



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Ownership Transfer..	1
Leadership.	2
Interpretive Goals	3
Family Legacy..	3
Gubernatorial Family ..3	
Nation Building	4
Preservation VA Philosophy.5	
Organization Structure	5
Staff Digram	6
Family Tree	7
2012 Events..	7

PRESERVATION VIRGINIA TO TRANSFER OWNERSHIP OF HISTORIC SMITHFIELD TO THE SMITHFIELD-PRESTON FOUNDATION

Preservation Virginia to transfer ownership of Historic Smithfield to the Smithfield-Preston Foundation With this special edition newsletter, we are pleased to announce that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Preservation Virginia and the Smithfield-Preston Foundation will be executed in the near future. This MOU has the effect of transferring all programming, maintenance, financial responsibilities and ownership of Historic Smithfield to the Foundation from Preservation Virginia.

Since its founding in 1889, Preservation Virginia has played a significant stewardship role throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. The organization's primary goal is to ensure that historical structures and sites are preserved for generations to come. Recent emphasis has been to maintain structures, archaeological sites and 'view sheds' for perpetuity under alternative ownership arrangements.

Historic Smithfield is a unique historic resource in Southwest Virginia ripe for consideration under an alternative ownership model. This ownership model will ensure the long-term preservation goals of Historic Smithfield. With this decision to transfer ownership, the mission of interpreting late 18th century history along the Virginia frontier will be expanded.

For almost six years, Preservation Virginia and the Smithfield-Preston Foundation have been discussing the concept of alternative ownership for Historic Smithfield. This discussion is in keeping with Preservation Virginia's goal of assessing its stewardship of sites and structures throughout the Commonwealth. We are pleased to announce that this discussion turned into action and a new future for Historic Smithfield.

The first step was the implementation of an Operating Agreement between Preservation Virginia and the Foundation. Effective January 16, 2012, the Foundation assumed all of the operating responsibility for Historic Smithfield. The Operating Agreement allows for the orderly transfer of day-to-day management while providing time to complete the necessary language of the MOU. Initiation of the Operating Agreement also facilitates the segregation of the financial data of Historic Smithfield from that of Preservation Virginia.

For 50 years, Preservation Virginia has been a wonderful steward of the Preston Family home. As the years have passed, the local Montgomery County Branch has taken on more and more of the responsibilities. We are pleased that Preservation Virginia has the confidence that the stewardship role can be well handled by the local volunteers while expanding the cultural contribution to our community. The Smithfield-Preston Foundation has benefitted from the leadership provided by Preservation Virginia and looks forward to continuing the strong relationship. At the same time, the volunteers that treasure Historic Smithfield are excited about the opportunities we face to ensure the continued preservation of this wonderful historic site.



HISTORIC SMITHFIELD LEADERSHIP COMING HOME TO BLACKSBURG

Beginning in 1961, Janie Preston Boulware Lamb, a fifth generation descendent of William and Susanna Preston, donated the Smithfield House, out buildings and surrounding 12 acres of land to Preservation Virginia.

At that same time, a group of dedicated volunteers came together to adopt and care for the wonderful 1774 frontier home that William and Susanna built. These volunteers assumed the responsibility of bringing the home back to its pre-Revolutionary War condition, fixing, painting, tending, gardening and sprucing up the house and surrounding grounds. Interpreting the rich history of the Preston family and frontier New River Valley has been another vital aspect of the volunteers' work. Indeed, Historic Smithfield has just celebrated 50 years of devoted attention from the many volunteers across the years. Historic Smithfield remains in its original, unreconstructed state. It stands today on what was the frontier of the late 18th century looking remarkably like the Raleigh Tavern in Colonial Williamsburg that William Preston would have seen when he was a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses. It is a treasure of a structure that represented a culture unduplicated in a world where settlers constantly faced hardships and Indian attacks.

Now, after one-half of a century, the Smithfield-Preston Foundation has stepped forward to accept the return of Historic Smithfield from Preservation Virginia.

In a recent meeting with the Board of the Montgomery County Branch of Preservation Virginia, the Board of the Smithfield-Preston Foundation and several employees, Ms. Elizabeth Kostelny, Executive Director of Preservation Virginia, offered several observations:

“Over the 122-year history of Preservation Virginia, this organization has been about saving historic places. As we reflect on that history, we take pride that more than 360 places across the Commonwealth are preserved because of our organization's efforts. We could not succeed if we saw our role as holding these places tightly in hand and never accommodating the needs of current and future generations. No, Preservation Virginia has courageously evaluated its role in a community to ensure that our engagement is appropriate over time.”

“That kind of philosophy is especially needed in this day and time. Historic preservation has tools that it can leverage that were not available to us in previous generations. We also face challenges to be relevant and economically sustainable.”

