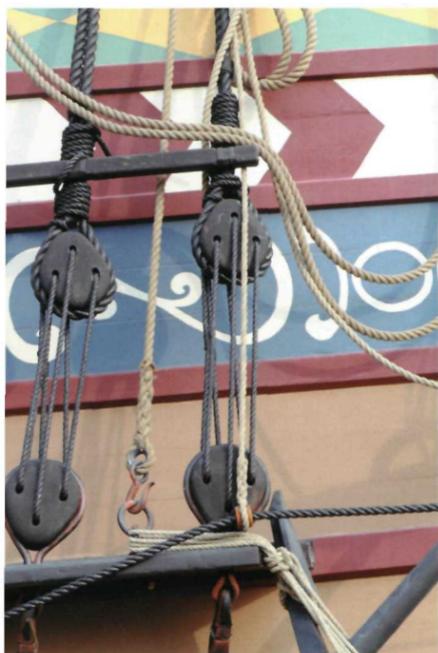
IN LATE JUNE 1608, CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT, COMMANDER OF JAMESTOWN'S little fleet, left for England with two of the three ships. Almost at once, the settlement was beset by calamity. The crops failed. Disease, probably from poor sanitation and near tropical heat, began to kill people. Smith traded for corn that sustained the settlers into the autumn. In December, during the course of one of his forays into the upper Chickahominy River, Smith was surrounded by a large party of armed natives. Two of his companions were killed. Smith was paraded through a succession of villages over the next few days and finally brought before Powhatan himself at Werowocomoco. If we are to believe Smith's 1624 account of what transpired next, he was about to have his brains beaten out at the great headman's feet when Powhatan's 10 year old daughter Pocahontas intervened. Smith was spared and adopted into the confederacy.

That may or may not have happened (his 1608 account of the incident doesn't mention the young woman), but it is more certain that Smith remained at Werowocomoco for a time, and was escorted back to Jamestown in early January. He was shocked at what he found. Of the over 100 people that had landed in May, fewer than 40

were still alive. John Ratcliffe, the president of the colony, was preparing to abandon the settlement, furious with Smith for his absence. In the nick of time Captain Newport returned with supplies and a hundred new colonists. But later in the month, much of the settlement was consumed by fire and most of the supplies lost. Newport and Smith went to parlay with Powhatan. An agreement promised peace, a flow of food to the colonists, and trade goods to the natives.

In time another ship arrived with more colonists and provisions. They were undoubtedly observed by Powhatan's people. The newcomers were not simply visiting to trade. They meant to stay.

Friction between Ratcliffe and Smith grew to a dangerous level, the captain faulted for his absence while being held captive. Ratcliffe may have resented Smith's youth, brashness, and facility with the natives. The tension may also have hastened Smith's departure to explore the great estuary north of the James. On June 2, he and 14 other men boarded a small shallow-draft boat, known as a shallop, to



THE SHEER AUDACIOUSNESS OF TAKING A SMALL VESSEL WITH A LIGHTLY ARMED CREW INTO THE VAST, UNMAPPED ESTUARY—WITH NO HOPE OF

head into Terra Incognita. Thus began the first of Smith's two voyages of discovery into the Chesapeake.

The sheer audaciousness of taking a small vessel with a lightly armed crew into the vast, unmapped estuary—with no hope of support in case of calamity—speaks volumes about Smith's nerve and the trust his crew placed in him. Over the next seven weeks the little party explored the eastern shore, going far up the Nanticoke, then crossing back to the western shore to reach as far north as the Patapsco at modern Baltimore. Then they tacked back southward.

Heading toward Jamestown, they rounded a marshy peninsula, now known as Point Lookout, and entered a broad river. Exploring upstream, in a few days they became the first Europeans to see the Great Falls of the Potomac, above what would one day be Washington, DC.

They passed dozens of Native American towns along the way, with Smith making the first maps of the Chesapeake's deeply dissected and complicated topography. There were close brushes with hostile tribes and a near mutiny by the crew. Smith was stung by a stingray while fishing one morning near the mouth of the Rappahannock, recovering enough by evening to dine on the creature. The place was called Stingray Point, the name it still bears.

On his return the feud with Ratcliffe heated up immediately, and in short order Smith and some allies deposed him. He was replaced with Matthew Scrivener, a friend. Soon Smith was off on another voyage. The crew was smaller this time, but meant to go all the way to the head of the bay. In less than two weeks, Smith and his band were almost 200 miles north parlaying with a delegation of Susquehannocks. As he began the return voyage, Smith knew the Chesapeake contained neither

LEFT: DETAIL OF REPLICA VESSEL. ABOVE: ON HIS WAY DOWN THE CHESAPEAKE, SMITH ROUNDED THE PENINSULA AT POINT LOOKOUT—TODAY A MARYLAND STATE PARK—TO JOURNEY UP THE POTOMAC. THE RECENTLY DESIGNATED WATER TRAIL COMMEMORATES HIS EXPLORATIONS.

gold nor a northwest passage into the continent, as hoped. But it did contain a seemingly inexhaustible supply of timber, fish, game, and maybe the most valuable commodity of all—land. Smith's voyages are the beginning of another American tradition: the exploration of the frontier. Like Daniel Boone, like Lewis and Clark, he wrote about his discoveries, inspiring others looking for the better chance or the quick buck. The watery trail he blazed was soon a highway into the heart of the new world.

When Smith returned to Jamestown he was elected president. By December, he was demanding corn from the tribes, sometimes at gunpoint, in order to see the settlement through the bitterly cold winter of 1608-1609. Relations degenerated into open hostilities. Smith exhorted his countrymen to pull themselves together, declaring that "he that will not worke shall not eate . . ."

Summer brought supply ships, new colonists, and a more hostile policy from the Virginia Company toward the natives. Infighting at the colony was as bad as ever. Smith, gravely injured in what was probably an assassination attempt, was packed off to England, never to return.