“But it all begins with the historic site – constantly analyzing what is the best use, what is the best structure, what is best for this place's preservation into the future. Preservation Virginia is bold enough to examine these questions with the knowledge that those models change over time. We are not alone in this quest. The National Trust for Historic Preservation and numerous local preservation groups are asking these same questions. What worked a generation ago will not sustain us into the future.”

“That is why I am so pleased to be here today with members of the Montgomery County Branch and the Smithfield-Preston Foundation to continue our discussion and to define the next steps in evolving the management of Historic Smithfield so that we ensure its preservation into the future.”

The many volunteers that are so fond of Historic Smithfield look forward to the challenges that must be faced to ensure that Historic Smithfield continues to present the rich history of our late 18th century heritage. But it will take a larger group of supporters than just the dedicated volunteers. All of us connected to Historic Smithfield will need to step forward to protect this wonderful home. And we welcome more of you to join with us to present the history of the house, the Preston Family and the role of both in the history of Virginia and the nation.

INTERPRETIVE GOALS FOR HISTORIC SMITHFIELD

The responsibilities that the Smithfield-Preston Foundation will assume for Historic Smithfield require planning to present the amazing history of the Preston family and Historic Smithfield in the best way. There are many facets to this home on the frontier, but three areas of emphasis emerge that more succinctly enhance the interpretative mission for Historic Smithfield.

PRESTON FAMILY LEGACY

William Preston was born in 1729 in a small village near Londonderry, Ireland. In 1738, at age eight, his family immigrated to Virginia and settled in what is now Augusta County, Virginia. Susanna Smith was born in 1740 in Hanover County, Virginia. William and Susanna were married on January 17, 1761.

Beginning with the marriage of William and Susanna Smith Preston and continuing to today, the Preston Family has a fruitful legacy. Leadership roles in Virginia have taken many forms: three governors, members of the U.S. Congress, members of the House of Burgesses/General Assembly and First Ladies of Virginia, to mention only a few. Noteworthy contributions across our nation, our military, in education and the political leadership of other states abound.

The contributions of the Preston descendents deserve significant attention. The more one learns about the family's leadership and achievement, the more fortunate we are to have Historic Smithfield as the tangible anchor for such accomplishments.

"William Preston represents one of the greatest success stories of any man to migrate to America during the colonial period."¹ "His greatest long-term contribution to society came from his family. On a frontier more used to eking out a living than reading books and getting an education for your children, Preston stood as a symbol of culture and refinement, further enhancing his elite standing among his fellow residents. His beautiful home which housed a family eventually made up of twelve children and many nieces and nephews represented another symbol to his fellow citizens."²

GUBERNATORIAL FAMILY

Descendents of William and Susanna Preston created a legacy of gubernatorial achievement that is unmatched. In Virginia three descendents served as Governor and three other descendents as First Ladies of Virginia.

James Patton Preston (1774-1843), the eighth child of William and Susanna Preston was the 20th Governor of Virginia. The gubernatorial story, however, goes well beyond his accomplishment. In addition to James Patton Preston, Letitia Preston, the tenth child, married John Floyd who became the 25th Governor of Virginia. Granddaughter Susanna Smith Preston married James McDowell who became the 29th Governor of Virginia. Granddaughter Sarah Buchanan Preston married John Buchanan Floyd who became the 31st Governor of Virginia. An interesting aside is that John Buchanan Floyd was born at Smithfield.

The gubernatorial connections also continued beyond Virginia. First Ladies of Maryland and South Carolina, as well as a Governor of Missouri, can also be found in the first three generations of the Preston Family. This aspect of the Preston Family will continue to be researched and published in the months and years ahead. The Prestons of Virginia were indeed a Gubernatorial Family.

1. Richard C. Osborn, "William Preston of Virginia, 1727-1783: The Making of a Frontier Elite" (PhD dissertation, University of Maryland, 1990), ii.

2. Ibid, iv.

THOROUGHFARE OF NATION BUILDING

After the arrival of the English settlers in Jamestown in 1607, English, Scots and Irish began to seek a new life in the land-rich colonies that would eventually become known as British America. This immigration from the United Kingdom to the unknown lands of our Eastern seaboard is commonly referred to as the ‘First Migration.’ From New England into Georgia, settlers arrived and farmed in a manner that was not possible in their former homelands.

As the number of settlers grew and the best lands were already claimed, the westward push away from the Atlantic coast began. In Virginia, settlers along the coast and the Chesapeake Bay began to move toward the Piedmont and then across the Blue Ridge into the Shenandoah Valley. Many more British and German immigrants in Maryland and Pennsylvania moved southwestward into the Shenandoah Valley. This extended westward movement in the late 18th century through the Appalachian Mountains was referred to as the Second Migration.’