The next winter is known in the chronicle of Jamestown as the Starving Time. Held near-captive in their fort, the frantic colonists ate rodents, pet dogs, and dried leaves. Their numbers dwindled from 214 to 60. Spring brought new colonists and a scorched earth policy toward the natives. The English burned crops and villages, killing men, women, and children. The natives hit back hard, and the

SUPPORT IN CASE OF CALAMITY—SPEAKS VOLUMES ABOUT SMITH'S NERVE AND THE TRUST HIS CREW PLACED IN HIM. OVER THE NEXT SEVEN WEEKS THE LITTLE PARTY EXPLORED THE EASTERN SHORE, GOING FAR UP THE NANTICOKE, THEN CROSSING BACK TO THE WESTERN SHORE TO REACH AS FAR NORTH AS THE PATAPSCO AT MODERN BALTIMORE.

war of reprisals went on for decades. Thus began a sad and bloody arc through the centuries, intersecting with places like Tippecanoe, Sand Creek, Little Bighorn, and Wounded Knee. The colony grew and saw developments that still affect daily life in the modern United States. In 1619, an elected assembly met for the first time at Jamestown, and has met every year since, a model for the framers of the Constitution. In that same year, a Dutch trader exchanged its cargo of humans for a cargo of food, introducing the nightmare of slavery. New towns popped up on the peninsula and eventually throughout the Chesapeake. When Williamsburg became the assembly's new home, the settlement faded away into the quiet fields.

LAST YEAR, PRESIDENT BUSH SIGNED LEGISLATION ESTABLISHING THE CAPTAIN John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. The trail—designated thanks to a National Park Service study boasting a wealth of information—will retrace Smith's explorations in the region. A network of connected water routes, covering nearly 3,000 miles, will spotlight the historic, natural, and Native American heritage of the Chesapeake.

The trail is the brainchild of a host of partners including the National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Program and Chesapeake Gateways and Water Trails Network, the National Geographic Society, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and the Conservation Fund. In addition to providing opportunities for recreation and heritage tourism, it will help raise awareness and build public support. The trail will be managed by the National Park Service in close cooperation with the U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. "The first conversations about the trail only began about three years ago," says Pat Noonan, the founder and chairman emeritus of the board at the Conservation Fund. According to Noonan, the new trail was recognized as a "way to highlight the upcoming 400th anniversary of Jamestown, and to bring some much needed attention to the ecological plight of the bay. It would also highlight the bay's incomparable Native American and colonial history, and serve as an educational resource for generations of regional students." Thanks in large part to the efforts of Noonan, Gilbert Grosvenor of the National Geographic Society, and others, the John Smith trail became the 25th addition to the national trails system.

John Maounis, the trail's recently named superintendent, says that while the management plan is still in development "by law it must be completed in December of 2008." It's already apparent that the trail routes will make use of some innovative technology and interpretive approaches, connecting a wide variety of parks and historic sites to tell the exploration story. NOAA plans to create "talking buoys"—interpretive guideposts for water-borne travelers that also collect environmental data to help monitor the bay's health. The Bay Gateways and Water Trails Network, which coordinates and helps fund the activities of 150 affiliated organizations, sites, and parks, has assisted in the production of *John Smith's Chesapeake Voyages, 1607-1609*. This richly illustrated volume, published by the University



AS HE BEGAN THE RETURN VOYAGE, SMITH KNEW THE CHESAPEAKE CONTAINED NEITHER

of Virginia Press, will be the definitive history of the explorations. And as part of the anniversary, a 12-man crew will take a reproduction shallop along the route of the trail and, according to Maounis, “deploy the first three talking buoys with stops at Jamestown, Baltimore, and Point Lookout at the mouth of the Potomac.” Sites and parks from the Virginia Living Museum in Newport News, to the James River Water Trail in Richmond, to the Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum in Calvert County, Maryland, are planning exhibits, interpretive signage, programs, and special events on the world of the 17th century Chesapeake. The Virginia-run Jamestown Settlement, a living history museum and site on the way out to the island, will inaugurate a new exhibit entitled “The World of 1607.” Among all, the goal is to share with visitors the sense of wonder and discovery that must have at times overwhelmed Smith’s tiny crew as their small boat rounded each point along the bay’s complex and seemingly endless shoreline.

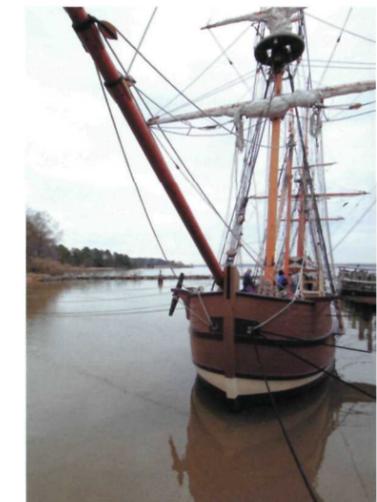
ON A SURPRISINGLY WARM JANUARY morning I find myself sitting in the brand new 18,000-square-foot National Park Service visitor center and curation facility on Jamestown Island. I’m talking with Karen Rehm, chief historian at Colonial National Historical Park, and National Park Service archeologist Andrew Veech.

The immense collection the park has accumulated over the years is showcased in a series of exhibits, which Karen explains with obvious pride. At the first glass case we come to, a period painting depicts a ceramic vessel being used in a 17th century household, a vessel whose twin—the real thing—is exhibited in the same case. The exhibits also depict the social diversity of the settlement, which grew to include English citizens of all social stations, both free and enslaved Africans, and Native Americans. The bustle and energy of an industrious community at the margins of the empire comes through in the objects and images. It’s the palpable connection to the

LEFT: ALONG THE POTOMAC JUST PAST POINT LOOKOUT. ABOVE LEFT AND CENTER: SMITH EXPLORED THE RIVER’S UPPER REACHES AS FAR AS GREAT FALLS, NOW A NATIONAL PARK. ABOVE RIGHT: REPLICA OF ONE OF SMITH’S VESSELS MOORED AT THE JAMESTOWN SETTLEMENT MUSEUM.

GOLD NOR A NORTHWEST PASSAGE INTO THE CONTINENT, AS HOPED. BUT IT DID CONTAIN A SEEMINGLY INEXHAUSTIBLE SUPPLY OF TIMBER, FISH, GAME, AND MAYBE THE MOST VALUABLE COMMODITY OF ALL—LAND.

day-to-day lives of the people who lived and died here that’s at the heart of the new exhibits—and the park’s mission. As Karen explains, it is all “just a means to an end. They remind us that people



lived here and their lives and stories are what are important about Jamestown.”

And maybe she’s right. Maybe what matters about Jamestown aren’t the famous events or the important precedents established at this little colony on the far edge of the world. Maybe what really matters is where the deeds and ideas that shaped the nation—for both good and ill—came from. They sprang from the vision and accomplishments of ordinary people who lived on this quiet tidewater peninsula, people not so very different from ourselves.

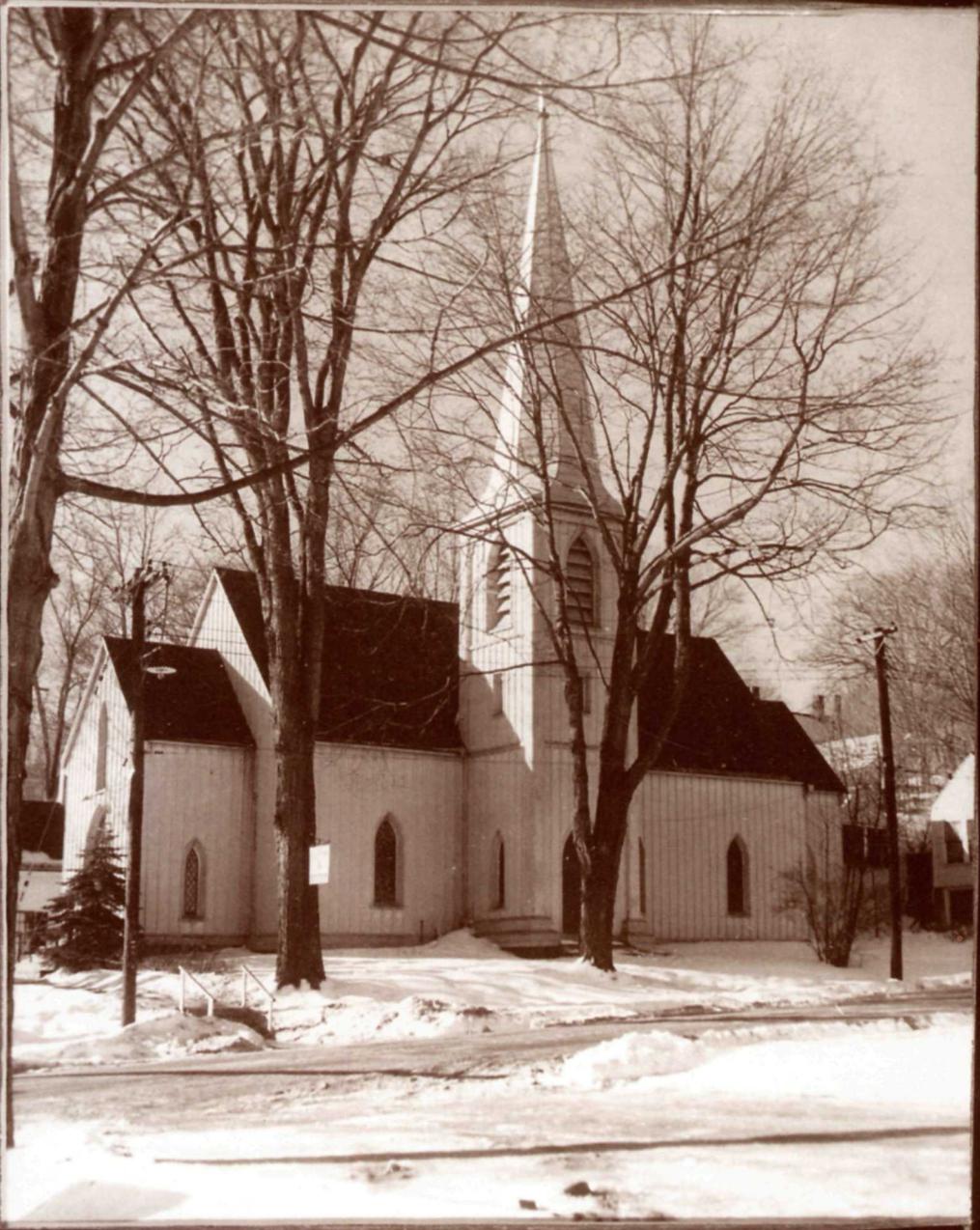
Contact Andrew Veech at Colonial National Historic Park, andrew_veech@nps.gov (www.nps.gov/jame); John Maounis at Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, john_maounis@nps.gov (www.nps.gov/nero/josm); Pat Noonan at the Conservation Fund, pnoonan@conservationfund.org; Bill Kelso at APVA/Jamestown Rediscovery, kelso@apva.org (www.apva.org/jr.html). There is more information about the water trail online at www.nps.gov/nero/josm. The Werowocomoco project is at powhatan.wm.edu, the Jamestown Settlement Museum at www.historyisfun.org.

Housing the Faith

Places of Worship Through the Lens of the Historic American Buildings Survey by Joe Flanagan

IN THE CROWDED HOLDS OF SHIPS BOUND FOR THE NEW WORLD, there were probably as many variations of hope as there were passengers. Printers, bakers, blacksmiths, farmers, mothers, soldiers, and nobles all no doubt pondered the equation of their circumstances—strife, finance, family, freedom, the odds of a life remade—as the endless horizon drifted past. They most likely thought of God, whatever they perceived Him to be. Religion was the unifier, a preoccupation they carried to the new continent. Today, its architectural manifestations are among our greatest treasures. Whether grand or modest, ornamented or minimal, they represent “humanity’s insatiable desire to state its relationship to the compelling and the inscrutable,” says former National Park Service Director Roger Kennedy in his book *American Churches*.