The topography of the Appalachian Mountains west of the Shenandoah Valley made it necessary for settlers to find passages that could accommodate wagons and livestock. The Smithfield Manor House was located along one of these critical passages.

As massive numbers of settlers moved westward from Virginia into Kentucky, West Virginia, Tennessee, and beyond, William Preston, the founder of Smithfield, made use of his strategic location. He built a prosperous real estate business and an influential political dynasty that lasted for almost ninety years. Numerous members of his extended family were industrious and wealthy people who were well connected to the Eastern and Western elite.

Smithfield’s significant role in both the American Revolution and in the great Western migration, two of the most important events in human history, makes it one of the most important historic sites in Virginia.



HISTORIC SMITHFIELD NEWS

• Winter 2012 •
Published by:
Historic Smithfield Plantation
1000 Smithfield Road
Blacksburg, VA 24060
info@smithfieldplantation.org
www.smithfieldplantation.org
(540) 231-3947
Museum Administrator
David McKissack
Editors
Asmaa Elsayed
Kate Preston



THANK YOU

Historic Smithfield extends its thanks to volunteer Mike Kelly for repairing the front gate that separates the property’s front yard and Virginia Tech’s cornfields. Thank you, Mike, for lending your hand and skill in maintaining Smithfield.



PRESERVATION VIRGINIA PHILOSOPHY REGARDING HISTORIC SITES

Elizabeth Kostelny,
Executive Director, Preservation Virginia

During its 122 year history, Preservation Virginia has played a stewardship role in over 165 historic sites. Preservation Virginia's goal is not ownership of historic sites, but to ensure sites and structures are preserved for generations to come. In the early decades of the organization's history, outright ownership was the primary tool of preservation. As other non-profit entities were formed, Preservation Virginia transferred some properties into local hands while retaining ownership of others. A prime example would be the transfer of the Palace Ice House, Gaol, and Capitol foundations to the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in the 1930s.

With the refinement of the easement program in 1988, another tool was added to the arsenal of Preservation Virginia and other preservation organizations. These voluntary donations of restriction to the Commonwealth ensure that the historic elements of structures, archeological sites and view sheds will be maintained in perpetuity. This tool allows that, in some cases, historic properties may remain in private hands and added to the locality's tax base.

Corotoman, in Lancaster County, Virginia, offers an example of this evolution. This site is residential yet also contains the archeological remains of a Carter family home. In 2000 when the archeological site was threatened by development, Preservation Virginia acquired the property. Easements were donated in 2010 and Preservation Virginia intends to market the property to another non-profit or for residential use. The resulting funds will be reinvested in the cash reserves to support Preservation Virginia's statewide mission and to be leveraged when another qualifying property is threatened. The Hopkins & Brothers Store and the Lynnhaven House are other examples. Each was transferred to alternative ownership to the Eastern Shore Historical Society of Virginia and the City of Virginia Beach, respectively.

Preservation Virginia continues to assess its stewardship role related to individual properties in its portfolio. The prevailing priority is to examine the preservation needs and the future of the individual historic site. The organization must answer these questions – what ownership model best serves the long-term preservation goals of this site? How does Preservation Virginia ensure that the historic site remains vital and contributes to the economic and cultural value of its community? What model supports Preservation Virginia's statewide mission and acknowledges the evolution of the historic preservation movement? Undoubtedly, there is a financial aspect to these questions. At the heart, however, is the best interest for the continued preservation of historic places.

SMITHFIELD-PRESTON FOUNDATION ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

With the advent of the Operating Agreement between Preservation Virginia and the Smithfield-Preston Foundation, a new Foundation organizational structure will be established. The new make-up will follow the approach used in many corporate and nonprofit organizations but with some minor differences.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As in the past there will be a Board of Directors responsible for oversight and setting the policy direction of Historic Smithfield. An Executive Committee composed of the Foundation's officers, will be responsible for any required interim decisions between Board meetings. Reporting to the Board will be a standing Audit Committee to monitor the financial activities and financial policies. Special committees, such as a Nominating Committee and a Finance Committee, will be appointed as needed.

There will be eighteen board members, each serving three-year terms. After the initial phase-in period, six new board members will be elected every year. The following elected officers will comprise the Executive Committee: President, VP of Administration, VP of Development, VP of Facilities, Secretary, Treasurer and Management Council Director.

MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

A fresh organizational approach springs from the creation of the Management Council to handle all the line functions at Historic Smithfield. The line functions, in the form of committees, are those ongoing roles that ensure the success of the interpretative and programming endeavors that make Historic Smithfield so special.

The Management Council will have its own by-laws and function independently. The three Vice Presidents from the Board of Directors will each be responsible for two or more of the eight committees listed below. The Council will be comprised of up to eighteen members. The Chairman of each committee will be a member of the Management Council. The present committees are:

Agriculture and Horticulture, Buildings and Grounds, Collections and Accessions, Guild /
Membership, Museum Store, Newsletter, Programming / Special Events, and Smithfield Review.