Right: St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church, Hallowell, Maine. The design of this gothic-style church, built in 1860, is similar to plans in architect Richard Upjohn’s Rural Architecture, the so-called “Sears & Roebuck catalogue for churches.” The structure is clad with board and batten, an unusual low-cost choice for a parish that could afford a tower.



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congregations long ago fled the cities, ornate masterworks that are difficult to maintain and expensive to repair.

FEW PLACES ARE SO INVESTED WITH MEANING, WHERE CULTURAL IDENTITY, HISTORY, ART, AND profound personal significance converge in a single structure. They are among America's most endangered places, particularly the older, urban buildings whose congregations long ago fled the cities, ornate masterworks that are difficult to maintain and expensive to repair.

For nearly 75 years, the NPS Historic American Buildings Survey—whose work is shown here—has documented this dwindling legacy, from iconic cathedrals to obscure folk churches. The result, preserved at the Library of Congress (online at http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/habs_haer/), is nothing less than a cultural roadmap of America.

When the first English settlers came ashore, they brought with them the effects of sweeping cultural changes in Europe. In his book *American Buildings and Their Architects*, William H. Pierson, Jr., points to the impact of the Protestant Reformation on “the cultural destiny of America.” The movement, along with the architectural forms of the Renaissance, dictated how early houses of worship looked—expressive yet restrained, reflecting the back-to-basics spirituality of a Protestant Europe eager to define itself against Catholicism’s opulence. In New England, the simplicity was fostered by a wish to separate from the Church of England, a Puritan desire to “purify” a religion seen as having strayed from truth.

The iconic clapboard church and steeple, synonymous with colonial America, owes its origins to events in Britain. When fire wiped out much of London in 1666, architects Christopher Wren and James Gibbs wielded enormous influence in the rebuilding, leaving their imprint with the seminal St. Paul’s Cathedral and St. Martin-in-the-Fields. Their style, “so appropriate to the colonies,” Pierson writes, “provided all the architectural conventions for the ubiquitous box-and-spire.” The colonial churches were strictly rectilinear, with no ceremonial space, no statuary, and no stained glass; clear windows let in natural light. “Austerely plain by choice” and “insistently Protestant,” is how Pierson refers to them.

Restraint was the coin of the realm. With the availability of mass-produced nails and milled lumber, the style “began in confidence and came, in time, to be something like defiance,” writes Kennedy. It spread from New England to the Deep South.

Left: Pilgrim Baptist Church, a Chicago landmark erected in 1891, creation of famed architects Adler & Sullivan. Originally the Kehilath Anshe Ma'arive Synagogue, the building was purchased by the Pilgrim Baptist congregation in 1922 as African Americans migrated to the region. The church suffered a devastating fire last year, leaving not much intact but the shell. The blaze earned the structure national attention, but its biggest claim to fame is as the birthplace of gospel music. Above: Cathedral of St. Peter in Chains (left) and Plum Street Temple (right), Cincinnati. The Greek Revival cathedral, designed by Henry Walter, was built in the 1840s and restored in the 1950s. The Byzantine-Moorish temple, designed by James Keys Wilson, was built in 1866 for the first group of Reform Jewish worshippers west of the Alleghenies. The neighborhood was in decline when HABS documented the structures in 1971.



LEFT HAROLD ALLEN/NPS/HABS, 1964; RIGHT JACK BOUCHER/NPS/HABS, 1971

IN EUROPE, THE CATHOLIC CHURCH REACTED TO THE TRENDS WITH "BURST after burst of sensuous splendor," Pierson writes. Glittering cathedrals spread across the continent, he says, steeped in theater and "conceived as instruments of propaganda." This influence also took root, ironically, in the stark and arid American Southwest. Spain sent soldiers and missionaries into the desert; the result was what Kennedy calls "fortress-cathedrals." Native American materials and building techniques yielded a hybrid both high-flown and elemental. Doors, facades, and steeples affected an elegant formality against blunt and defensive forms. The

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Americans looked to ancient Greece and Rome for inspiration. The classical world was perceived as the source of a "pure" aesthetic and true democracy. The young nation eagerly appropriated the symbolism. Churches took on the look of miniature temples. Stone was the material of choice, but wood was chosen also, often painted white to resemble marble.

As the eastern cities overflowed their bounds, a proliferation of sects filled out a complex religious landscape. The nation witnessed a series of Great Awakenings, periodic religious revivals. Unfulfilled by traditional denominations, and feeling that core truth had been lost, people met under tents and in "brush arbors" to find their faith and discuss issues like slavery and temperance. It was the start of the great revival meetings of the late 19th century. Writes Kennedy in *American Churches*, "Religious impulse was seeking new means of expression. The great age of the Evangelical sect was dawning."

Above far left: Mission San Jose y San Miguel de Aquayo, one of four preserved at San Antonio Missions National Historical Park. Completed in 1782, it was the largest of the group—"Queen of the Missions" was its nickname. Having fallen into decay over the years, it was stabilized by the National Park Service and now has services every Sunday. Above near left: Mission San Francisco de la Espada. Another one of the park's missions. Right: Our Lady of the Wayside Catholic Church, Portola Valley, California. Architect Timothy Pflueger was only 21 when he designed the red-roofed structure in the early 1920s. Colonial Revival meets Spanish Mission with its Georgian entrance and Monterey-style eaves.