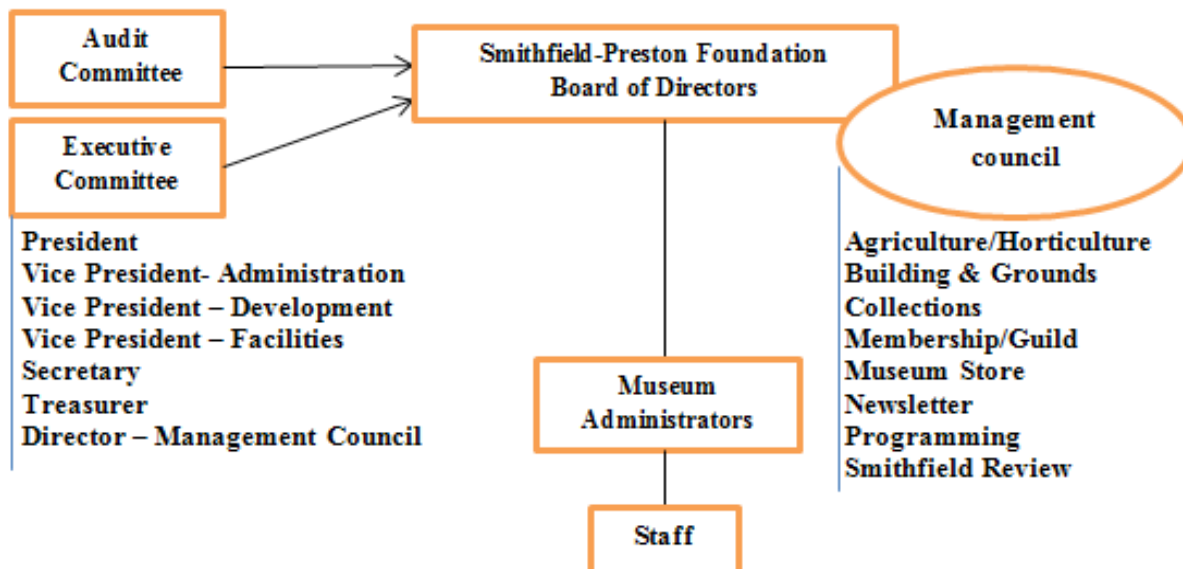
The members of the Management Council will annually elect the Management Council Director who will sit on the Board of Directors and be a member of the Executive Committee by virtue of the position. Based on the existing eight committee roles plus the Management Council Director, there will also be nine Council members that are without a 'portfolio' of committee responsibilities. These members will have the opportunity to move from one area to another as needed or desired in order to ensure that the overall activities at Smithfield are successful and don't place too much burden on too few members.

As with any new endeavor, it will be necessary to 'tweak' the organization as we learn more about what works best for Smithfield. Happily the new Foundation structure provides the opportunity to involve more of the dedicated individuals that celebrate Smithfield as the bright reminder of the frontier culture, pre-Revolutionary political leadership and Preston family legacy.

STAFF

The new Foundation organizational structure will segregate the line and staff activities from the Board of Directors just as would be found in a corporate environment. Historic Smithfield differs from a corporation in that there is no chief executive officer. The Museum Administrator handles the day-to-day activities while the President of the Foundation is responsible for confirming or initiating actions on behalf of the Board. For this reason the staff will report through the Museum Administrator directly to the Board rather than through the Management Council.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART:



EXTENDING BRANCHES OF THE PRESTON FAMILY TREE

Prior to the Preston Family Reunion in August 2010, an effort began to gather information about as many family members as possible. That effort is not just looking back at Preston ancestors, but also looking forward to the youngest generations that will provide more chapters to the legacy of William and Susanna Preston. We have made wonderful progress, but recognize too that some information is missing

Please send us any information about your branch of the family, and the little twigs that we haven't yet met. We'd rather have the information twice than not at all.

SPRING/EARLY SUMMER 2012 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

March 31	Opening Day - Spring Opening of the Museum Store
April 4	Annual Guild History Trip
April 8	Easter Sunrise Service
April 27	Preston Premiere - Spring Fundraiser at the Pavilion (Cocktail Party and Silent Auction)
May 12	Plant Sale
May 28	Dedication of the gravestone of James Patton Preston - Commemoration of the Bicentennial of the War of 1812
June 2*	Citizenship Ceremony (*this date is tentative)
June 16	Juneteenth Celebration
July 4	Independence Day Celebration

HISTORIC SMITHFIELD



1000 Smithfield Plantation Road
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Blacksburg, VA
24060
Permit No. 109