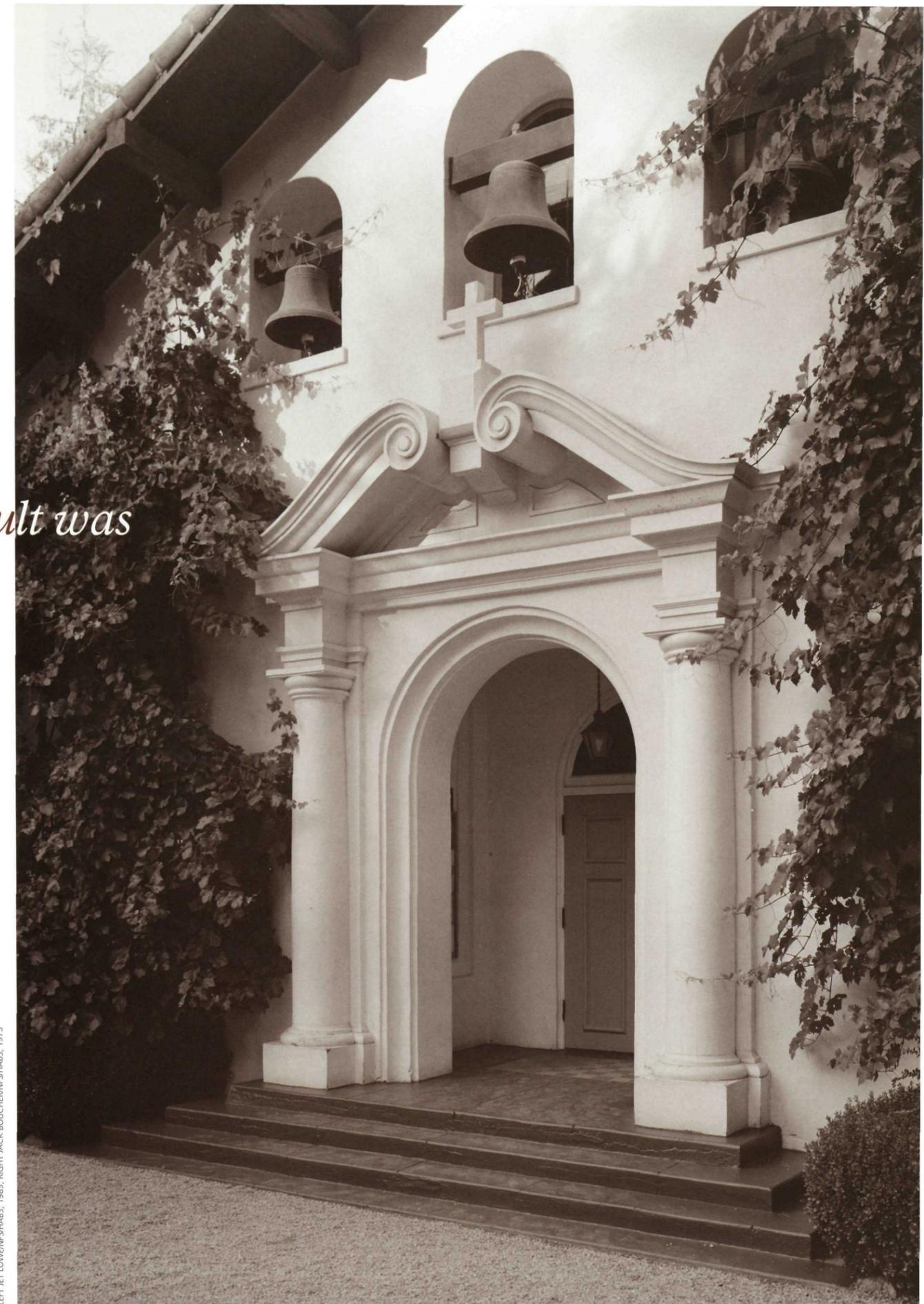
mission church adopted the idea of theatrical light from the European churches of the Counter-Reformation, drawing the worshipper's eye upward in awe. Yet here there is a sense of shadowy mysticism as shafts of light—entering high-placed slit windows—direct the eye downward into the dark, mysterious space. Today many of these churches remain central to their communities, ancient and revered places that likely far transcend what their builders could ever have imagined.

MOST CHURCHES WERE CUSTOM-MADE, DISTINGUISHING THEM FOR THE AGES and demonstrating the reverence of the faithful. Yet the most prized elements—the brass, marble, mosaics, stained glass, and impossibly pitched slate roofs—pose a serious challenge to preservation, and to modern heating and cooling. Add to that the ebb and flow of economic fortune in the urban neighborhoods where many reside, and their very survival comes into question.

Philadelphia is an example. "It seemed there was once a church on every corner," says Carl Doebley, a conservator specializing in religious architecture with the firm DPK&A Architects, which oversaw the renovation of the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in Savannah.

For those that remain, safety often trumps preservation. Rotting trusses and compromised masonry threaten many houses of worship. When the preservation group Partners for Sacred Places asked Doebley to assess the condition of Christ Memorial Reformed Episcopal Church on Pine Street, he told them, "Forget the assessment. You have a major problem here." Some months later, its massive stone tower crashed to the ground. "People don't want to lose these buildings because of the unique architecture and tradition they represent," says Paul Dolinsky, chief of the Historic American Landscapes Survey. "But is that enough to keep them up and running?"

AFTER THE REVOLUTION, THERE WAS A SEARCH FOR NATIONAL IDENTITY. The new constitution, which promised freedom of worship, prohibited official religion. "Pluralism became the hallmark of the American religious experience," writes Robin Langley Sommer in *The Old Church Book*.



LEFT: JET LOWENPSHABS, 1983; RIGHT: JACK BOUCHER/PSHABS, 1975



Unfulfilled by traditional denominations, and feeling that core truth had been

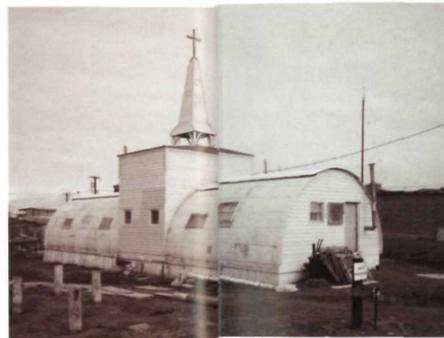
Jews gained enough of a foothold to build their own temples. The new synagogues looked like nothing before them. “This was the Jewish struggle for identity,” says Dolinsky. “They chose styles that were intentionally different.” They favored the Moorish, Babylonian, and Egyptian revivals—visual references to their faith’s origins.

In the 1830s, nostalgia ushered in a new form. The Episcopalians, primarily, were not comfortable with the restraint of the classical style. The structures they built, in gothic revival style, at first glance resemble the Catholic churches of the Middle Ages. Yet, says Kennedy, they were “as anti-Roman Catholic as the austere Puritan churches of the colonial and neoclassical eras.”

Numerous denominations adopted the look, which spread from coast to coast, reaching an apogee in landmarks like St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York City. English architect Augustus Welby Pugin, a Catholic convert who held sway in Europe, advocated gothic as the only true form of Christian architecture. Richard Upjohn’s pattern book *Rural Architecture*—likened to an ecclesiastical Sears cata-

Left: The domed roof of California’s Fort Ross Russian Chapel. One of the structures built starting in 1824, several years after a Russian trading company started a colony here. The high style is unusual for a remote fur-trapping post. The church has been rebuilt several times since it collapsed during the San Francisco earthquake of 1906, a later victim of three fires. Left below: The first building used by St. Patrick’s Roman Catholic Church of Barrow, Alaska. The structure was patched together from abandoned World War II buildings in the mid-’50s—just as Catholicism was taking root—to be replaced in 1992 with a modern structure. Right below: Indian Fields Methodist Campground, Dorchester County, South Carolina, erected in 1848. The 99 cabins, an early commune of sorts in a circle around a main tabernacle, are representative of the 19th century evangelical movement. Services are still held every year during the last week of September.

lost, people met under tents and in “brush arbors” to find their faith and discuss issues like slavery and temperance. It was the start of the great revival meetings of the late 19th century.



JACK BOUCHER/NPS/HABS, 1987

logue—heralded what Dolinsky calls “the hegemony of the Gothic cottage church in America.”

Today, a blighted section of Philadelphia boasts the purest example of the Gothic style. St. James-the-Less, built between 1846 and 1848, is a near-precise replica of the Church of St. Michael in Cambridgeshire, its construction closely supervised by church authorities in England (see photo, table of contents). “St. James-the-Less is unmatched for quality and authenticity by any other American church of its time,” says Pierson. The structure was a powerful expression of Pugin’s idea that all that was wrong with the modern world could be righted if society returned to a simpler, more natural way of living—reminiscent of 14th century rural England.

Today, the future of St. James is uncertain. It would have gone the way of many abandoned churches, but for members who stayed loyal when they moved out of the declining neighborhood. Episcopalians embracing a conservative strain of the faith closer to its Anglican roots, they disagreed with the more liberal hierarchy of the diocese—deciding to withdraw while claiming the structure where the parish had worshiped for more than 150 years. A legal dispute went all the way to the state supreme court, which ruled against the parish. Today, St.

James stands empty. What will become of the national historic landmark remains unknown.

“We’re dealing with an era of economic dislocation,” says Bob Jaeger, executive director of Partners for Sacred Places. A source of grants and expertise, the group finds innovative ways to help churches stay open. Studies show that in most churches, about 80 percent of the people coming through the doors are not members. Day care, after school care, meeting places, community centers, soup kitchens, and performance venues account for the bulk of the use. Jaeger tells civic leaders, policymakers, and potential donors, “Don’t look at them as sectarian places anymore. They are really de facto community centers.” The group trains congregations in things as varied as finding roofers and finding partners, such as advocates for the homeless, at-risk youth, the elderly, and the arts. “Unless they build a constituency,” says Jaeger, “they will not survive.”

LEFT ROGER STURTEVANT/NPS/HABS, 1934; NEAR RIGHT JET LOWE/NPS/HABS, 1991

“We’re dealing with an era of economic dislocation,” says Bob Jaeger, executive director of Partners for

IN THE LATTER HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY, CATHOLICS, ONCE MARGINALIZED and prohibited from worshipping together, came into their own. Attaining political and economic security, with their numbers swelled by immigrants, they began building in grand style. As the Catholics embraced the traditional, the 1880s saw evangelical Protestants introduce a radical change to the very idea of worship. Their auditorium churches were rambling stone structures whose exteriors borrowed from the Romanesque or Gothic. But the interiors were pure theater. Seating sloped upward from a central stage, with opera boxes, proscenium arches, and marquee lighting. Services took on the elements of performance. These were the antecedents of today’s megachurches.

The roots of these churches were in the early part of the century, in the days of circuit-riding preachers and tent meetings and the move to explore spiritual life outside defined avenues. In her book, *When Church Became Theater*, Jeanne Halgren Kilde suggests that they were a manifestation of nascent consumer culture. The congregation had a choice in how to experience the service, and even a say in its choreography, a re-negotiation of authority. Auditorium churches were adopted by Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and Methodists, a banding together in a time of anxiety at the dawn of a new century. The unity was ultimately broken as liberal and conservative schools of thought clashed and separated.

AFRICAN AMERICANS MIGRATING TO THE northern cities established spiritual communities wherever they could. Often it was in a church that once belonged to another denomination. Chicago’s Kehilath Anshe Ma’arive synagogue, built in 1891, was sold to a black congregation 30 years later. The newly named Pilgrim Baptist Church became fertile ground for a new way of worship. Pilgrim Baptist, today known as the birthplace of gospel music, drew singers such as Mahalia Jackson, James Cleveland, and Sallie Martin. A fire gutted the church in 2006, and all that remains are the walls.

As the 20th century progressed, traditional church architecture seemed to disappear with the consuming wave of the new. Dowdy, drafty, dark, antiquated—these were the terms associated with the old styles. Once again, the faithful stepped

Above: Big Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, founded in 1847. A social institution with Atlanta’s African American community, the church hosted President Taft in 1911 and Nelson Mandela in 1990. Black architect J.A. Lankford transformed the structure from Victorian to Romanesque Revival. Right: Compton Bassett Chapel, Upper Marlboro, Maryland. A private chapel from around 1783, the Georgian structure recalls the state’s persecution of Catholics, forced to worship in secret. Many families built them, but most are gone.

Sacred Places. A source of grants and expertise, the group finds innovative ways to help churches stay open. Studies show that in most churches, about 80 percent of the people coming through the doors are not members. Day care, after school care, meeting places, community centers, soup kitchens, and performance venues account for the bulk of the use.



LEFT: JAMES R. LOCKHART/INPHOTOS; 1979. RIGHT: JACK BOUCHER/INPHOTOS; 1989

Traditional church architecture seemed to disappear with the consuming wave of the new. Dowdy, drafty, antiquated—these were the terms associated with the old styles. Once again, the faithful stepped back to reassess the very approach to the idea of God. The new forms were influenced by secular architecture. Modernism was changing the face of cities and neighborhoods alike with sleek lines, cubic forms, and glass planes.

Right: St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Anchorage, Alaska. An asymmetrical A-frame designed in 1955 by Edwin B. Crittenden and Associates as part of a complex that includes a parish hall and rectory to complement the church.

back to reassess the very approach to the idea of God. The new forms were influenced by secular architecture. Modernism was changing the face of cities and neighborhoods alike with sleek lines, cubic forms, and glass planes.

Leading practitioners of the form tried their hand at the spiritual. Eero Saarinen's North Christian Church and Tabernacle Church of Christ, both in Columbus, Indiana, are considered major works of this period. Frank Lloyd Wright's Unity Temple, a national historic landmark in Oak Park, Illinois, is another. Viewed in the context of their times, these structures are a breathtaking challenge to the spiritual status quo. Whether they work as churches is the point of much debate. In their abstraction, repeated geometrical forms, and plain surfaces one can see why Valparaiso University humanities professor Gretchen Buggeln, writing in *The Christian Century*, would call modernism "the death of ornament."

Many Catholics blame the Second Vatican Council of the mid-'60s for helping erode the faith's uniqueness. The sweeping changes that altered so many aspects of Catholic culture, they argue, found their way into church architecture.

Today, modern often means megachurches—stadium-size structures with stereo systems, mixing boards, and giant video screens preaching to audiences of thousands, with parking lots so big they are frequently located on the outskirts of cities. Buggeln says these structures bear the "unmistakable influence" of office parks and shopping malls.

A common complaint is that a sense of the sacred is missing. The backlash against modernism and careless rehabs has yielded books like *Ugly as Sin: Why They Changed Our Churches from Sacred Places to Meeting Places*. One writer titles her critique "How Great Thou Aren't."

THE PRESERVATION OF MIDCENTURY MODERN CHURCHES POSES A DILEMMA.

For now at least, they have not galvanized a broad constituency, but that may change soon enough given the style's surging popularity. The urgency, for the moment, seems to weigh in favor of places freighted with age and history.

Since 1986, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, among the most active groups dealing with the issue, has given over \$5 million in grants to more than 600 religious properties. "In New York City," says president Peg Breen, "developers are literally going door to door asking churches if they can buy them and tear them down." The group works with the state historic preservation office to provide congregations with technical assistance, fundraising advice, and architectural referrals. The conservancy promotes heritage tourism, too. "A lot of tourists come to see these structures and hear gospel music," says Breen.

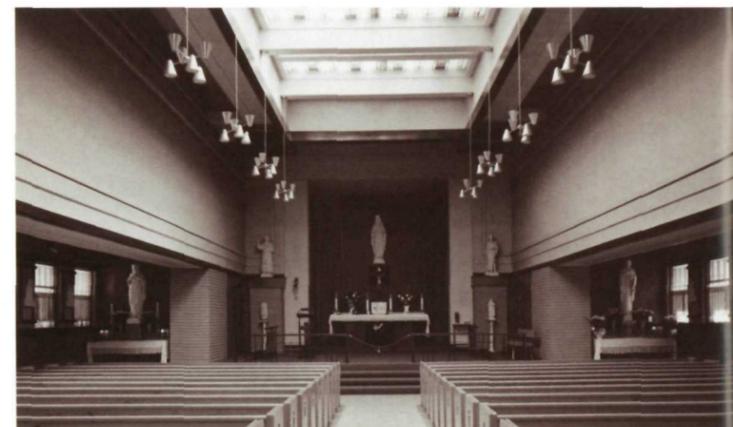
THE PROBLEM IS NOT CONFINED TO CITIES. "MANY RURAL PARISHES ARE

smaller than ever," says Jaeger. In North Dakota, he says, "twenty percent of the rural churches are empty, because of the depopulation of farmland. It may be closer to half in another few decades." In upstate New York, shrinking congregations are consolidating into fewer buildings, says Ann Friedman, director of the conservancy's sacred sites program. Doebly says it's often a question of "haves and have-nots." When his firm renovated Savannah's St. John the Baptist, it was thanks to "an affluent congregation that could raise the funds." On the other side, he adds, are "congregations that can hardly scrape together the \$1,500 to match the grant they're getting. Poorer churches need roofing and wiring upgrades. There are a lot of church fires."

Grandeur can be a blessing or a curse. It's the very quality that saves some houses of worship and condemns others. Churches are often large, complicated structures that do not lend themselves readily to



LEFT: JACK BOUCHER/NPS/HABS, 1994; BELOW: HAROLD ALLEN/NPS/HABS, 1965; RIGHT: JET LOWEN/NPS/HABS, 1991



Far left: Beth Shalom Synagogue, in the Philadelphia suburb of Elkins Park, a later Frank Lloyd Wright work and his only synagogue. Construction began in 1957 and ended shortly after Wright's death in 1959. The design includes many elements of Jewish symbolism; services are held daily in the recently designated national historic landmark. Near left: Our Lady of Lebanon, formerly the First Congregational Church of Austin, in Chicago. A small prairie-style church designed by Wright's chief draftsman, William E. Drummond. Built in 1908, the structure was Drummond's first commission.

other uses. "I've seen them turned into apartments, bars, and restaurants, but it doesn't really work," says National Park Service photographer Jack Boucher. "What else can it be but a church?"

In the face of a seemingly inexorable trend, some have chosen to light a candle rather than curse the darkness. The New York City

council, for example, is discussing a task force to assist struggling congregations, which would help preserve communities, too. Says Bob Jaeger, "Many can be saved with the right intervention."

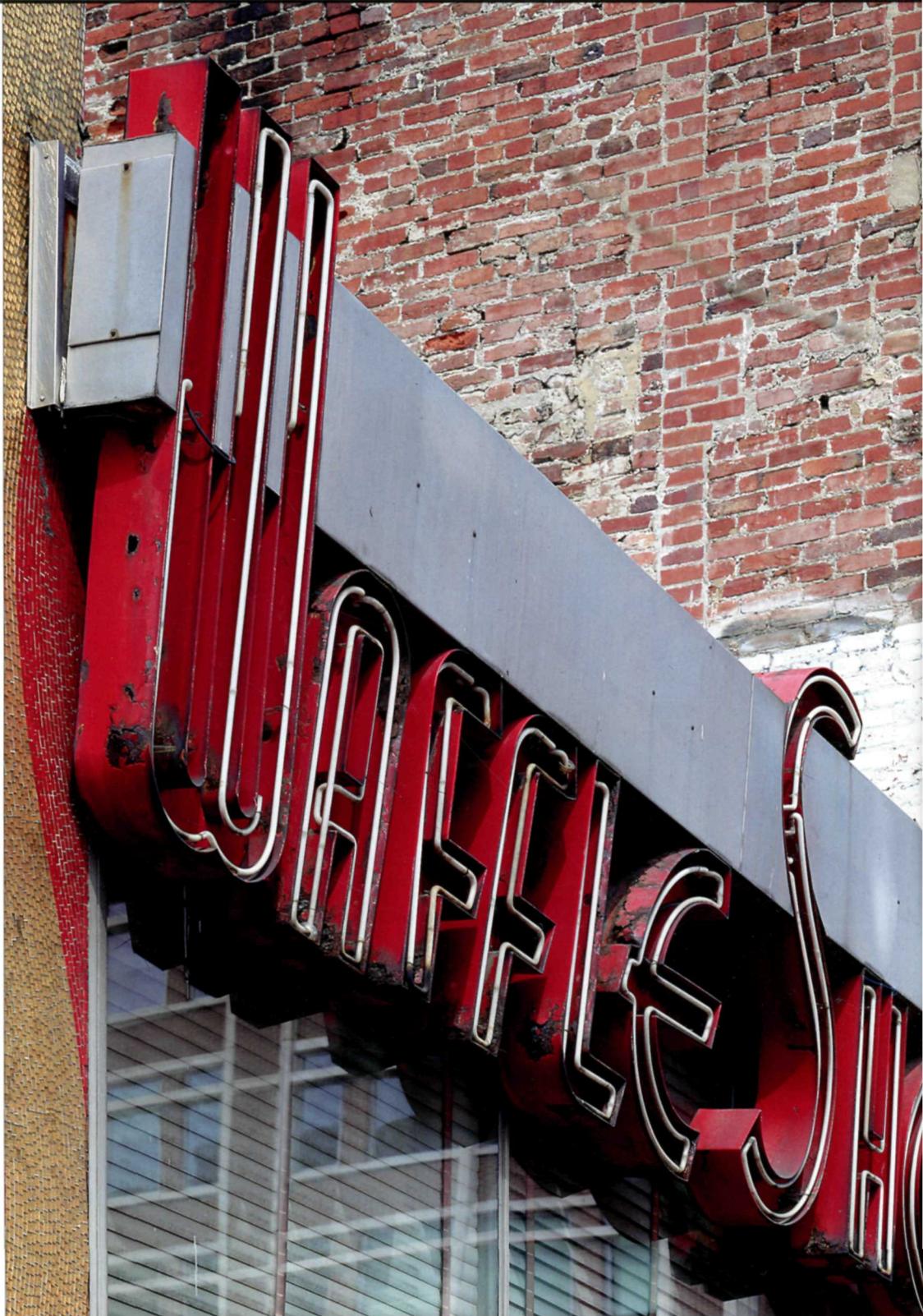
For more information contact Partners for Sacred Places, (215) 567-3234, email partners@sacredplaces.org, online at www.sacredplaces.org, or Ann-Isabel Friedman at the New York Landmarks Conservancy, (212) 995-5260, email annfriedman@nylandmarks.org, online at www.nylandmarks.org. The National Park Service works with a host of partners to preserve this precious legacy through Save America's Treasures grants, the National Historic Landmarks Program, the National Register of Historic Places, and other initiatives. Contact your local state preservation office or go to www.cr.nps.gov.

ON THE GRIDDLE

FOR 56 YEARS, RESIDENTS OF WASHINGTON, DC HAVE ENJOYED BREAKFAST at the Waffle Shop, a Doo-Wop-era diner across the street from Ford's Theater. But now that part of the block has been purchased to build an office tower, they will soon have to eat their waffles elsewhere. Regulars are already mourning the loss of one of the capital's cultural institutions.

THE ART MODERNE ESTABLISHMENT LOOKS LIKE IT'S SEEN BETTER DAYS and it has. One can glimpse those days in the gleaming photographs on the back wall, taken shortly after the opening in 1950. The formica counters shined, the stainless steel gleamed, and the air-conditioning—a novelty—epitomized high-tech. Nowadays, even though the neon no longer blazes and signs cover the double-height windows, the atmosphere still packs them in, friends and strangers elbow to elbow sitting around a horseshoe-shaped counter.

THAT'S WHY SEVERAL GROUPS ARE FIGHTING TO SAVE THE PLACE. The Committee of 100 on the Federal City, the Recent Past Preservation Network, the Downtown Arts Coalition, the Art Deco Society of Washington, and the Society for Commercial Archeology are rallying to sponsor a DC landmark nomination, and the Historic American Buildings Survey—anticipating possible demolition—took the photograph shown here. **IF SAVING THE DINER ISN'T POSSIBLE,** preservationists would like to see elements of it incorporated into the new building. "So much of the texture of the downtown shopping district has been swept away by large office buildings," says Sally Berk, a DC architectural historian. "It's a rare example of small-scale retail."



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